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Diaspora ex-citizens for special Immigration status

By Guardian Reporter

THE government is in the final stages of drafting procedures to grant special status to the Diaspora where people of Tanzanian origin can benefit in efforts to stimulate participation of the non-citizens in the national development.

January Makamba, the Foreign Affairs and East African Cooperation minister, made this affirmation in the National Assembly in Dodoma city yesterday when tabling the budget estimates of 241.06bn/- for fiscal 2024/25, specifying that the legislature will be presented with such recommendations next month.

They seek to amend the Immigration Act, Cap. 54 and the Land Act, Cap 113, facilitating the granting of special status in the following months, he said, noting also that foreign policy blueprint of 2001 is being extensively reviewed. It is expected to be floated during the next financial year, incorporating the special status view of Tanzanian nationals now having another citizenship, so forming part of the Diaspora. The review is meant to strengthen economic diplomacy by marketing the country's investment opportunities plus utilizing opportunities overseas, he said.

Significantly, the policy review was finished last August and submitted to the cabinet office where the ministry was instructed to collect more views, he said, affirming that now everything is ready for the policy to be rolled out.

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Lands, Housing and Human Settlements Development minister Jerry Silaa addresses residents of Dodoma yesterday shortly after ordering the Lands Registry in the city closed and shifted to his office with immediate effect as part of a strategy to resolve challenges related to land ownership and use in the national capital. Photo: Correspondent Munir Shemweta

UK offers duty free access for Tanzania's horticultural export crops

By Guardian Correspondent, Arusha

THE UK has extended duty-free access to its market for Tanzania's horticultural industry produce.

Lord Wanley, the trade envoy at the UK Prime Minister's Office, said at a high-profile business to business event organised by the Tanzania Horticultural Association (TAHA) here yesterday, where 17 horticultural exporters attended the forum.

The offer is an aspect of the Britain's Developing Countries Trading Scheme (DCTS), described in an online entry as a simpler and more generous preferential trading scheme which has been designed to boost trade with developing countries in order to support their development. It benefits UK businesses and consumers by reducing the import cost of thousands of products from around the world, with the trade envoy emphasizing the UK's commitment to enhancing trade with Tanzania.

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PATENTS STUDENTS FLOAT:

'Roads built with paper, invisible weigh bridges, wireless electricity'

By Correspondent Marc Nkwame, Arusha

STUDENTS in a leading technical college here believe they have come up with scientific innovations that can totally transform Tanzania's construction industry, including building roads, highways and other transport infrastructure using waste paper.

This is the gist of experiences in the first Arusha Technical College (ATC) research, innovation and career guidance week, fea-

turing a presentation by Emma Marandu/She came up with the idea of "the suitability of penetration grade bitumen with kerosene and diesel to produce medium curing cutback bitumen."

Another student, Regina Mlay tabled an innovative recycling of plastic waste into sustainable and environment friendly building materials, officials said, citing four students, namely Ang'ombwise Chavala, Gilbert Mwakivike, Mohammed Juma Othman and Musa Mwasembo as having

designed a "concept and simulation of an automatic weighbridge system model for super highway roads in Tanzania."

Admirers said that while it seems that future roads in Tanzania will be made of paper and plastic materials, with invisible weighbridges, young scientist Philips Athanas "decided that electricity posts on the road sides won't be needed either."

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US, Tanzania hold dialogue as business volumes inch up

By Correspondent Joseph Mwendapole

TRADE volumes between the United States and Tanzania are still quite low, bringing up the need for enhanced dialogue to remove trade barriers between the two countries to boost

the volume of trade, US ambassador Michael Battle has declared.

He made the remarks at a US-Tanzania commercial dialogue session bringing together American and Tanzanian trade companies to discuss the digital economy, access to markets, improvements in regulations and the wider commercial environment.

The two sides also appealed for tours and trade exhibitions to elevate trade ties, an engagement proceeding from an October 19, 2023 memorandum of cooperation (MoC) between the two countries, outlining key areas of focus in envisaged cooperation.

These include the digital economy, market access, regulatory environment and the business climate, structural reforms, trade missions as well as trade fairs, he said, noting that at the meeting, local and visiting traders will map out proposals on how to remove trade

barriers.

Citing expected renewal of the Africa Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) he said it enables Tanzanian traders to sell products in the US market for another 16 years, promoting growth in business by opening the US market.

"Commercial dialogue is an appropriate way to promote American business to set foot, also developing Tanzanian businesses seeking to enter the US market," he said, underlining the need for regular discussions concerning existing trade barriers.

Noting that there is scope for much larger trade volumes, he pointed at AGOA as a major element in trade relationships.

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UK offers duty-free access for Tanzania's horticultural crops

FROM PAGE 1

Under DCTS, Britain has offered duty-free market access to exports from 65 countries, including Tanzania, while the coveted Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) has been signed with a few Eastern and Southern African (ESA) states, noted as Mauritius, Seychelles and Zimbabwe, with Madagascar and the Comoros having signed the agreement. They will be covered by EPA status when they bring it into effect, the entry affirmed, noting that Zambia will also be covered by the EPA if they sign it and bring it into effect.

The trade envoy said that the UK was abolishing tariffs on flowers from East African countries, with

Sabiha Ahmed, the policy advisor on trade for development, aired the view that DCTS is one of the world's most generous trade preferences.

