

Madhvani

Group Magazine

Volume 21 No 2 | July 2013

**2013/14 Madhvani Foundation
Scholarship launched**

**More Sugar, More Electricity:
The Kakira expansion**

**Aberdare Country Club
refurbishment**

**Premier Safaris provides an
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Editor's Note



Our dear readers,

Welcome to yet another edition of the Madhvani Group Magazine.

So much has been going on in different sections of the Group. Kakira Sugar Limited is almost completing the expansion at the factory and the new co-generation plant is about to be commissioned. This will not only increase the amount of sugar produced but also the power generated and exported to the national grid. Read on and find out how this affects you.

We have three accounts of people that have been to our different lodges. From Paraa to Chobe to Silverback and Mweya, they tell you what their Marasa experience was like. We hope that their stories will persuade you to take a trip to any of our lodges in the region.

There have been a number of refurbishments going on at our properties in Kenya. You may wonder, can the Aberdare Country Club look even more beautiful? It can and it does. Can watching the animals at the waterhole at The Ark get even more magical? It can and it does! Do read on and find out more about it.

This magazine will also update you on what is happening at the Steel plant, Kakira Sweets and Confectionery, KORD and the Amuru project.

To everybody that has contributed to this magazine, thank you. Sneha, Peter and Dorothy, we appreciate your willingness to tell us your stories. And to the team at Madhvani Group that submitted stories, I am grateful.

Enjoy!

Hellen Nyana

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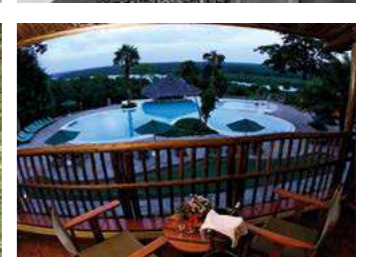
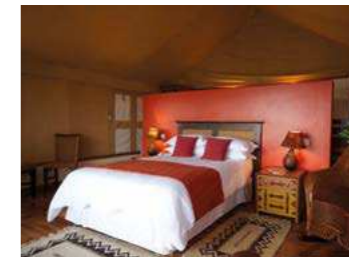
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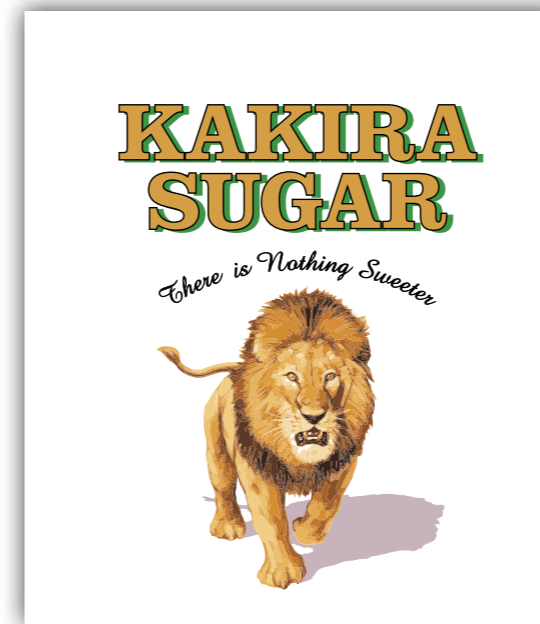
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More Sugar, More Electricity: The Kakira Expansion

Kakira Sugar Limited has been in the business of producing sugar and generating electricity for a while now. With the increase in demand for both, expansion of the factory and co-generation section is almost complete. This story explains how far expansion has gone.

Kakira Sugar Limited (KSL) is on the verge of a new era. KSL embarked on an over USD75 million expansion of the factory and the co-generation plant.

When the expansion is complete, KSL will have capacity to crush 2,000,000 tonnes of cane per crop season. This cane will be crushed at a rate of 7,500 tonnes per day, that is, 315 tonnes of cane per hour. The increase in crush rate will directly influence the quantity of sugar bagged, which will increase to 186,000 tonnes of sugar per crop season.

Increasing cane crushing capacity and improvements in energy efficiencies will result in increased power saving. The Co-generation capacity will increase as well. KSL will be capable of generating 52MW of power (the equivalent of one of the five turbines at the recently commissioned Bujagali Dam) but will be producing 47MW. Of this power, 32MW will be sold to the national grid via two dedicated transmission lines direct to the Jinja substation.

What is happening:

Preparation to commission the installed 160 tonne per hour boiler and the 30 MW electrical generating set, together with a number of ancillary services that are required, is in progress. New bagasse carriers are being set up and the existing shed is being extended.

Additionally, a new cooling tower to cool the water from the condenser of the power turbine; a larger reverse osmosis plant to supply boiler feed water; and a new export line to supply power to Umeme have installed.

Construction of a new sugar go-down is well underway. The building will be completed in time to receive the anticipated increased sugar. A marked feature of the new go-down is the adoption of new material handling methods. The 50kg bags will be stacked into 1250kg sling bags utilising vacu-lifts (a small crane, which, with the aid of vacuum and spring loaded cable, takes the load of the bag away from the operator). The sling bags will be moved using overhead cranes to storage. When required the bags will be recovered and transported to the loading bays using a crane. This new system will eliminate the heavy manual work currently being performed by workers in the current go-down.

What next:

The next phase will be expansion of cane yard, Front-end and Process House. Work on these has already commenced and will continue during the forthcoming offcrop. With the planned additional cane supply and power export, the Front-end and Process House require modification and expansion.

The cane yard unloading equipment capacity is to be increased to handle the additional cane. Two new feeder tables with Hilo unloaders will be installed, one each on Pomini and F&S Mills. These feeder tables will be outside of the gantry crane structure and will be dedicated to unloading estate cane. The other four feeder tables will be dedicated to outgrower cane. Two overhead grabs will be installed to try their effectiveness, with the intention of phasing out the front end loaders which are becoming old and expensive to run.

Pomini Mill will be upgraded with new knives and a fibrisor with a 2 MW electrical drive. Similarly the mills will be converted from inefficient steam turbines to variable speed drives. The installation of electric motors is to improve energy efficiency which will contribute to increased export to the

national grid. The carriers supplying cane to the Pomini Mills will be changed to belt conveyors, which are cost effective. Extensive civil work, removal of existing foundations and casting of new foundations will require that the offcrop on Pomini be extended beyond the normal 35 days.

Modifications to the Process House will focus on increasing throughput capacity, improving energy efficiencies and maintaining quality. The major modifications and changes to be made will include; additional juice heaters and an additional rotary vacuum filter to handle the additional mud. The filter cake disposal system will be relocated to outside the factory perimeter fence.

The old F&S evaporator set will be replaced with a new evaporator set and new condensers will replace the inefficient condensers and vacuum pumps currently in service.

How it works:

The boiler will evaporate 160 tonnes (160,000 litres) of water at a pressure of 67 bar (670kPa) at a temperature of 515°C every hour. The purpose of the very high pressure and temperature is to utilise thermal efficiencies when using bagasse to generate electricity. The boiler is similar in design to the existing co-generation boilers, albeit operating at much higher parameters.

Fitting in with KSL's commitment to conserve the environment and ISO 14000 certification, the boiler has been fitted with an electrostatic precipitator which will remove all dust particles from the flue gas and prevent pollution of the surrounding environment.

The new turbo alternator will have the capacity to generate 52 MW of power when fully loaded. Exhaust steam will be extracted for the heating process in the Process House and the balance will be condensed back to water, which will be returned to the boiler.

Both the boiler and alternator are fitted with state of the art instrumentation, capable of detecting faults and raising alarms. In case the alarm is not corrected in time, the instrumentation will safely shut down the equipment. A central control room is manned by trained operators who control the co-generation boilers and two TDPS turbines via

distributed control system. The close proximity of operators to the room will improve communication and operations.

What it means to KSL staff:

The new equipment provides challenges and opportunities to the staff at Kakira. The old boilers will be decommissioned and the staff currently operating these boilers are being trained and will be absorbed into the operation of the new boiler. Some instrumentation staff were sent to India to be trained on the new system and on-the-job training is continuing for all staff concerned.

However, the major challenge will be operating and achieving the design efficiency of the plant, maintaining maximum export of power and at the same time meeting the steam needs of the Front-end and Process House. Learning how to operate this new equipment effectively will provide a useful opportunity for the staff to demonstrate their aptitude and skill depending on how they grasp and excel at running and maintaining the new plant.

"All this new equipment will require civil work, pumps and motors, extensive new piping and instrumentation. The scope of work and task ahead will stretch all concerned at the Kakira factory, particularly considering that this work will run concurrently with the normal offcrop," Mr Chris Strathern, Works Manager says.

Once the contractors leave and the equipment has been commissioned, the challenges will start for Kakira staff. Additional skills will have to be learnt to operate the new evaporators and pan configuration, although the principals are almost similar to the current operation.

