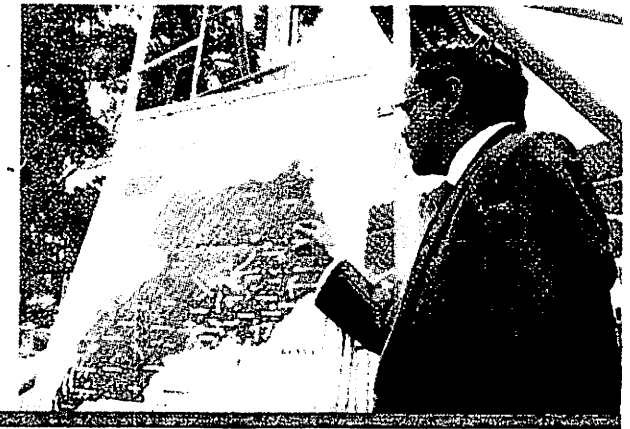


Daily Monitor

THURSDAY,
NOVEMBER 10, 2011
www.monitor.co.ug

business

Airtel in bid to boost its network. The state minister for ICT, Mr Nyombi Thembo, has said the improvement in technology will help Uganda achieve some of its MDGs through enhanced opportunities that will combat poverty, hunger, ill health and illiteracy. Mr Thembo was speaking in Kampala on Tuesday during the launch of Airtel's 300 network masts (sites) spread in various parts of Uganda. Mr V.G. Somasekhar, the telecom's managing director, said "Airtel's key strategy is to provide services to those who have historically been left out, as well as correcting challenges faced by the industry which include dropped calls and network failures among others. [Monitor Reporter]



Rice becomes Uganda's most popular food crop - govt

The introduction of the Nerica rice specie that is friendly to humid environments has led to the crop's popularity.

BY MARTIN SSEBUYIRA
mssebuyira@ug.nationmedia.com

KAMPALA. Rice has become Uganda's biggest income earner topping traditional food crops, according to a survey released by ministry of Agriculture.

The survey released on Tuesday indicated that the production of rice in Uganda

had increased by 23 per cent in 2010, compared to 9 per cent for bananas, 5 per cent for cassava and 4 per cent for beans.

Although the survey does not list percentage growth in cash crops, Mr Tress Buchanayandi, the minister of Agriculture, said during the Coalition for African Rice Development meeting in Kampala that rice had become the most popular staple food topping all traditional crops in Uganda.

He said: "Uganda has increased rice production from 120,000 metric tonnes in 2002 to 200,000 in 2010 saving the coun-

INSUFFICIENT FUNDS

Growth in consumption. Whereas there is growth in the consumption of rice, the current production has not been able to satisfy demand thus the need for the continued commodity exports.

Production deficit. Uganda produces about 200,000 metric tonnes annually, however, the domestic market needs about 206,000 metric tonnes, thus leading to leading to the importation of about 6,000 metric tonnes.

try about Shs120 billion (\$ 50 million) annually in rice imports."

According to data as the ministry of Agriculture, Uganda exports between 40,000 to 50,000 metric tonnes of rice to South Sudan, DR Congo, Kenya and some Asian countries.

Mr Buchanayandi, however, said the growing of rice had been hampered by ecological requirements but the introduction of the Nerica rice specie that grows even in humid environments had boosted the crops growth.

Africa's phone usage to hit one billion by 2016 - report

BY ISAACK KHISA
ikhisa@ke.nationmedia.com

NAIROBI. Africa might become the second largest mobile phone market by 2016 as the continent's user numbers continue to grow, according to Informa Telecoms, a research analyst agency.

The firm's research findings re-

Central bank issues Shs95b bond as shilling appreciates

Lifting the shilling. The move seeks to increase dollar inflows as the central bank struggles to protect the shilling against further depreciation. According to data the shilling had lost 25 per cent of its value in the past 12 months.

BY MARTIN LUTHER OKETCH *Monitor yesterday that the impact of the two-*