It targets 3.3bn people and provides duty-free access for up to 99 percent of export products from eligible countries to the UK market, as the scheme supports an export value of approximately £23bn per annum from the participating countries, he explained.

David Concar, the UK High Commissioner, said at the event that the UK was forging closer ties with Tanzania, brightening the future of the local horticultural industry. Enhanced market access sets fertile ground for growth, paving the way for sustainable advancement in Tanzania's horticultural sub-sector, he stated.

He praised TAHA for its significant role in transforming the local horticultural industry, citing its tireless efforts, which have been

instrumental in shaping a promising future for the horticultural industry. This effort lays a strong foundation for its growth and development, positioning the industry for further success and sustainability, he stated.

Dr Jacqueline Mkindi, the TAHA CEO, praised Britain's longstanding support in uplifting the local horticulture industry, pointing at a trade facilitation agency known as BEST Dialogue. The facility ended its operations in June 2019 where for 15 years it was the source of grants and capacity development services for Tanzanian private sector membership organisations, an entry profiled.

The CEO said that the agency has been pivotal in empowering TAHA's advocacy efforts, enabling the organization to champion policies and practices that favour the horticultural sub-sector's growth.

"BEST Dialogue provided TAHA with the necessary tools and resources to influence policy changes enhancing the industry's future prospects, in a manner similar to TradeMark Africa, which was instrumental in aiding TAHA's efforts to improve market access abroad.

TAHA's chief development manager, Anthony Chamanga said that the value of Tanzania's horticultural exports had seen significant growth, reaching \$87million over the past five years.

"This growth is a testament to the effectiveness of TAHA's strategies and the comprehensive support from UK partners," he stated. This increase in export value not only reflects the rising quality and demand for Tanzanian horticultural products but also signals a robust future for the industry, he added.

US, Tanzania in dialogue, business volumes inch up

FROM PAGE 1

alongside links between the local US Chamber of Commerce and its counterpart chamber for Tanzanian traders in the US. "They will be working side by side to increase trade and investment between our countries," he stated.

Using digital technology will bring about new avenues as well as expanding the scope of links for the provision of government services for small and medium businesses, which all shows the vital importance of a digital infrastructure, he further noted.

Dr Hashil Abdallah, the Industry and Trade permanent secretary, said that trade statistics show rising trade volume with the US, from \$309m in 2016 to \$476.1m in 2023, underlining that this tendency shows the potential to enhance trade volumes in the coming years.

This calls for efficient utilisation trade and investment opportunities, he said, laying accent on commercial dialogues platforms. Expressing optimism on the African Trade and Investment (ATI) project of the US government, he said that this initiative is crucial for supporting Tanzanian trade activities and boosting exports via AGOA.

"We anticipate the ATI project will help increase export volumes to the US and generating export earnings of up to \$1.48bn," he added.

Women in agriculture want obliging policies

JOHANNESBURG

AS South Africa prepares for its upcoming elections, women leaders in the agriculture sector have voice their expectations and hopes for the future.

Lesego Serolong Holzapfel, founder of Moedi Wines, along with Shandini Naidoo, founder of AvoPort and Dr Gabby Gostina Malope, chief executive officer of Touted Agriculture College South Africa, have called on the new government to prioritise targeted support for the agriculture sector. Their vision includes enhancing productivity, promoting sustainability, and ensuring inclusivity, particularly for women in agribusiness.

According to Naidoo, the elections will express hope for continued democratic processes and a smooth transition.

"As proud South Africans, we expect to continue our democracy with faith in a free and fair election process," Naidoo said.

She emphasised the need for stronger leadership and targeted strategies to address the challenges in the agriculture sector.



Roads Fund Board acting CEO Rashid Kalimbaga (2nd-L) welcomes National Assembly Speaker Dr Tulia Ackson to the fund's booth at the opening of the Construction Sector Exhibition at Parliament grounds in Dodoma city on Monday, as Works minister Innocent Bashungwa looks on. Photo: John Badi

'Roads built with paper, invisible weigh bridges, wireless electricity'

FROM PAGE 1

The student brought to the public his design of future power transmission wirelessly in what he described as 'Flying Electricity!'

a notion that would somewhat take back electric car Moghul Elon Musk.

Dr Baraka Kichonge, the ATC academic and support services director, said the college administration "will assist the students to patent their

innovations," affirming that the young scholars are a living example on how students can translate what they learn in class into actual products and services.

The innovations on display will be officially documented, he stated, while Winifrida Mbowe, a lecturer and career

development coordinator, said the college staff "is working to ensure that all students accomplish their dreams and

reap benefits from their work."

The new innovations for which patents are being pursued will see the paper roads, installed with invisible weigh-bridges and 'flying' electricity eliminating the use of roadside posts and dangling wires.

The clever students showcased those designs at the first ATC research, innovation and career guidance week at the campus, with Emmanuel Laurent coming up with the inno-

vation of partial replacement of cement by using waste paper sludge ash (WPSA).

That can be used in soil stabilization during road construction projects, apparently removing cement from the road building equation, he said, citing wastepaper sludge ash as generated during the recycling of paper, an industrial by-product. Some visiting

observers said that WPSA has considerable potential in the

construction industry in relation to the production of concrete, brick, mortar, soil stabilizing additive, rigid pavement and controlled low-strength materials (CLSM).