What this means for the country:

KSL, while previously producing 27MW of power, has been supplying 12MW to the national grid. With the new boiler, the company will be supplying 32 MW to the national grid. "Jinja town including industries consume around 18MW of power per day basing on reliable sources. KSL will be 32MW which is more than Jinja, Kamuli and Iganga," Mr Mayur Madhvani, Joint Managing Director, Madhvani Group explains.

Electricity production and consumption in Uganda

It is estimated that just three to five per cent of the population have access to electricity and many towns, especially in the North of the country have no electrical power. In the rural areas only about two per cent have access to power, of which less than half is provided through the national grid, the remainder coming from household generators, car batteries or solar photovoltaic (PV) units.

Energy consumption in Uganda is partially met by a number of energy resources including solar power, biomass and fossil fuels. In total, Uganda has an installed capacity of 595 MW, mostly consisting of hydropower a situation that puts Uganda in the lowest ranks of per capita electricity consumption (70 kWh/year) in the world.

About 72 per cent of total electricity supplied by the main grid is consumed by 12 per cent of the domestic population concentrated in the Kampala metropolitan area and nearby towns of Entebbe and Jinja.

It is estimated by energy experts that Uganda will require 2,000 MW by 2025 to run its industries and homes. To achieve this, more than \$3.5 billion will have to be sourced and spent in the energy sector.

Within 20 years from now, the country must generate an additional 1,700MW to meet its demand. With the completion of the Bujagali Hydropower Project another 250MW has since been added onto the grid. The construction of Karuma hydropower project when complete, the project will further improve the electricity situation in the country.

In 2012, Uganda also began the process of supplying 480,000 rural residents with electricity with the help of the Energy for Rural Transformation Programme. It is hoped that with the financial support of the World Bank, more rural households will be able to access adequate and reliable power supply.

| PLANT/SOURCE | CAPACITY(MW) |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Kiira hydropower station | 200 |
| Nalubale hydropower station | 180 |
| Bujagali hydropower station | Planned 250 current 100 |
| Jacobsen Namanve thermal plant | 50 |
| Kakira Sugar Cogeneration | 32 |
| Electromax thermal power plant | 20 |
| Mpanga small hydro plant | 18 |
| Bogoye small hydro plant | 13 |
| Kinyara Sugar limited | 7 |
| Ishasha small hydro plant | 6.5 |
| Kilembe Mines small hydro plant | 5 |

Source: Ministry of Energy and Minerals Development annual report 2012



KORD: Developing communities in Busoga region

KORD is one of the Corporate Social Responsibility projects that Kakira Sugar Limited runs with the farmers in Busoga region. We spoke to Dr Eric Adriko, the first Chairman of KORD. He has been serving in that capacity since its inception in 2005. He tells us how KORD works and how the community is benefiting.

What is KORD and what was the rationale behind starting it?

KORD in full stands for Kakira Outgrowers Rural Development Fund. Kakira Sugar Limited (KSL) together with the Busoga Sugarcane Growers' Association (BSGA) developed this innovative partnership which was incorporated as a company limited by guarantee and is registered under the NGO Statute.

The rationale behind starting KORD was to improve the quality of life of the community by facilitating the provision of loans and managing the funding of investment and implementing infrastructure projects.

KSL and BSGA started KORD as a new model of Corporate Social Responsibility focused on building a long-term sustainable and mutually beneficial relationship with the entire community. The KORD model of partnership promotes community development and accountability through the involvement of both KSL and sugarcane





farmers.

KORD is the first vehicle of its kind to involve a unique funding mechanism by the partners that is also conducive to leveraging donor funds.

This model has been appreciated by the New Partnerships for Africa's Development (NEPAD). NEPAD recognised the KORD model as a unique example where interests between the public and private sector have aligned to support the innovative public private partnership arrangements for rural roads, school and other community infrastructure projects.

How far (in terms of coverage) do KORD activities go in the Busoga region?

The mission of KORD is to improve the quality of life of the community within a 30km radius of KSL which includes Jinja, Iganga, Luuka, Mayuge and Kamuli Districts although our work spreads a little beyond than what we actually have on paper.

How is KORD funded?

KORD is funded by contributions from BSGA farmers and KSW based on tonnes of canes delivered to the factory. Shs250 per tonne of cane is given by BSGA and Shs125 per tonne of cane is contributed by KSL. Donor support is also significant and growing.

Please tell us about KORD projects

As I have stated earlier the objectives of KORD among others is to create the environment for sugarcane farmers to access cheap loans from Banks. Important also is to develop the catchment area by rendering health, agriculture and education services and by the development of the supporting infrastructural facilities.

Since its registration KORD has achieved the following:

Finance/Loan Project

KORD fixes about Shs400 million annually in Tropical Bank Jinja Branch to facilitate farmers' access to loans. Over 1,000 farmers have so far benefited with about Shs2.5 billion given to them. Repayment is at 17 per cent interest rate regardless of the prevailing market rate.

Fuel Station Project;

The KORD fuel station project was prioritised as an important project that addresses sugarcane transport problems faced by outgrowers. Outgrowers are accessing fuel at a discounted pump price of Shs110 per litre and fuel is also given on credit. Shs10 per litre of the total discount goes to BSGA.

Schools Projects:

They include: two science laboratory blocks at Busede College and Buyengo S.S.S in Jinja District, a five classroom block at Baitambogwe S.S.S in Mayuge District, two science laboratory blocks at Budondo S.S.S in Jinja District and Nawampiti S.S.S in Iganga District, two blocks of three classes each at Bufulubi S.S.S in Mayuge District and Wabulungu S.S.S in Iganga District, two blocks of two classes each at Buyemba P/S in Mayuge District, Buyemba S.S.S in Iganga District and Mutai Kagoma S.S.S in Jinja District.

In 2012, KORD implemented three construction projects of which two are school projects and the other is a health centre. The projects include: completion of a two classroom block at Bulanga C.O.U Primary School in Waibuga Sub County, Luuka District, construction of a science laboratory block at Busalaamu S.S.S in Bukanga Sub county, Luuka District, and construction of a General/Maternity Ward with a paediatric wing at Bulamagi Health Centre III in Bulamagi Sub County, Iganga District.

Road projects:

29 roads covering 25km have been rehabilitated within the outgrowers' area. These are mainly difficult swampy areas.

Scholarship/OVC Project:

200 Orphans and Vulnerable Children are benefiting from school fees, stationery and psycho social support and other health/livelihood improvement programmes.

Poultry project

This is one of the income-generating activities being implemented for OVC households.

Malaria Project:

3,000 long lasting insecticide treated nets worth Shs45 million were secured from African Foundation for Development (AFFORD), a malaria consortium and distributed to 1,500 outgrowers i.e. to pregnant mothers and children of five

years and below in Busede sub county.

Dairy Improvement project

Uganda National Council of Science and Technology (UNCST) funded the study on improvement of diary production to a tune of \$49,800. The project is being implemented by KORD in partnership with Makerere University as main researcher, Dairy Development Authority and KSL. 105 farmers from Jinja, Kamuli, Iganga, Mayuge and Mukono Districts have been involved in the study. Milk booster feed has been produced and improves milk production by 36 per cent. Commercialisation of the feed is the next stage.

How has Kakira Town as an area benefited from your work?

The Waste Management Project was devoted to Kakira Town. The French Embassy funded the solid waste management project in Kakira Town Council for 17 months.

The town council now has disposal systems and is cleaner. Kakira has also benefited from other donor supported project such as: the scholarship/OVC project funded by HIPS a USAID NGO, Cook stove Project funded by AFREPREN/FWD

KORD IN NUMBERS:

Shs400m: KORD annual fixed deposit in Tropical Bank to facilitate farmers' access to loans.

200: Number of orphans and vulnerable children in formal education supported with fees and scholastic material.

72: Number of caregivers for 112 OVC who were supported to access free HIV counselling and testing.

29: Number of swampy roads covering 25 kilometres that have been rehabilitated in the past.

and all the other social projects I mentioned earlier.

The issue of food security vs sugar cane growing in Busoga region is one that is often raised. Is there anything KORD is doing to ensure people are growing enough food?

KORD is active in helping the target community through sensitisation and the development of agricultural projects such as the Milk Booster Project.

About Dr Adriko

Dr Eric Adriko, by profession is a Mechanical Engineer although going by his vast experience in other fields, he has demonstrated over time that he is more than an Engineer. In addition to his professional activities as a Mechanical Engineer, Dr. Adriko has served as an active Political and Civic leader.

Dr Adriko has served as a Chancellor of Kyambogo University,

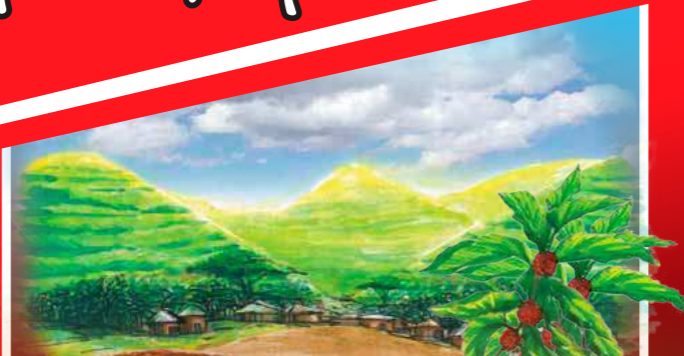


a Minister of Industry and Technology, a Minister of Lands, Housing and Urban Development and a Minister of Public Service whilst holding the office of Deputy Prime Minister.

