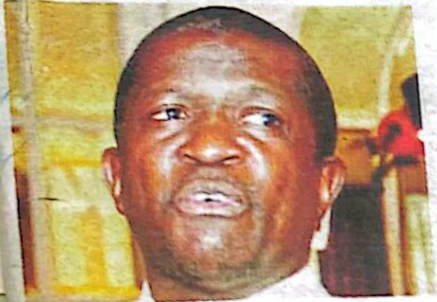


Tea prices at Mombasa auction remain flat after losing streak



EATTA managing director Edward Mudibo.
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KAMPALA. Tea prices at the Mombasa auction remained flat in this week's exercise following a losing streak in the last five sales.

On average, a kilogramme of made-tea fetched Ksh241 (Shs8,119), the same value it traded at in last week's auction. The quantity of the beverage offered for sale grew from 8 million kgs to 9 million.

"The week's average price remained constant at Ksh241 (Shs 8,119) when compared with last week's auction," said Edward Mudibo, the managing director of the East African Tea Traders Association (EATTA) in a statement Thursday.

Tea prices have been dipping since January with stakeholders attributing the decline to increased supply on the market. At the beginning of the year, a kilogramme of processed tea fetched Ksh275 (Shs 9,265). Kenya's

tea exports increased by 23 per cent last year helped by a strong dollar and good market price in the world market.

EATTA says earnings from the crop grew to Ksh125b (Shs4.2 trillion) last year up from Ksh101b (Shs3.4 trillion) that was recorded the previous year.

This year's earnings have been projected at between Ksh115b (Shs3.9 trillion) and Ksh120b (Shs4 trillion) depending on the the strength of the dollar, the volumes that will be pro-

duced globally and the global market price. The regulator says that production is likely to remain at the same level but that earnings could dip.

Meanwhile, EATTA is set to appoint an officer to lead in introducing an electronic trading platform for the weekly auction in Mombasa to increase transparency in dealings.

The auction in Mombasa handles tea from Uganda, Rwanda, Malawi and ~~technology~~ ^{technique}. Ethiopia is ~~also~~ ^{to} join in March.