Baraka Magosha, another student, added to alternative construction with an assessment of the performance of concrete produced by partial replacement of sand with crusher dust, the visitors noted.



Prime Minister Kassim Majaliwa has a word with Musoma Rural constituency legislator Prof Sospeter Muhongo (R) at Parliament grounds in Dodoma city on Monday. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

Kenyan president overrules ban on addictive stimulant

NAIROBI

KENYAN President William Ruto has reversed a contentious ban imposed in parts of the country on muguka, a variety of the popular stimulant known as khat or miraa.

Consumption of the freshly plucked buds and soft leaves has been blamed for a rise in mental health issues and increased social ills, including crime.

Three county governors from the coastal region banned its sale and use last week, sparking anger in the areas where the crop is grown.

President Ruto on Monday said muguka crop was legal and its sale should not be prevented.

Muguka, a cheaper, more potent and addictive variety of the plant,

is popular in the coastal counties of Mombasa, Kilifi, Taita Taveta and Kwale.

Last week, Mombasa Governor Abdulsamad Shariff Nassir banned the entry, transportation, sale and consumption of muguka citing its harmful effects, especially on young people.

Nassir said more than half the people recovering in Mombasa rehabilitation centres were muguka addicts.

A similar directive was issued by the governors of Kilifi and Taita Taveta counties who vowed to crack down on its sale and use.

It sparked protests in the muguka-growing county of Embu, with farmers and traders decrying the risk of closing businesses due to the ban on the lucrative crop.

Diaspora ex-citizens for special Immigration status

He said that those living in the Diasporas contribute a lot to development by family remittances and investment, where during 2023 those living in the Diaspora injected \$751.6m (1.95trn/-) with numerous transactions.

They also invested upwards of 9.28bn/- by purchasing houses and plots, from 4.4bn/- the previous year, while purchasing shares totalling 6.45bn/- in UTT Asset Management and Investors Services (UTT AMIS) during the period, compared with 2.5bn/- in 2022.

East African Community (EAC) members have implemented measures to cut trade barriers, he said, noting that there were 14 vexing issues in the 2021/22 financial year and just four barriers by February this year.

The government was encouraging embassies and international institu-

tions to open offices in the capital, he said, citing those who have done so as including the UK high commission and the Chinese embassy, and numerous United Nations agencies. Ethiopia has built the foundation of its embassy office and residence, he stated.

During the year Tanzania signed a total of 78 memorandum of understanding (MoUs) with various countries, aimed at strengthening collaborations in various sectors of economic activity, he said, lamenting low levels of awareness on economic diplomacy and how to make use of various opportunities.

In the next financial year the ministry will seek to pursue a strategic plan for developing government-owned plots outside, rehabilitate embassy buildings and oversee the performance of institutions affiliated to the ministry, he added.



Muhimbili National Hospital executive director Prof Mohamed Janabi (C-seated) briefs journalists in Dar es Salaam yesterday on the five people (back row) discharged from the referral medical facility's Mloganzila after bone marrow transplants. Photo: Correspondent Christina Mwakangale

Minister calls for more support toward clean cooking initiative

By Guardian Reporter

MINISTER of State in the Vice President's Office (Union and Environment) Dr Selemani Jafo has called for increased support from stakeholders to promote and facilitate access to clean cooking energy in the country.

The minister made the call in Dar es Salaam on Monday during the launch of a special clean energy public awareness event which was supported by a church based in the city.

He said that women and girls are disproportionately affected when there is no access to clean cooking solutions, a situation which calls for increased investment.

Dr Jafo said it is important for stakeholders to also increase their support as currently only 6.7 percent of households use clean cooking energy.

He said that apart from the global economic cost, an estimated \$1.4 trillion is spent annually to treat women affected by the harmful cooking energies.

"Due to lack of clean cooking energy, lives of many women, especially the old ones, are at risk due to use of firewood with many living in fear due to discrimination from the society judging them as witches because of their red eyes," he said.

Dr Jafo said the government has been insisting on environment conservation by planting more trees through various campaigns in order to overcome impacts of climate change and protect people's health.

He urged Tanzanians to support the government's clean energy initiative whereby the target is to see 80 percent of Tanzanians using clean energy by 20230.

Dr Mulenda Omary, TAG-City Light Temple Bishop said: "We will ensure that members of various groups in the society are supported to purchase cylinders and gas to reduce the use of firewood and charcoal," he said.

Zanzibar banks on free economic zones to appeal to more investors

By Guardian Reporter, Zanzibar

GOVERNMENT of Zanzibar is set to implement strategic projects in free economic zones, including construction of factories to increase employment opportunities.

Sharif Ali Sharif, Minister of State in the President's Office (Labour, Economy and Investment), disclosed this here yesterday when ad-

addressing journalists after the House of Representatives approved his ministry's budget for the financial 2024/2025.

He said that one of the strategies is to open up Pemba Island for investment by strengthening free economic zones in Micheweni as well as implementing strategic projects to increase the national income.

Sharif said the main task that has

been completed in Pemba free economic zones is improvement of road infrastructure, clean water and electricity.

He said the government has built a road at tarmac level at Micheweni free economic zones of 13.5 kilometres worth 2.93bn/-.