He sits on several boards and is a Director of KSL.



Koffee Feast



Kakira Sweets are nationally and internationally certified

Early last year, Kakira Sweets and Confectioneries started its endless efforts towards manufacturing products that meet the requirements of their customers through compliance with both national (UNBS) and international (ISO) standards.

Internally, awareness trainings were conducted, all operational and process controls were modified and the factory made a joint focus on achieving good quality products expected in the regional market.

A new laboratory was installed to intensively monitor the factory's products. Internal audits were conducted according to the required standards and corrective actions were taken accordingly for continual improvements.

Nationally, in an effort to meet legal or regulatory requirements, formal applications to use the UNBS Quality Mark on most of product brands were made and all products bear the mark now.

A delegation of auditors from Uganda National Bureau of Standards (UNBS) carried out a product certification audit last year at the factory premises. The few non conformances that were observed were dealt with in order to grant the factory certification.

The market for Kakira Sweets and Confectioneries is much bigger than just Uganda and/or East African region. Penetrating this market requires a manufacturer to do much

more than just national compliance through UNBS. Thus Kakira Sweets decided to implement a Quality Management System based on ISO 9001.

The system was successfully launched for implementation in 2011 and the assessment of the effectiveness of the system (Pre-audit) was conducted by NEMKO AS, the certification body.

In October 2012, the company got full certification with the help of Jamal Rashid and the guidance of Mr Prasad, (GM Kakira Sweets) and the co-operation of the entire team.

Measures taken by the factory for effective implementation of compliance systems:

Administrative

- Proper handling of man power by use of work schedules
- Improvement of strategies with supervisory personnel to ensure compliance

Behavioural measures

- Continuous internal awareness/training
- Good communications to encourage involvement of employees at all levels
- Ensuring good manufacturing practices

Procedural measures

- Documentation of new rules and methods of work as per ISO 9001 and UNBS recommendations

Technical measures:

- Modification of factory processes; isolation and segregation and/or correction of hazardous processes
 - Improved ventilation and mechanisations/automation of operations
- Planned preventative maintenance schedules to reduce risk of structural or component failure
- Purchase of new and improved machines with reduced risks of exposure or contact to hazards. The machines include: new oven for Compressed Sugar Tablets, New Flat Lollipop Line, three new wrapping machines and new granulator for sugar grinding.

Steel Corporation of East Africa to resume operations



Steel Corporation of East Africa Limited (SCEAL), a company under the Madhvani Group and trading name Madhvani Steel, is set to resume operations soon.

Presently undergoing major rehabilitation, the plant was incorporated in 1962. Running at full capacity in 1971, the plant was producing 25,000 tonnes of steel after which due to the political turmoil in the country, production came to a halt.

The factory was repossessed by the Group in 1996 but was not fully rehabilitated due to various reasons. A **partial rolling only start** was undertaken in 2005 using outsourced billets. However it was soon realised that this model was not best suited to the operations and due to constant power shortages, the plant was put under care and maintenance soon after.

With the completion of the Bujagali Power Project and the continued demand for steel it was decided to revive the operations but to include melting as well. The plant is now undergoing a full scale rehabilitation programme which includes:



- a new 15Mt induction furnace from a world class manufacturer
- a modern continuous casting machine from Italy
- complete modernisation of the rolling mill with full PLC controls
- new modern water safety systems on the mill
- new TMT machine to ensure **stronger strength** steel bars
- State of the Art Spectrometer to check bar quality.

Additionally ISO programme is being implemented. The short term improvement plan also includes an online billet rolling system to improve productivity.

Madhvani Steel will be procuring scrap from Uganda and the neighbouring countries during this start-up phase and a long term plan envisages obtaining good quality iron ore from the sponge iron plant in the Kabale area to solve the problem of scrap shortages in future.

This first phase of rehabilitation will yield 32,000 tonnes of steel products whilst creating employment to over 250 Ugandans directly.

Counting on the upward growth trend in the economy due to a boom in the construction sector and the continued industrialisation in the region for its market, Madhvani Steel intends to produce a wide range of products. These will include steel billets, angles, bars, barbed wires, fasteners and wire rods with an emphasis on quality to carve its niche in the regional market that now includes the newly formed state of South Sudan.

About A.F Sebastian

A.F Sebastian is the General Manager of Steel Corporation of East Africa Ltd and is presently overseeing the rehabilitation at SCEAL.

He has been working with the Madhvani Group of Companies for close to 20 years. Mr Sebastian started his work with the Group in SCEAL where he attained a lot of expertise in the steel industry over time. He has also served in different capacities in Makepasi Matches and the oil and soap division (now defunct) also under the Madhvani Group of Companies.



Steel production in East Africa

The budding real estate business in East Africa and beyond has given rise to high demand for steel products consequently bringing in a number of new players in the steel manufacturing industry in the region. However despite the increase in the number of manufacturers and the booming construction sector, prices of steel products still remain high due to soaring energy costs coupled with poor infrastructure and fluctuating currencies in the region.

In neighbouring Kenya, the increase in property vandalism by dubious scrap metal dealers has forced the government to ban the exportation of scrap metal altogether. With an estimated importation bill of Ksh63 billion in 2011 (an increase of 50 per cent) from the previous year, the trend is unlikely to be reversible any time soon. In Uganda alone, the demand for steel is estimated at over 150,000 tonnes per annum and 480,000 to 600,000 tonnes for Kenya while Tanzania whose demand stands at over 600,000 tonnes can only manage to produce a paltry 20,000 tonnes.

The steel industry is often considered an overall indicator of economic progress because of the role played by steel in infrastructural development. According to data from the Uganda National Bureau of Statistics, the real estate sector grew by 5.8 per cent in Ugandan for the year 2010 and 4.5 per cent in Kenya while still being predicted to grow further hence the surge in demand for steel products.

The forging of steel products dates as far back as 1400BC when steel weapons were produced by Roman armies in large quantities and used in warfare. The Haya people of Tanzania invented a type of furnace that was used to make carbon steel, it is reported. An alloy of iron and other elements like carbon, steel has been produced since then for thousands of years from black smith forges.

The establishment of Steel Corporation of East Africa Ltd (SCEA) in 1962 with modern and efficient steel production methods paved way for mass steel production in East Africa. At its incorporation, it was the largest steel making plant in the region and with production of 25,000 tonnes of billets.

Weetuli and MyLife; Liberty Life's new products



In medieval times, insurance was by mutual agreement. For instance if a neighbour's granary or house was destroyed by a storm, the whole village would pool resources to make sure one of their own didn't starve or freeze death. Not anymore! In this world of rapid urbanisation one would rather count on an insurance policy.

"Insurance can be termed as the transfer of risk of a loss from one entity to another in exchange for some payment," says Mr Joseph Almeida Managing Director, Liberty Life Assurance. It is used as a form of risk management to cushion one against an uncertain loss. Before insurance is taken up a contract known as an insurance policy is drawn up between an insurer normally the company selling the insurance and the insured. The contract contains details conditions and circumstances under which the insured will be compensated in case of a loss. In simple terms insurance involves pooling of funds from many insured entities to pay for the losses that any one of those entities may incur in the future.

With a diverse range of insurance policies to suit each and everyone's needs and income range, Liberty Life, a Madhvani Group company under Padre Pio Insurance Brokers of Italy is better suited for ones needs when it comes to matters to do with life insurance.

"With the recent launch of tailor made policies like Weetuli and MyLife, our major objective is to offer our potential customers peace of mind in case of any eventualities," says Mr Almeida.

The Weetuli Policy

Uniquely designed to combine three distinct benefits into one, the Weetuli policy covers individuals and families from birth to the age of 70. Weetuli covers risk of accident resulting into permanent disability or death, medical expenses arising from hospitalisation caused by accidents and death as a result of accident disease or natural causes. The policy has benefits such as the Personal Accident Benefit where a lump sum of cash is paid out to accident victims depending on the severity of the disability attained and Grocery Benefit where a lump sum of cash is paid out to family members to assist with immediate needs in case a policy holder or spouse passes on.

On the other hand, the Accident Medical Hospitalisation Benefit pays a cash amount of up to Shs300,000 to cater for medical expenses that may have been incurred in case a policy holder has been hospitalised for more than 72 hours continuously.

In partnership with Uganda Funeral Services and Kampala Funeral Directors, Liberty Assurance has also introduced the Mabugo Benefit to cover expenses associated with the memorial service and the Funeral Service Benefit where if any policy holder passes on, either of the partner companies will conduct a funeral service with associated expenses for the deceased.

Currently priced at Shs50,000 per annum for those aged between 0 and 18 years, Shs70,000 for the age group of 19-60 years and Shs200,000 for those between 61-70 years premiums can even be paid conveniently through the mobile money platform.