He added that the government has planned to create an enabling environment for access to jobs in the

private sector to tackle unemployment especially among youth.

The minister said that availability of jobs for locals has improved by 65.9 percent due to confirmed contracts from 6,348 jobs in the year 2022/2023 to 9,630 jobs in the year 2023/2024 in the private sector, including tourist hotels.

He said that registration of 63 investment projects with capital of at

least \$ 1,499 million has been finalised and the projects are expected to create 4,392 jobs.

He said that 12 projects have already been opened and foundation stones laid for others during the 60th anniversary of the union between Tanganyika and Zanzibar.

Sharif said he expects increased investments after the signing of the recent Zanzibar Investment Act

No.10 of 2023 which created several incentives to promote investment in the Indian Ocean archipelago.

Some of those incentives are extended to individuals who buy high-value properties in Zanzibar, including permanent resident status.

"We want to make full use of the free economic zones for scaling up investments in Zanzibar," he said.

Zimbabwe's new gold-backed currency faces public scepticism amid restriction

HARARE

THE introduction of the world's newest currency in April inspired a reggae artist to record a song praising ZiG, or Zimbabwe Gold.

The catchy tune, titled "ZiG Mari," received generous play on state television and radio. The musician, Ras Caleb, received a car and \$2,000 – ironically paid in greenbacks, not the new ZiGs – from a businessman with close ties to Zimbabwe's ruling party and President Emmerson Mnangagwa who said he wanted to reward an act he considered "patriotic."

Although money typically doesn't require publicity, Zimbabwe's sixth national currency in 15 years needs all the help it can get.

Desperate to halt a money crisis underlining the country's economic troubles, the government launched the gold-backed ZiG, the latest attempt to replace the Zimbabwe dollar, which had been battered by depreciation and often outright rejection by people unwilling to put their faith in it.

Senior officials from the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe and the ruling ZANU-PF party embarked on a flurry of public rallies and meetings to encourage the skeptical population to now embrace the ZiG ahead of the U.S. dollar – also legal tender in the southern African nation. Commercial jingles heralding the currency flooded the airwaves along with Caleb's single.

Yet despite the charm offensive, the ZiG is facing a familiar problem: public mistrust and structural barriers that have people still clamouring for U.S. dollars. Although the ZiG has largely held its value on the official market, it has tumbled on the black market, where \$1 can be exchanged for up to 17 ZiGs.

Authorities are also using force to prop up the new banknotes. They have packed jail cells with dozens of street currency dealers, and frozen the accounts of businesses accused of undermining the ZiG.

Law enforcement agents have arrested more than 200 street currency dealers on allegations of flouting foreign currency exchange regulations, national police spokesman Paul Nyathi said. The government accuses them of undermining and devaluing the new currency by using exchange rates higher than the official one.

Twin brothers Tapiwa and Justice Nyamadzawo, 24, were arrested two weeks after the launch of the new currency for allegedly selling undercover detective's cell-phone airtime worth \$10 at a rate of 15 ZiGs per dollar, according to court papers. The official exchange rate was just over 13 ZiGs per dollar. Like other currency traders, the twins were denied bail and remain in pre-trial detention on charges that carry a maximum prison term of 10 years.

The crackdown is incongruous, because Zimbabwe has a long history of street currency dealers whose unofficial rates often carry the day. Many shops and mer-

chants also ignore the official rate and only accept the local currency at their own rates. And many vendors, particularly in the unlicensed sector that employs more than 80 percent of adult Zimbabweans, still only accept the dollar.

What's more, the government has allowed some businesses, such as gas stations, to refuse to accept the ZiG in favour of U.S. dollars. Some departments, like the office that issues and renews passports, also accept only greenbacks. Many others still list their fees in U.S. dollars, although they accept the equivalent in local currency.

The government has announced fines up to 200,000 ZiG or about \$15,000, for businesses that fail to stick to the official exchange rate. Authorities have also frozen bank accounts of some businesses on accusations of rejecting the new currency or trading using exchange rates higher than the official rate. The Reserve Bank didn't name the affected businesses.

Zimbabwe has a long and tumultuous history of monetary instability. The ZiG is the sixth currency used following the spectacular 2009 collapse of the Zimbabwe dollar amid hyperinflation of 5 billion percent, one of the world's worst currency crashes.

The government printed a 100-trillion Zimbabwe dollar banknote to keep up with spiralling prices that saw a loaf of bread going for more than 500 million Zimbabwe dollars.

John Mushayavanhu, the governor of Zimbabwe's central bank, has hyped the ZiG as a first step toward eventual de-dollarization. The U.S. dollar accounts for more than 80 percent of transactions in the country, according to Mushayavanhu, who wants the ratio to be 50 percent by 2026.

But for now, the allure of the almighty dollar remains. Across Zimbabwe, it is widely used for paying rent, school fees and to buy groceries. Many citizens, including government workers, take their local currency earnings to the black market to trade for dollars.

The government has said it is working on mechanisms that include opening bureau de changes for individuals to access dollars "for small transactions." Economists and business groups have warned, meanwhile, that the use of force is unlikely to lead to more confidence in the ZiG or halt the black market traders.

"They will work to ensure that the police do not catch them," Sekai Kuvarika, the chief executive of the Zimbabwe National Chamber of Commerce, told a hearing of parliament's finance and industry committees.