MyLife Policy

Similarly, MyLife is a policy that provides a lump sum cash benefit in case of accidents leading to disability, loss of life and hospitalisation for more than 72 hours. According to Mr Almeida, the policy is open to those between 18-65 years but unlike Weetuli where one can take out one policy to cover the whole family, Under Mylife each policy holder has to have their own plan. The policy is divided into cover options of Silver, Gold and platinum to suit different financial standings.

Whereas those under the Silver cover pay Shs 2,500 as premium per month, the amount increases to Shs6,250 and Shs12,500 for Gold and platinum respectively. Likewise the benefits payable to a policy holder under the silver cover in case of an accident or loss of life is Shs1 million compared to Shs2,500,000 for Gold and Shs5,000,000 for platinum cover holders while hospital cash backs range from Shs333,333, Shs833,333 and Shs1,666,667 for Silver, Gold and Platinum cover holders respectively.

"At Liberty Assurance, our insurance cover starts 24 hours after the payment of the first premium and claims are paid within, a maximum of five days," asserts Mr Almeida.

Mcash

With the introduction of Mcash, a virtual account used to transfer funds, payment of ones premiums has never been easier. Under this innovation, customers can access their insurance accounts through their phones with their phone numbers acting as their account numbers, through thumbprint at Liberty Life offices, website or through insurance cards all of which can be linked to one's bank account.

To apply for a policy of one's choice, all that is required is relevant documentation like a passport, driver's license or birth certificate to prove date of birth and two recent passport photos.

For more inquiries one can visit the nearest Padre Pio retail point or visit the Padre Pio office at plot 12A Turfnell Drive in Kamwokya, Kampala.

E-mail: libertylife@stanbic.com

Minister commends Madhvani Foundation as it celebrates 10 years since re-launch

This year marks 10 years since the Madhvani Foundation Scholarship scheme was re-launched in 2003 and the Foundation celebrated this milestone by giving away scholarships worth Ushs650 million. The scheme which was briefly halted from 1972 to 2003 due to the political instability brought on by Idi Amin's regime has educated over 1,300 Ugandan students and provided scholarships worth over Shs3 billion in both science and technical University courses.

The celebrations to mark a decade since the re-launch were held at the Madhvani Group Exhibition Hall at UMA showground on April 30, 2013. Speaking at the celebrations, the Minister of State for Higher Education, Hon John C. Musingo commended the Foundation's continued commitment to invest in the lives of young Ugandans who would otherwise have struggled to attain higher education.

"On behalf of the Ministry of Education, I would like to thank the Madhvani Foundation for the tremendous support they have given to the education sector in Uganda and for the role they have played and are continuing to play in the transformation of Uganda's socio-economic landscape. The passion they have for their community has been witnessed by all of us from year to year through their sponsorship package which has steadily increased from Shs300 million in 2003 to Shs650 million in 2013."

"The Government of Uganda is willing to work with socially responsible companies such as Madhvani Group which has made it their duty to give back to the Ugandan community through educating the youth most especially in science and technical courses which the President identified as highly valuable for this country's development." He added.



reach for the sky

The Madhvani Foundation

As one of Africa's largest annual private sector contributions towards education we are proud to be at the forefront of developing Uganda by empowering gifted and underprivileged students.

www.madhvanifoundation.com

Announcing the launch of the scholarships, Madhvani Foundation Board member Dr Jack Luyombya said, "The Madhvani Foundation scholarship scheme was established as a way of honouring the vision of the Madhvani family patriarch, Muljibhai Madhvani. At the heart of this vision is a desire to see a scheme that nurtures brilliant youth to fulfil their potential and reinvest their knowledge, skills and experience in programs that will benefit others. The scheme focuses on giving back to Uganda and strives to inspire and nurture its beneficiaries to fulfil their dreams over and above the pursuit of an undergraduate or postgraduate degree."

In the past 10 years, the Foundation has established a nationwide footprint that has supported students from as far as Gulu University in Northern Uganda to Mountains of the Moon University in Western Uganda. It is a two-time (2011 and 2012) award winner of the prestigious Patrice Lumumba award by the Uganda Universities Union of Guild Parliaments, formed an Alumni Association in 2009 for the purpose of networking among the alumni and has held annual entrepreneurial and career skills trainings for its alumni.

In conclusion Dr Luyombya said the Foundation continues to set the pace for philanthropy in the private sector and invited all those that meet the requirements of this scholarship to apply. The selection process to choose the over 150 people that are eligible for the scholarship is currently going on and successful applicants will be shortlisted.



David Baker followed in the footsteps of his ancestors to rediscover the mighty Murchison Falls



**MARASA
Africa**

Marasa Africa, where the unforgettable happens

Murchison Falls National Park in Uganda was the center of historical attention this January 2013 as Mr. David Baker, the 73-year old great-great grandson of a famous British explorer, Sir Samuel Baker, retraces the footsteps of his courageous ancestor who discovered Lake Albert in northwestern Uganda.

This was David's First visit to Uganda to see the famous geographical features that his great-great grandfather named 150 years ago. He visited Uganda as part of the Great African Expedition organized by Explorer Mr. Julian Monroe Fisher. The aim of the expedition is to retrace and document the African explorations of Sir Samuel Baker, a very courageous 19th century adventurer.

Anthropologist and modern day African explorer Julian Monroe Fisher announces a five year - nine expeditions - Ethnographical research project deep in the heart of Africa. Entitled, 'The Great African Expedition', Fisher will conduct a 21st century Ethnographical documentation of specific regions of Africa related to the 19th century Victorian age of exploration. The project will follow the African expeditionary routes of the famed Victorian explorers to include Baker, Baumann, Speke, Grant, Burton, de Brazza, Wissman, Park, Cameron, Stanley and Livingstone. For the journeys Fisher will implore the use of dugout canoes, camels, donkeys, horses, feluccas, ferry boats and on foot.

The objective of 'The Great African Expedition' will be to compare the 19th century Ethnographical research documentation of the African tribal kingdoms along the rivers and lakes gathered during the expeditions of the Victorian age explorers with the realities of 21st century Africa. Phase one and two of the project will begin in March, 2012, with Fisher traveling alone on an overland journey up the Nile River from Cairo, Egypt to Khartoum, Sudan. He will then cross the world's newest nation of South Sudan to Lake Albert in Uganda.

Julian Monroe Fisher is a Fellow of The Royal Geographical Society in London and an International Fellow of The Explorers Club in New York City. Between 2007 and 2011 Fisher had the honour of carrying the Explorers Club Flag on five consecutive research expeditions to the African continent. In 2008 he and his team were accredited by The Ugandan Wildlife Authority for establishing a new route in the Rwenzori Mountains. In 2011 the explorer walked large portions of the African continent between the Indian Ocean

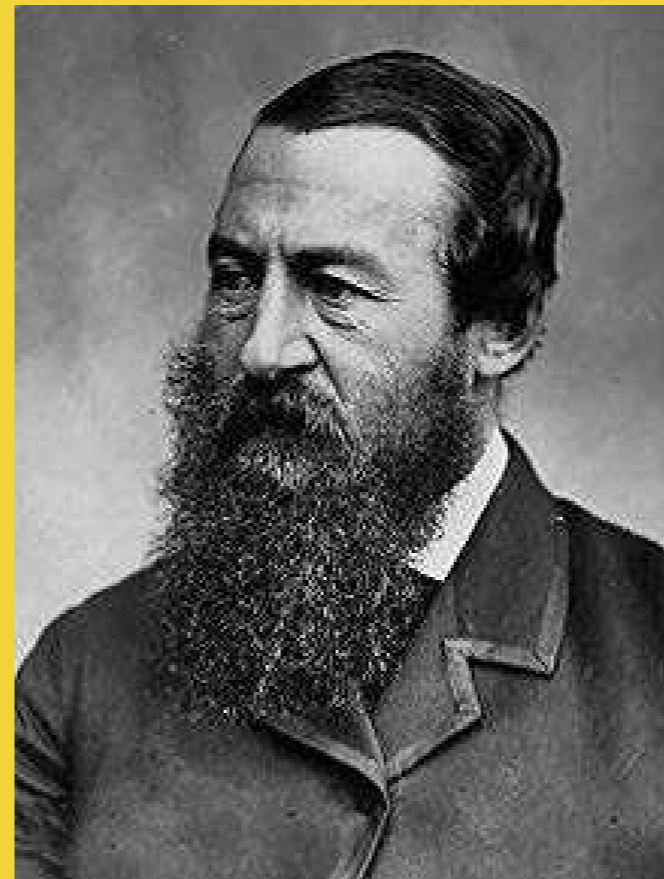
coast of Mozambique and the Atlantic Coast of Angola. Those that studied Social Studies (SST) under the Uganda primary school education curriculum will remember that Sir Samuel Baker was always mentioned as having been pivotal in putting Uganda on the world map through his geographical discoveries as well as his keenness to name them after Prominent British figures at the time. Sir Samuel Baker first sighted Lake Albert on the 14th of March 1864 and then sought to establish the fact that the lake poured significant volumes of water into the famous River Nile. He identified the place where the White Nile enters the lake, and then christened the lake "Albert," after England's late Prince Regent. Upstream he discovered the mighty Murchison Falls, where the Nile flows through a 23-inch-wide cleft in the rocks to plunge 148 feet below, forming a spectacular rainbow. Baker named the Fall's in honor of the then president of the Royal Geographical Society, Sir Roderick Murchison.

As a result of his exploits, he received many medals in Europe and he published two books about his adventures in Uganda and other African countries. Sir Samuel Baker's adventures are further enhanced by the romantic story of how he met his second wife, Florence Baker, a Hungarian beauty whom he rescued from a slave market in Bucharest, Bulgaria minutes before she was to be sold into a Turkish harem. She became his wife and accompanied him on all his wild travels in various African countries including Uganda.

The great-great grandson of Sir Baker now retraced his ancestor's footsteps in an expedition that took him through much of northern Uganda. No known member of the Baker family has ever undertaken this activity, which makes this quite remarkable as a 21st Century adventure. Nearly 149 years after the first Baker-visit, Uganda played host to his descendants.

The expedition was organized in partnership with UWA and Marasa Africa group that hosted the expedition team at their lodges in the national park.

Those enchanted by the romance and derring-do of Africa's great explorers can follow in the footsteps of Samuel and Florence, who became notorious in Victorian England because they traveled as an unwed couple. After their incredible adventures, notoriety turned into fame: he for his discoveries, she for her resourcefulness (among other gifts, she was an expert seamstress, who made all their clothes) and together for their unconventional romance (they later married).



Premier Safaris has put together a great once in a lifetime adventure that will follow the same route as David Bakers recent visit. www.premiersafaris.com or send your email tooperations@premiersafaris.com Also look out for the documentary that is being compiled about the trip.

Information on the filmmaker and photographer. Jonathan Maguire is from Lichfield, UK, and is a graduate from the University of the Arts, London, with a degree in Fine Art Photography. For the last eighteen months he has worked with the British Exploring Society as a filmmaker and photographer. During his tenure he filmed a documentary of a BES expedition in Norway and Sweden in 2011 with a group of disadvantaged young people which concluded with a crossing of the North Sea on a tall ship back to London. In April 2012, in affiliation with Agapao International, Media Trust UK and Brownhills School in Rochdale, UK, he wrote and directed a documentary film based in Uganda. In July 2012 he filmed a documentary following an expedition with the British Exploring Society as they crossed the Sinai Peninsula. The Sinai expedition was the largest British group expedition, and the only multi-team crossing, of the Sinai Desert in recorded history. Jon was recently appointed as Discovery Channels first ever 'Chief Adventure Officer'. Follow the updates on this trip on Premier Safari FB page: <https://www.facebook.com/#!/pages/Premier-Safaris/230111593704515>

Credit - Julian Monroe Fisher, Jonathan Maguire and The RailRiders 2012-16 Great African Expedition www.julianmonroefisher.com/greatafrica



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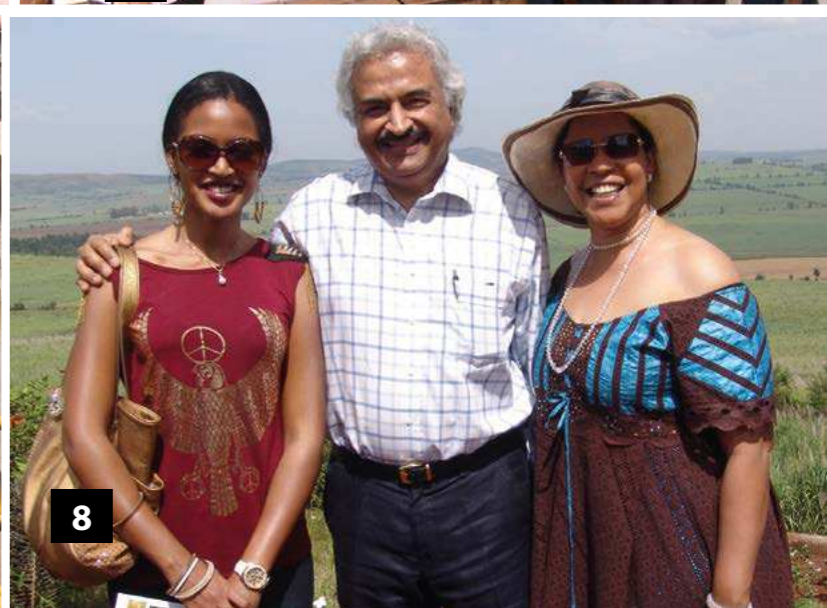
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1. Muljibhai Madhvani Alumni Association (MMASS) committee members visited Makerere University. They formed the Makerere University Muljibhai Madhvani Students' Club. The meeting was attended by 62 students from the university currently under the Muljibhai Madhvani Foundation Scholarship.

2. Mr Mayur Madhvani explains the sugar making process to visiting Rwanda Minister of Trade and Industry, Hon Francois Kanimba.

3. Kakira's Mr Kamlesh Madhvani, Robert Omoding, Kenneth Barungi, Christian Vincke, Dr Reddy and BSGA's David Ojwang welcome Hon Amelia Kyambadde, Minister of Trade and Co-operatives.

4. Mr Kamlesh Madhvani hands over a million shillings cheque and other items to the Mayor of Jinja town, Mr Kezaala Baswaale at Kakira.

5. Mr Mayur Madhvani explains the way around the Kakira factory to Hon Maria Mutagamba, Minister of Tourism, Wildlife and Heritage during her visit to Kakira. Looking on are KSL's Mr Wilfred Pacoto and Mr Christian Vincke.

6. Mr Mayur Madhvani congratulates Kakira estate schools' best performing pupils. Overall, all Kakira estate schools were ranked among 15 per cent of the best schools nationally and 10 per cent of the best schools in Jinja.

7&8. Mr Mayur Madhvani takes Tooro Queen Mother, Best Kemigisa and Tooro Princess Ruth Komuntale around the factory.

9. Mr Kamlesh Madhvani together with Madhvani Group management staff (Mr Jim Kabeho, Mr Christian Vincke, Mr Satish Kumar, Mr Kenneth Barungi, Mr Farhan Nakhoods, Mr Chris Strathern and Mr Modi) hosted Mr Chinedu Ikwuinma (MD Citi Bank Uganda) and Mr Naveed Riaz (Citi Bank Africa) and a team from Citi Bank.

10. Iganga Woman MP Hon Olivia Kabaale at the official opening of Bulamagi Maternity Ward in Bulamagi Sub County. The maternity Ward was constructed by KORD at Shs80M.

11. Tharun Patnaik attended the Trane Annual Distribution Meet this year in Montecarlo-France and was part of the strategy team for the East African market.

12. Marasa Africa-Kenya joined the tourism body in Kenya in February this year in a Peace Walk ahead of the elections. The event's aim was to raise a voice of peace to the government, the general public and other industry partners. From left to right: Charles (Reservations Manager), Rose (Reservations agent), Leonard (Credit Controller) and Kandarp Amin (Head of Marketing and Sales).

13. Mr and Mrs Sumner, winners of Millfield Olympian Dinner (London), sponsored by Mr Mayur Madhvani plant a tree at Mweya Safari Lodge. Looking on is Mweya Safari Lodge GM, Mr Fred Makumbi.

14. KN Nair, Executive Director of Madhvani Group with Julius K. Kipng'etich, Director Kenya Wildlife service when they signed a new lease for The Ark Lodge for 33 years starting 2013. The earlier 20-year lease signed with previous owners of The Ark Ltd expired in December 2012.



Premier Safaris provides an adventure of a lifetime

Premier Safaris is an East African Safari company based in Uganda. The company specialises in safaris throughout the entire region though with tailor-made safaris ranging from three days to three weeks.

The company boasts of providing personalised services to its customers with a wide range of itineraries to choose from with an emphasis on quality service and flexibility. In addition, specially designed four wheel drive vehicles customised for wildlife viewing and safaris are at the clients' beck and call to ensure maximum comfort.

Premier Safaris has many years of experience under its belt in the East African market with its tour guides having a proficiency of local knowledge of the areas that are visited that would ensure an adventure of a life time for its visitors.

With its array of itineraries for each country, Premier Safaris ensures that its clients are taken to some of the best and least known safari destinations with breath-taking lodges or permanent tented camps in remote areas.

With the ability to manage ones entire safari under one roof from transportation, meals to accommodation bookings, the company can confidently stand behind its recommendations an achievement not many can stand up to. This is achieved through constant interactions with managers, travellers and tour guides whilst continuously touring various camps.

To ensure that clients have a lasting impression of their safaris, Premier Safaris partnered with Air Serv Ltd to provide scheduled flights to all the National Parks in Uganda. The flights take off from Entebbe International Airport and not only boast of top notch pilots and Engineers with FAA licenses but are also a cost effective, reliable and comfortable way to travel. On board, in-flight catering and souvenirs for the guests are also provided.