Street currency dealers holding wads of money and openly soliciting for clients were a feature of Zimbabwe's urban architecture for years. They have deserted their familiar spots since the crackdown began in April and appear to have taken their business underground.

Many now use social media and instant messaging platforms such as WhatsApp and Facebook to connect with customers.



National Economic Empowerment Council (NEEC) executive secretary Beng'i Issa pictured in Dar es Salaam yesterday briefing the media shortly after closing six-month training for 50 young and women entrepreneurs held in the city. It was conducted in collaboration with the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), a dedicated training arm of the UN system. The thrust was on ways to accelerate the realisation of sustainable and climate-resilient livelihoods through the development of small and medium agri-business enterprises. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

Maxwell Chisanga, 28, a resident of the capital, Harare, said a shop where he works pays him in ZiGs, but he needs U.S. dollars for everyday transactions.

"My landlord needs her rent in dollars so I have no choice but to look for it on the black market," he said. Economist Prosper Chitambara said lack of faith in the

local currency and demand for U.S. dollars will continue driving the black market despite the crackdown.

"The solution is to build public confidence in the local currency. Otherwise, arrests will not work as long as people are hungry for U.S. dollars, which they cannot get from official channels," he said.

MAK Solutions Ltd celebrates 10 years Anniversary in June

By Guardian Correspondent

MAK Solutions Limited is expected to celebrate its 10 years anniversary on 1st June 2024, a cheerful journey that has been filled with success and prosperity in Tanzania.

To be commemorated in swing at all MAK Solutions offices (showrooms) situated along Haile Selassie Road Masaki, Mlimani City and Julius Nyerere International Airport Terminal III in Dar es Salaam, the company will join customers and all Tanzanians through showcasing value and norms that keep them on top in offering quality services in different sectors.

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As the flagship brand within the physical security division, MAK Safes & Vaults is another business unit that is committed to delivering top-notch security solutions.

With an in-depth understanding of security needs, the brand specializes in the sales and service of high-quality

physical security equipment.

With two strategically located showrooms in Masaki and Mlimani City Mall, MAK offers variety of safes to offer to customers.

The partnership between MAK Solutions Ltd and Godrej (India) specifically signifies a collective commitment to providing cutting-edge security solutions to clients in Tanzania.

Products include all kinds of physical security equipment like safes for retail use, home safe, burglar resistant safes for banks and offices.

In embarking on a journey of style and functionality, the MAK Interio business unit is considered as the latest addition to the MAK Solutions Ltd family. Collaborating with the renowned Godrej Interio brand, MAK Interio offers a stunning array of furniture solutions designed to elevate any space - be it offices, schools, hospitals, or homes.

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Because when it comes to literature, security, aesthetics, and innovation, there's only one name you need to remember - MAK Solutions Ltd.



Finance ministry permanent secretary Dr Natu El-Maamry Mwamba (2nd-L) pictured in Nairobi yesterday leading the Tanzanian delegation in following a presentation on the activities of the East African Development Bank as tabled by the bank's Director General, Vivienne Yeda (2nd-R). It was on the sidelines of the 2024 Meetings of the Board of Governors (Finance ministers) of member countries of the African Development Bank. The PS is filling in for Finance minister Dr Mwigulu Nchemba. Photo: Finance ministry

'Govt banks on private sector to keep SGR coaches rolling'

By Correspondent James Kandoya

THE government to consolidate economic activities by engaging key stakeholders from the private sector as a reliable source of revenues for the standard gauge railway when services start.

Chairman of the committee formed to oversee operations of SGR project, Prof Godius Kahyarara, said this on Monday after inspecting progress of the Dar es Salaam-Morogoro stretch.

He said that after a short meeting with the Tanzania Railways Corporation (TRC) board of directors and management, the committee came up with three recommendations of engaging key stakeholders to ensure the project goal is achieved.

Prof Kahyarara said that the recommendations focused on how the SGR will operate, how it can be profitable and how other productive sectors can contribute to the success of the project.

He named some of the stakeholders to be

engaged as from agriculture, factories, security organs, Tanzania Port Authority (TPA) and the privately-owned businesses.

"Without consolidating the economic activities by engaging key stakeholders, the government's target of having SGR cannot be achieved easily," he said.

He said stakeholder engagement is an inexpensive and efficient way of creating a better operational environment for the project.

Furthermore, he said stakeholder engagement helps the government to identify critical issues and prepare effective strategies.

The committee chairman said the future plan is to see people living along the railway line utilize the opportunity by using its services to transport their farm produce and products.

According to him, the aim of involving security organs is to ensure people's safety and their properties.

Lawrence Mafuru, Executive Secretary of the Planning Commission, said that the

transport sector plays a big role to stimulate other sectors such as agriculture and manufacturing.

He said without a vibrant transport sector, it will not be easy to achieve the intended goal.

"As a committee, we are satisfied with the progress in development of the project," he said.

Tanzania Railways Corporation (TRC) Director General Masanja Kadogosa said that management was in a dialogue with financial institutions to come up with a smart way of issuing tickets to avoid revenue loss.

He said TRC was finalising systems, including freight management systems adding that the systems will integrate with each other.

Kadogosa said that TRC was also exploring options of passengers buying tickets through their mobile phones.