Some of the itineraries the company offers include the Nile Spectacle, a six day jaw-dropping adventure safari that sets off from the source of the River Nile in Jinja with a stopover at the lush green Mabira natural Forest. After spending a night at the Wild Waters Lodge with a view of the roaring rapids of the White Nile, guests have an opportunity to view

some Rhinos (an endangered species) at the Ziwa Rhino sanctuary. From there, it's off to Murchison Falls National park for game viewing and nights in the luxurious Chobe Safari Lodge.

Other activities include beautiful birding for the bird enthusiasts and gorilla tracking in Bwindi Forest.

However, programmes can be made to suit group or individual needs.

To book an adventure of a life time, Premier Safaris can be reached through email at reservations@premiersafaris.com or visit www.premiersafaris.com or by calling their Head Office on +256 (0)312260260,+256(0)772657767.



Hanging with the "Hairy People"

By Corne Schalkwyk

In a small country about the size of one of South Africa's smaller provinces, you will find it all: from forests and fertile soils, animal life and a wide diversity of tribes, rivers and lakes to lush vegetation thick with chirping birds, and savannahs where wild beasts prowl. This is Uganda, where you will feel welcomed by the warm climate and the bright smiles. You would be forgiven for asking what to tackle first. My first mission in Uganda was to track down the "hairy people" that inhabit the forests of Bwindi Impenetrable National Park.

Meeting the "hairy people" of Uganda for the first time is an exciting and truly memorable experience. Nothing prepares you for the emotions you experience when you first see a Silverback gorilla in its natural surroundings. Although there are different subspecies of gorilla, these mountain gorillas cannot be found in zoos, as they don't survive in captivity.

Bwindi Impenetrable National Park is located in the south-western part of Uganda on the rim of the Rift Valley. The mist covered hillsides are sheltered within one of the oldest and most biologically varied rainforests in the world. It dates back more than 25,000 years and is home to approximately 400 different plant species. This "impenetrable" forest also protects a population of about 400 mountain gorillas – approximately half of the total remaining mountain gorilla population in the world.

Premier Safaris arranged for me to visit the area in an attempt to track the historical Mubare gorilla family, one of the first families that were habituated in Bwindi. After the tragic death of their leader, the group dwindled in numbers to only five gorillas.

We took the winding – and sometimes terrifying road up the mountain through breath-taking misty scenery to reach our base camp, aptly named Silverback Lodge. It was pouring with rain when we arrived and my guide, Erick, explained that this is normal for the area, as it rains almost daily on the mountain.

At the lodge, the general manager pointed out the last location of the group that I was about to track. The next morning we had an early start from the bottom of the mountain as we retraced the gorillas' path from their previous evening's nests. Erick explained that they make a new nest every evening at about 19h00. Trackers then use these nests as a starting point from which to track the group.



The steep incline of the mountain with its slippery red clay is not for the unprepared, and I was very grateful that my guide provided me with a walking stick, even after I had initially indicated that I didn't think I would need it. The scenery and incredible diversity of plants and birds en route, however, more than made up for the long, arduous climb.

We finally reached the group a couple of hours and two mountains later and slowly approached them while being careful to stay out of sight. My first glimpse was of a Black back gorilla of about eight years old that suddenly came bursting into view, dragging a female along behind him.

Apparently this is how they steal females from other groups to add to their own. This must be how the new Silverback – the son of the previous leader – has managed to grow the Mubare family from its original five to its current eight members.

With great excitement we observed the family, sometimes a little closer than was planned, as individual members would suddenly make their way towards us, observing us with as much curiosity as we did them. They displayed uncanny human-like characteristics, such as the young member who threw a tantrum because he had to wait while the Silverback had his fill of a plant that resembled a water fuchsia.

When it was time to leave the "hairy people" and make our way down the mountain, I felt a distinct sadness as I glanced over my shoulder to get the last glimpses of the Silverback as he disciplined a member in the group.

It is a sight that I will cherish until I can return once again to this small piece of the "Pearl of Africa".

For more information on primate safaris or national parks in Uganda visit www.premiersafaris.com or email: reservations@premiersafaris.com.

A new year's weekend at Silverback and Mweya Safari Lodges



At the beginning of 2013, Marasa Africa took tour operators on a familiarisation trip to Silverback and Mweya Safari Lodges. Doreen Kafureka of Great Lakes Safaris recounts their experience.

Time check is 7am and we can't wait for a spectacular breathtaking familiarisation trip organised by Marasa. If what we have been told is anything to go by, we are in for a treat. It takes an eventful journey and at around 6pm we behold the stunning beauty that surrounds the Silverback Lodge in Bwindi, our refuge for the night.

At the lodge, we are welcomed by some of the warmest staff this side of Africa. The glass of juice that is provided on arrival goes down well after such a long journey and the warm hand towels delivered make us feel right at home. Mr Osano Mudhkayo, the General Manager and his staff can best be described as efficient. It is evident from their swift movements and broad smiles as they ensure all guests are comfortable.

With the chefs just as hasty, it doesn't take long before meals are served at the dining area that sits a maximum of 25 and has a breathtaking view of the leafy green Bwindi forest. With birds chirping and soft music in the background one can't help but ask for another serving of the chef's great tasting meals. At SilverBack Lodge the meals are a la carte and buffet affairs with the option of having them outdoors provided the weather is obliging. After dinner guests have the option of winding down the day by a warm camp fire or relaxing at the tranquil bar area.

Twelve in total, the rooms are spacious, clean and stocked with all the necessary amenities like tissue, towels and soaps. The comfortable beds with crisp white sheets just beckon one to dive right in. After a long day hiking to experience life with the Batwa (Uganda's forgotten little people) or visiting the falls and enjoying the beautiful scenery sleep does come easily. In the morning, hot water is available and all rooms are self-contained with a view of the gorgeous Bwindi Forest scenery.

Come January 2 and we are off to the much talked Mweya Safari Lodge in the heart of Queen Elizabeth National park. Checking in at noon, the staff just like at SilverBack are quite the hosts. The rooms at Mweya are lavish, self-contained with a satisfactory view of the Nile. The food, bar, shop and pool area live up to the publicity. Served either in the expansive indoor dining area or outside with a pronounced view of the lake, the food at Mweya is mouth-watering. The chefs are helpful enough to explain one's choice of food so the exotic sounding names do not pose a problem. While the meals are served a la carte, breakfast is buffet with ceaseless options to choose from.



After meals, guests can stroll off to the craft shop to buy beautiful souvenirs or catch up on documentaries, movies or soccer matches in the private TV room that is a reserve for residents only. Internet services are also available for those who may want to send mail or even boast about the trip to friends on Facebook. The pool area next to the restaurant is highly recommended even for those with children since it is dived into sections.

With an array of adventures to choose from, ranging from game drives to boat trips that give guests an abundant view of a number of bird species and other flora and fauna, it was no surprise that we were worn out by the end of the day.

After an exciting and wonderful trip at both lodges, saying our goodbyes can't be postponed any longer. We depart for Kampala with packed lunch and bottled water courtesy of Mweya Safari lodge.

On Safari at Mweya Safari Lodge



Mweya Safari Lodge is located on a peninsula within the heart of the Queen Elizabeth National Park and surrounded by the magical Rwenzori Mountains - the 'Mountains of the Moon' offers visitors a spectacular experience of luxury in the wilderness.

Game drives are available both in the morning and evening using Premier Safaris and knowledgeable drivers.

Wildlife on the North Kazinga plains closest to the Lodge includes elephant, buffalo, lion, leopard, waterbuck, bushbuck and warthog. Another common-but unexpected-sighting in this area is the Giant Forest Hog, Africa's largest pig, which is usually associated with dense forests rather than semi-open thickets.

The Kasenyi sector on the east side of the Kasese road is best known for the lions which prey on large population of Uganda Kob that live in this area. Varied habitats in Queen Elizabeth National Park - lakeshore, swamp, grassland and forest - support a remarkable 612 species of birds - over 60% of the 1,008 species of indigenous and migratory birds recorded in Uganda.

Highlights include the Martial Eagle, the African Fish Eagle, Shoebill, Papyrus Gonolek, Lesser and Greater Flamingo, White-tailed Lark and Verraux's Eagle Owl. Forest species including some less common species from the Congo basin can be located in Maramagambo Forest.

The Lodge offers a range of activities and attractions: take a game drive and discover a vast array of wild game, experience a launch trip on the Kazinga Channel using one of the luxury boats, or watch some of the 619 different species of birds available to be seen.



One visit to Paraa Safari Lodge was not enough!

By Sneha Shibu



Dusk painted the western sky into a beautiful pink and grey as we munched the crispy fish fingers and downed our drinks. The calm river below and the vermillion sky above were too stupendous for words. Night brought with it its own sounds after the flurry of birds roosting. The occasional motor-like grunt of the hippos punctuated the awe-filled silence of the twilight. As the veil of darkness got punctuated by judiciously placed lights, we went to the lounge upstairs where a television delivered the day's news.

A sumptuous buffet with an extensive menu was served to us at dinner time. After dinner, we walked back to our room, delightfully tired and satisfied. The small curio shop displayed Ugandan arts and crafts. Baby bats flitted around in darkness as the sausage trees stood like sentries on guard. Once inside the room we found that the mosquito proofing was drawn around the beds in a very practical and thought-out way. Tired as we were, we got under the comforters and soon waded off to sleep.

Food at Paraa Safari Lodge is always a lavish affair – be it breakfast, lunch and dinner, so we learnt the next day.

Since we just wanted to relax, we did not go for any game drives. All we wanted was to soothe the nerves and rediscover ourselves and what better spot than in the lap of nature! However, on the earlier visit, we saw giraffes, hartebeests, lions, impalas, warthogs, bucks, hippos, crocs and some birds.

The view from the dining area was indeed soothing to the eye. Boats plied up and down with visitors for a good view of hippos and crocs and also of the magnificent Murchison Falls of the Nile. The calming green and the sweet chirps of the birds would turn one into a poet. Warthogs, a small gazelle, a buck and a hippo were seen in the premises of the lodge. We spent one more night at the lodge enjoying the hospitality and good service. As we checked out, we could feel a reserve of energy and peace that was to be with us for a long time to come. If at Murchison Falls one witnesses the handiwork of God, one cannot but marvel at the serene thatched roofed handiwork of man, nestled on the banks of the Albert Nile where one falls in love with a piece of heaven – Paraa!

Sneha Shibu was a guest at Paraa Safari Lodge.

A brief halt at Masindi for lunch, a long drive through the verdant forest and a short ride on a ferry – and we were at Paraa Safari Lodge for a second time in four years. Tucked away the Murchison Falls National Park, Paraa Safari Lodge blends with its environs. A perfect hideaway from the din and bustle of cityscapes, it is blessed with a rustic charm, complete with the chirps and squawks of the birds keeping the place throbbing with life all through the day.

We were welcomed with a smile at the reception, and as we waited for the check in procedures to go through, moist towels and a refreshing glass of passion fruit juice were offered. Nothing could have been better after a long journey. The staff were very friendly, helpful, easy to be with and with a good sense of humour.

The room allotted to us had spacious single beds (which housekeeping staff put together for us). Complementary bottles of mineral water and laundry bags were provided. There was ample storage for the luggage and the white bath towels were spotlessly clean. A couple of canvas chairs and a table were on the small veranda outside the glass door that opened into a well-manicured green lawn. One of the Paraa staff told us that tea/coffee and a 'bite' would be available. We went for our tea and the promised 'bite' near the amoeba pool where children frolicked, filling the air with their squeals and laughter. People relaxed on the poolside chairs. It is a wonder and a luxury to have electricity and hot water in the middle of what seems to a jungle, thanks to solar power. After a warm shower in the tastefully utilised minimum space, we went back to the deck near the poolside sunken bar.

Why not vacation at Chobe Safari Lodge?

By Peter Kahindi



On the weekend commencing March 22nd 2013, 16 of my colleagues and I set off from Kampala headed for Murchison Park Game Reserve. In particular, we were going to spend a weekend at Chobe Safari Lodge. Only two out of the 17 had been there before so most of us were only looking forward. As I boarded the car, my boss mentioned that he was particularly excited about Chobe because it is very highly rated as a tourist resort. Given my sceptical nature, I refused to raise my expectations.

We set off from Kampala at around midday and arrived at Karuma falls at around 4.30pm. At the falls, I started experiencing a part of the wilderness. I saw a couple of baboons (or I believe they were) lying around on the road side. They seemed unbothered; clearly they are used to the traffic. Once we took the turn, I managed to see what I think were a few kobs on the way. I also saw a few families of warthogs. A few minutes later, we arrived at Chobe Safari Lodge.

Once all of us were converged at the reception, a lady came by with glasses of passion fruit juice and served us. I won't lie; I extremely thirsty so I was the first person to partake of the juice. In the meantime my colleagues were requested to check in and we were afterwards led to our rooms. My first impression was that the room was spacious. Actually too spacious for I was alone. The balconies have a set of chairs and a table, complete with an ashtray. I was, in the words of a typical Kampalan, sorted.

When I looked out towards the river and the setting sun, I felt like Chobe was the kind of place I was supposed to live for the rest of my life. It was quiet and serene. The only noise was that coming from the showers of the river, which I was later made to understand were hippos and a variety of bird songs. I had never been so relaxed and happy. Next was the dining area where we all gathered for tea – or a beer for the likes of me – and then afterwards dinner. I was dreading "exotic" food for dinner given such an "expensive-looking" place. To

my surprise, there were all sorts of local dishes, including matooke.

After dinner, together with four other colleagues, we proceeded to the bar area to have some drinks. Given that we are used to the noisy bars in Kampala, I requested the bar man for some music. He connected the system and we were able to listen to some ballads that reminded me so much about my childhood especially one of my favourite childhood movies, *The Gods Must Be Crazy*. When we got a bit tipsy and demanded for more entertainment we were advised that there was a TV room and the complaint was quickly forgotten.

The next morning we were in the restaurant again and variety at breakfast was sufficient. I had passion fruit juice, tea, French toast with a pair of sausages and baked beans.

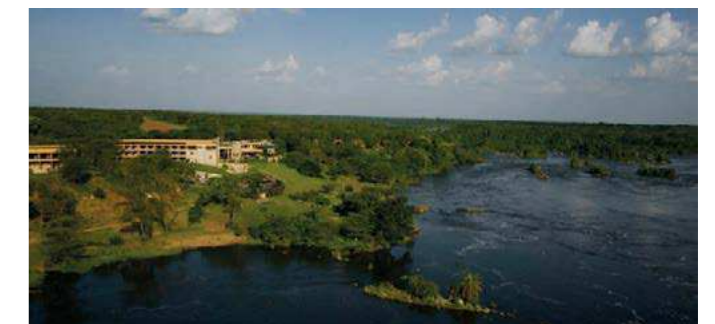
We then set off for Paraa Safari Lodge for lunch. We were informed by the UWA guard whom we travelled with that given that one of our cars had a low suspension, we had to go through Arua Road which was longer, but it would confer upon us the advantage of spending more time on the game drive.

Given that we arrived towards lunch time, we were requested to go to the dining area first. Like the Chobe arrangement, we were served a three-course meal and a soft drink. Immediately after lunch we proceeded with the game drive and for the first time, we were able to see a family of elephants. We then sojourned to Murchison Falls to have an experience of the falls from close range. On the way, we saw more giraffes, buffaloes, warthogs and deers but most importantly, we saw a leopard cooling down in of the trees. It was pointed out by our tour guide. At Murchison Falls, I was particularly intrigued by the sheer force of the water.

Back at Chobe, I had another hot shower and headed for our dinner, which we used as an opportunity to bid farewell to a long-servicing colleague. The next day, most of my colleagues proceeded for what was referred to as a "game walk" but I preferred the comfort of my small bed. I also ordered for room service to compliment my lazy Sunday morning. After breakfast I relaxed for another hour or so and then headed out with my luggage.

My time at Chobe Safari Lodge was great! I promised myself that I would save up and go back. I also wondered why people fly out of this country for honey moon!

Peter Kahindi was a guest at Chobe Safari Lodge.



Marasa Africa: new and re-assigned faces



MARASA Africa
Marasa Africa, where the unforgettable happens

Ms Kim Allen, the new Chobe Safari Lodge General Manager, has been in the hospitality industry for 28 years.

She did her in-house training with Protea Hotels and was a General Manager at the age of 25.

Ms Allen did her Post Graduate Studies at Cornell Hotel School (Cornell University), Ithaca, NY States and proceeded to work in very remote areas in Africa, specialising in turning hotels or resorts from non-profit situations into profit generating situations. She has extensive experience in refurbishing and building hotels and consulted in various countries in Africa.

Chobe Safari Lodge, it is her first time in Game Lodge environment as she usually manages coastal or island resorts where she has won several awards for marketing, profits, resort manager of the year among others.

Ms Allen has two sons Zane (27) and Nicky (25) who live in South Africa.

In related news, Marasa Africa Kenya is delighted to announce the redeployment of Mr Richard Hodgson as the new General Manager of the Aberdare Country Club. After working in the Casino industry in the UK and later in Africa, Richard returned to the UK to be trained in the hotel industry. He returned to Africa with his new found skills and started working for Southern Sun and moved between South Africa, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Mozambique and Tanzania before he started at Marasa Africa in Uganda in 1999 when they opened Mweya Safari Lodge in Queen Elizabeth National Park.

Mr Hodgson moved to different properties of the Marasa Africa Group in Uganda his last appointment in Uganda being Chobe Safari Lodge and will now be applying his considerable knowledge of the industry and the Group's workings in Kenya.

Welcome to Marasa Africa Ms Kim Allen and all the best to Richard Hodgson at Aberdare Country Club.