"I would like to assure the committee and the public that everything is in place and we are ready to start operations from Dar es Salaam to Morogoro even now," he said.

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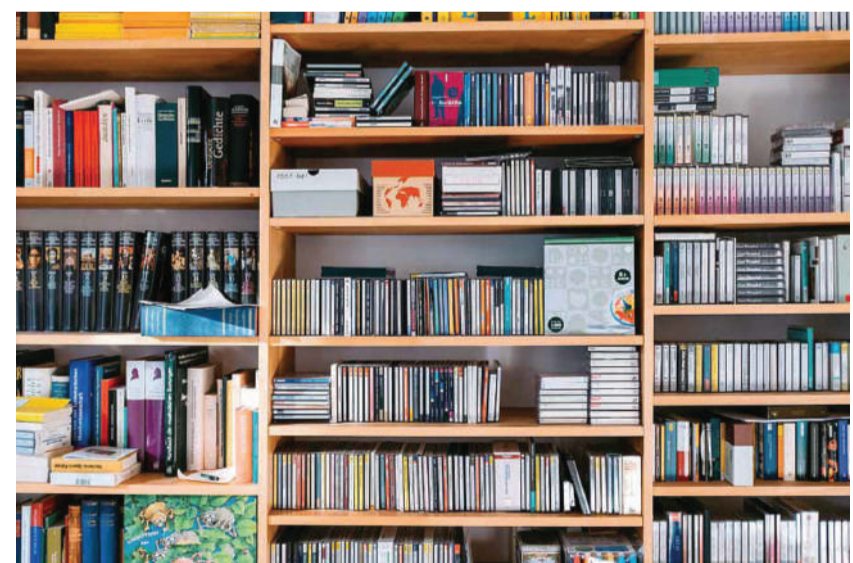
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Africa CDC in partnership to strengthen preparedness against disease outbreaks

GENEVA

THE Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC) and the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on the sidelines of the 77th World Health Assembly to expand their partnership to strengthen epidemic and pandemic prevention, preparedness and response in Africa.

United by a shared mission, the organizations will collaborate to boost regional vaccine research, development, and sustainable manufacturing leadership and capabilities in Africa, fostering a faster and more equitable response to emerging infectious diseases.

"The New Public Health Order calls to action to build resilient health systems capable of managing recurrent, high-impact infectious disease and outbreaks; an action-oriented partnership such as this is at the core," said Dr. Jean Kaseya, Africa CDC's Director General.

"This collaboration with CEPI in research, clinical trials, and local manufacturing of medical countermeasures will elevate Africa's read-

iness against outbreaks, epidemics, and pandemics, thus consolidating the continent's preparedness far beyond where we were prior to the COVID-19 pandemic."

"African leadership and capabilities will be key for ensuring the continent can respond to increasingly frequent infectious disease outbreaks," said Richard Hatchett, CEPI's Chief Executive Officer, he said.

"The preparatory work to manage these outbreaks—from greater vaccine manufacturing capacity to clinical trial readiness—must be undertaken now. CEPI stands ready to support Africa CDC in the realisation of these goals and to further strengthen Africa's preparedness and resilience against future outbreaks."

In line with the African Union's ambition to produce 60 percent of the continent's vaccine needs in Africa by 2040 under the Africa CDC's Partnerships for African Vaccine Manufacturing (PAVM); the expanded partnership will ultimately focus its efforts on enhancing research and development, building a workforce as well as supply chain optimization to support resilient health systems



Aliza Totayo, Commercial Counsellor at the US Embassy, speaks at US-Tanzania Commercial Dialogue held in Dar es Salaam yesterday. From-R: Industry and Trade ministry permanent secretary Dr Hashil Abdallah, US Ambassador Michael Battle and the Industry and Trade ministry's Director of Trade Integration, Ombeni Mwasha. Photo: Correspondent Joseph Mwendapole

New HIV infections remain high among young women in Zanzibar

By Rahma Suleiman, Zanzibar

ZANZIBAR AIDS Commission (ZAC) has said that despite the decrease in new HIV infections in the isles, the challenge still remains among young women aged between 15 and 24.

Dr Ahmed Mohammed Khatib, ZAC Executive Director said this yesterday at a stakeholders' meeting to discuss new initiatives to

help combat spread of HIV/AIDS in isles. He said new HIV infections have decreased to 60,000 people per year from the previous 72,000 people every year.

"However, we still need more efforts in protecting young women from infections as the group is at high risk with the number of those who contract the virus increasing," he said.

He said that one of the lead-

ing factors contributing to high prevalence among young women is sexual violence as studies show that three out of 10 young women between the ages of 15 and 24 are abused or are at high risk of experiencing sexual abuse.

In addition, he said that the leading region with highest HIV infection is South Unguja with 0.8 percent compared to other regions whereby the total infection for all

people in Zanzibar stands at 0.4 percent. He said that HIV/Aids in Zanzibar is mainly stimulated by three groups which are women engaging in commercial sex work, men who have sex with other men and young people who use drugs by sharing injection needles.

Research conducted in 2007 showed that women in sex work account for 21.1 percent of HIV infection, men who engage in same

sex 11.4 percent and young people who use drugs by sharing injection needles 9.3 percent.