Marasa Africa lodges earn 2013 TripAdvisor awards



TripAdvisor, the world's largest travel site recognised Chobe Safari Lodge and Paraa Safari Lodge with 2013 Certificates of Excellence. The prestigious award places the lodges in the top-performing 10 per cent of all businesses worldwide on TripAdvisor and is given to businesses that consistently earn high ratings from TripAdvisor travellers.

Earlier this year, TripAdvisor also announced the winners of its 2013 Travellers' Choice awards for hotel in which The Ark, a Marasa Africa property, was among those named in the top 20 Luxury Hotels in Kenya.

In its 11th year, the awards have identified the most outstanding properties worldwide, in the categories of Top Hotels, Luxury, Bargain, Service, Small Hotels, and B&Bs and Inns. Representing its biggest-ever Travellers' Choice campaign, TripAdvisor named more than 6,000 award-winning properties around the world this year, with dedicated lists now covering 82 countries and nine regions worldwide. Unlike any other hotel honours, TripAdvisor Travellers' Choice winners are based on millions of valuable reviews and opinions covering more than 650,000 hotels and collected in a single year from travellers around the world.

Chobe Safari Lodge: Located in the Murchison Falls National Park, this Five Star lodge is undoubtedly the gem in Uganda's

crown of tourism destinations. The breathtaking panoramic views, coupled with the sounds of the River Nile's magnificent rapids, sets the scene for an adventure that will impress even the most discerning of visitors. Chobe Safari Lodge offers a unique opportunity to sample the wildlife, birds, flora and fauna; all in an area of the park that has yet to be discovered. This area of Murchison Falls National Park is ideal for fishing, and will revive this newly refurbished lodge to become one of the best fishing destinations in Africa.

Paraa Safari Lodge: Located in the north west of Uganda overlooking one of nature's best kept secrets, the River Nile, on its journey from its source at Lake Victoria to join Lake Albert. Paraa Safari Lodge offers a unique blend of comfort, relaxation and adventure. Each of the rooms is a haven of style and serenity, complete with balcony and private bathroom. The luxurious pool overlooks the winding River Nile below, which was the setting for the classic Hollywood movie "The African Queen" (starring Katharine Hepburn and Humphrey Bogart).

The Ark: Set in the heart of the Aberdare National Park, iconic and yes, quirky, The Ark overlooks a floodlit waterhole and salt lick, which attracts a host of awesome wildlife. Modelled after Noah's Ark, it has four viewing decks with balconies and lounges to provide superb game viewing from the comfort of the lodge. The animals come to you!

The Ark has four viewing areas from which to observe the ever-present animal activity at the waterhole and saltlick. There is also a ground level hide - the perfect spot for the discerning photographer. From this vantage point, photos of animals can be taken at eye-level.

So as not to miss any animal sightings, the resident guide buzzes guests' rooms when special animals come to the waterhole; one buzz for elephant, two for rhino, three for leopard, and four for something even more dramatic. At the beginning of this year, the lodge launched a webcam that streams live video 24/7 of wild animals coming to its floodlit watering hole and salt lick. Guest wannabes, Ark-o-philes or the just plain curious can virtually observe elephants, buffalo, impala and other game quench their thirsts, soak up nutrients, vie for position or try to get their "teen-agers" to obey. Visitors have the advantage of not only watching the phenomenon first-hand from one of the boat-shaped lodge's four decks, they can take photographs and videos.





Aberdare Country Club Saddles Up

Historic Aberdare Country Club (ACC), a lodge and chalets set in a 1300-acre wildlife sanctuary has added horseback riding to its abundant range of activities that comprise day and night game drives, nature walks, gym exercise, swimming, golfing, tennis, yoga and rhino trekking.

Guests can ride on the forested slopes and moors mingling with a dazzle of zebras, a herd of impalas, a sounder of warthogs, and a tower of Rothschild giraffes, the tallest creature on earth. The Rothschild giraffe identified by its light colouring and white knee socks (no patterning below the knee) is a rare and highly endangered species and ACC is one of the few places in the world to see them in the wild.

"Five horses are available and guests can ride solo or be accompanied by a syce. There are no predatory animals

in this wildlife-teeming sanctuary," says Richard Hodgson, General Manager. What a perfect adventure for romantics, nature lovers or those who want to channel colonial Kenya of the '20's and '30's! All levels of riders are welcome.

The Aberdare Country Club is located in the Aberdare Highlands, part of the Great Rift Valley. It has retained the charm of a private home with the simple comforts of a country inn as highlighted in Monty Brown's book, Haven Under the Hill: "Today, despite the fast-changing tempo of the outside world, the old home still retains that comfortable, solid feeling based on traditions from a time when life proceeded at a far more leisurely and gentle pace."

Visit: www.aberdarecountryclub.com



Excel Construction's Nile Breweries Mbarara project nears completion

As Excel Construction nears completion of the new brewery project for Nile Breweries in Mbarara in record time, production of beer at the site has already started.

Commenting on the project Malkit Singh, the Managing Director of Excel says, "We are extremely proud to have been associated with this landmark project and it is a significant milestone for the Company. I would like to thank Nile Breweries for the opportunity as well as all our other stakeholders and the entire team at Excel Construction."



My Marasa Rewards for Guiding



It is now one year since Marasa Africa and USAGA (Uganda Safari Guides Association) started a win-win scheme by engaging our very important stakeholders, the driver guides, in a long-term relationship. The scheme which we named "My Marasa Rewards for Guiding" aims at recognizing the guides who are a key component in making the overall guests experience a positive one.

The scheme involves recognizing and rewarding those guides that bring the most visitors to our properties and also engaging the association in other matters of concern.

The scheme also allows the guides to receive free accommodation for one night validated by every 10th visit to any of Marasa Africa lodges. On Saturday 25th May 2013, prizes were awarded to the best 16 guides who brought the most bed nights, however every member received a little token.

The prizes were of high-perceived value and are ideal tools to aid the guides during the course of their work and these included I-Pads, binoculars, guidebooks, Marasa branded umbrellas among others.

Representing Marasa Africa at the function were Anil Ghei (Director of Operations), Corne Schalkwyk (Head of Marketing), Jennifer Makanga (Front office Manager Chobe Safari Lodge, and Rukia Mwai (Marketing Manager).

USAGA greatly appreciated the incentive scheme and overall initiatives Marasa Africa brings to the tourism industry.

"I am writing to express our sincere thanks for the great support you have rendered to our members. The items that were given to our members have become an important topic in the daily discussions. The monetary support of Shs1 million

you extended to us enabled us to bring our guides together and entertain them as they celebrated the prizes they won.

This was indeed a very good project and a number of guides signed up for the new passports on that very day.

We shall continue working together in the promotion of tourist services in this county and at your facilities."

Herbert Byaruhanga
Chairman USAGA

A certificate of appreciation was awarded to Marasa Africa.



Why you should build with EADL



Building is very hard work whether you are putting up a commercial structure or your dream home. First it is the basics: bricks, cement and sand, the easy part numerous people say. Then comes what many of us refer to as the finishing. Now that's the part to reckon with. If one is not buying fake locks that have flooded the Ugandan market from China, then it will be tiles that will fade within six months or sanitary ware that gets stained within a few days of being used. To make matters worse these products are scattered amongst several hardware shops and will usually cost an arm and a leg. With no clear solution at hand, many make do with what is available on the market and brace themselves for several costly repairs and replacements in the nearby future.

But it doesn't have to be that way. Not with East African Distributors Ltd (EADL) in the market anyway. The company not only supplies several of your building requirements like composite pipes and construction machinery but also offers guarantees on their products through their sister company East African Building Solutions Ltd.

Representing some of the most durable and trusted brand names world over, EADL offers retail and project supplies, consultation, distribution and after sales services and deals in a wide range of products. Safes, access controls, fire extinguishers, fire doors and security doors are some of the items in the new product line on offer.

Being the sole representatives of some of the most trusted and robust lock brands, their showroom serves as a one-stop centre for building solutions with brands like Yale, Union, Bessam, and Tesa Inhova. Also on offer are air-conditioning solutions for offices, malls, retail spaces or even residential premises. Infact, EADL is the only authorised distributor of the leading air conditioning brand name Trane in Uganda with a team of specialised technicians ready to handle any servicing needs.

One need not look any farther for sanitary ware or lighting solutions either. Available at EADL in large quantities is top-notch sanitary ware from Kohler, leading manufacturers and sanitary fitting suppliers in Germany while LEDS-C4 lighting and lighting systems of Spain that specialises in modern and state-of-the-art lighting appointed EADL as its distributor in the region.

When it comes to elevators, EADL has cut a niche in the market as sellers and installers of the products by partnering with Omega Elevators of India, a company with a presence in over 20 countries in the world, manufacturing over 1,500

lifts every year. Through their joint venture Omega Elevators Uganda, servicing of escalators and elevators is also done by a specialised team of engineers on ground.

With a strong presence in the East African region through a network of distributors from Rwanda to Southern Sudan, world class original products and a dedicated professional after sales team, EADL is highly recommended for your building solutions, repairs and maintenance.



Experience our newly refurbished rooms at Mweya Safari Lodge at very special rates



Marasa Africa.

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