"These three groups are also facing serious sexual abuse and harassment, thus contributing to transmission of HIV/Aids," he said.

Hassan Ibrahim Suleiman, Director of Social Welfare in the Ministry of Health, Social Welfare, Elderly, Gender and Children, urged the public to invest in good parenting

in order to reduce violence that contributes to various effects including HIV infection.

"Most of the children who are abandoned by their families or raised by one parent, their emotional tolerance tends to be low and when they enter adult and married life, they are more likely to end up in divorce because their endurance is usually low," he said.

Nigeria extends cervical cancer vaccination drive

LAGOS

FIRST introduced as part of the routine immunisation programme in October last year the HPV vaccine, developed to help prevent cervical cancer, was extended to a majority of Nigerian states on Monday.

In the country's south-western Oyo state, health workers took part in a drive to spread information about the vaccine in local villages.

"We have heard about the cervical cancer before now and we are aware of the disease it creates, that's why I asked my daughter to go get vaccinated as a preventive measure," said Ramotalai Awoniran, after her daughter received the vaccine. The HPV vaccine is now available across the country.

In Nigeria cervical cancer is the third most common cancer and the second most frequent cause of cancer deaths among women aged between 15 and 44 years, according to the United Nations.

In 2020 - the latest year for which data is available - the country recorded 12,000 new cases and 8,000 deaths from cervical cancer.

Unlike other vaccination campaigns that the West African country has successfully run against all odds - like the more than 500 languages spoken by its population of at least 210 million people that could make communication more challenging or the underfunded primary healthcare centres which are the remotest government-run health facilities where the shots are usually given - HPV is quite different.

Ahead of the nationwide vaccination drive, Nigerian authorities had been ramping up campaigns online and offline to educate citizens about the HPV vaccine.

"There are some rumours going around that they want to reduce the fertility of the girls, but we have been educating the parents that this vaccine is safe, the only thing it does is it prevents cervical cancer," said Oyo-west's primary health care coordinator, Lagbenro Arinlade-Ayoade.

Although the HPV vaccine has been in use in many developed nations for about two decades, it has only been introduced in the immunization programmes of just half of the countries in Africa despite the continent's heavy burden.

One in five cervical cancer deaths that occurred globally in 2020 was in Africa, where 100,000 women developed the disease with 70,000 deaths recorded.



A member of the Mzumbe University staff briefs visitors to the national week of education, skills and creativity exhibition being held in Tanga city on the university. Photo: Correspondent Lulu Mussa

EU launches board to drive youth action, empowerment in Tanzania

By Guardian Reporter

THE European Union in Tanzania has launched Youth Sounding Board (YSB), an initiative aimed at amplifying youth participation and empowerment in key areas such as the blue economy, human capital, employment and governance.

The YSB comprises 25 young leaders from Tanzania Mainland and Zanzibar who will advise EU Ambassa-

dor to Tanzania and EU delegation as well as Team Europe.

Speaking during the event in Dar es Salaam on Monday, Christine Grau, EU Ambassador to Tanzania, said that the EU will continue to foster youth engagement by providing avenues for educational growth and international exposure, notably through scholarship programmes like Erasmus+ and Member States opportunities, which offer high qual-

ity sponsored education frameworks. "We value young people, their ideas, and their energy. The Youth Sounding Board will ensure that the voices of Tanzanian youth are heard in our collaborative efforts," she said.

The YSB members were selected through a competitive process, starting with a call for applications which attracted over 700 applications. The selection process was conducted over several months, resulting in the

appointment of 25 talented youth who were chosen based on their expertise, experiences and engagement on youth affairs.

Ambassador Grau elaborated on various collaborative areas including business and trade, investments and inclusive development.

"Through our Global Gateways approach, we want to support our partners such as Tanzania

to build the capacity, the networks and the bridges necessary to join the global markets as equal, unleashing the economic development potential of the country," she added.

In his remarks, Minister for Finance Dr Mwigulu Nchemba acknowledged the EU as a key strategic partner, noting the substantial financial support for Tanzania. He said Tanzanian government has received support amounting to 6.4trn/

(2,394m euros) as grant and 1.5trn/ (573m euros) as concessional loans from the European Investment Bank.

"We equally appreciate the EU's significant support through regional frameworks such as the East African Community and the Southern African Development Community. The EU's commitment to uplifting African nations through these partnerships has been instrumental in our development journey," he said.



Commissioner General of Immigration, Dr Anna Makakala (C), addresses journalists in Dar es Salaam yesterday on the sidelines of a meeting on cooperation between Tanzania and Zambia. Right is the Deputy Director General of Zambia's Immigration Department, Dr Japhet Lishomwa. Photo: Correspondent Jumanne Juma

India-Tanzania trade reaches new heights

By Guardian Reporter

BILATERAL trade between India and Tanzania has soared to \$7.9 billion in the financial year 2023/24, marking a 22 percent growth over the previous year.

In a statement released yesterday, Indian High Commission in Tanzania said: "This growth has elevated Tanzania to the position of India's second-largest trade partner in Africa, up from the third position last year."

The latest trade statistics reveal not only an increase in the volume of bilateral trade but also an improvement in the trade balance.

Tanzanian exports to India have surged by 29.5 percent, reaching \$3.29 billion, thereby making India the largest export destination for Tanzania.

According to TRA data for CY 2023, India stands out as Tanzania's top export market, with exports to India surpassing those to Tanzania's next largest export market by over 50 percent.

The balance of trade between India and Tanzania has shifted favourably towards Tanzania, improving by \$435.51 million. This indicates a balanced and robust growth in bilateral trade.

Tanzania has a diverse range of exports to India, notably in the agriculture sector. India emerges as a significant importer of various produce including legumes such as pigeon peas, soybeans and cashew nuts, avocados and other agricultural goods.

"This exchange not only fuels economic

growth but also generates employment opportunities, uplifting the livelihoods of Tanzanian farmers. Additionally, the minerals and mining sector receives substantial support, with India importing Tanzanian gold and coal, thereby bolstering Tanzania's mining industry," reads the statement.

Conversely, India contributes significantly to Tanzania's economic advancement by exporting essential commodities such as petroleum products, industrial machinery and tractors which facilitate industrialisation and economic growth.

Moreover, India serves as a vital supplier of life-saving pharmaceutical products at competitive prices, alleviating the healthcare burden on Tanzanian citizens. Furthermore, the export of sugar from India to Tanzania plays a pivotal role in stabilizing prices and providing relief to consumers. Indian motorcycles and automobiles are quite popular among Tanzanians.

"The burgeoning trade relations between India and Tanzania underscore the mutual commitment to fostering economic growth, enhancing cooperation, and unlocking shared prosperity.

As both nations continue to deepen their engagement across various sectors, the trajectory of their bilateral trade is poised for further growth and diversification in the years to come. This robust partnership holds the promise of mutual benefit, driving socio-economic development and prosperity for both India and Tanzania."

Studies point to growth in cooperative societies

By Polycarp Machira, Dodoma

COOPERATIVE societies in the country are currently more beneficial to Tanzanians than before, thanks to studies undertaken on how to improve their operations.

The Permanent Secretary in the ministry of Agriculture, Gerald Mweri, made the statement yesterday at the opening of the 3rd Cooperative Research Conference organized by the Tanzania Cooperative Development Commission (TCDC) in collaboration

with Moshi Cooperative University (MoCU).

He said that because of the research being done in the sector, co-operative societies are now going to be wealth-producing than before.

However, he warned the management of cooperative societies to improve by adopting new technologies, including digital systems.

He thanked TCDC for convening the meeting that brought together participants from different colleges,

Co-operative Audit and Supervision Corporation (COASCO), government departments and ministries.

"A lot of success has been realized following the outcome of the annual conference aimed at discussing matters affecting co-operative societies," he said.

On the envisioned Cooperative Bank, Mweri said that it is one of the best decisions made by TCDC and other stakeholders but spoke of the need for good management once the financial

institution starts.

The PS also called on participants of the meeting to come up with a mechanism on how to implement the deliberations and follow up the matters and report back in the next meeting.

Registrar of Cooperative Societies and TCDC CEO Dr Benson Ndiege said that in recent years the sector made a great stride and witnessed several improvements, including capital increase for some societies and a rise in collection of government

revenue, especially charges from the agriculture sector.

He said that despite the achievements, a lot of work still needs to be done to make cooperative societies more productive.

TCDC Vice Chairperson Irene Mlola said that the meeting aimed to discuss development of cooperatives and set a strategy to strengthen the sector, adding that stakeholders' views are important in improving the cooperative system.

"Additionally, the commission wants to provide education on the concept of cooperatives that is centred on looking outside the box by opening doors for non-agricultural societies which are not common in the country," she said.

She argued that the commission, we want to speed up the process of establishing the national cooperative bank

"The commission will make sure the resolutions reached during the meeting are properly im-



NOTICE OF THE TENTH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING:

Notice is hereby given that the Tenth Annual General Meeting of the Shareholders of Maendeleo Bank PLC will be held on Saturday 22nd June 2024 at MSASANI TOWER HALL, Dar es Salaam from 10:00 AM. The AGM meeting will be preceded by a workshop on shares investment and awareness on Merger and Acquisition of companies.

The agenda will be as follows:

1. Opening of the Meeting.
2. Adoption of the Agenda for the 10th Annual General Meeting.
3. Confirmation of the Minutes of the 9th Annual General Meeting.
4. Matters Arising from the 9th Annual General Meeting.
5. Directors' Report for the Year ending 31st December 2023.
6. External Auditor's Report and the Audited Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31st December 2023.
7. To Receive and Approve Directors' Remuneration for the Year 2024.
8. To Receive and Approve Appointment of External Auditor for the Year Ending 31st December 2024.
9. To Receive and Approve Dividend Proposal
10. Approval for Merger
11. Update on National Bank Status Process
12. Any other business
13. Date of Next Annual General Meeting

NOTES:

1. A member wishing to attend the meeting will do so at his/her own costs and must come with a copy of his/her Depository receipt (share certificate) OR Statement of Account issued by DSE together with identity card with photo for identification.
2. Virtual Attendance: The AGM may be attended through zoom video conferencing; the Bank will send to Shareholders information on how to participate in the meeting through their registered email and mobile numbers. Members wishing to participate on this meeting through zoom may communicate with the Company's Secretary through email: shareholders@maendeleobank.co.tz or sms / WhatsApp message through +255677 005050 by 21st June 2024 in order to get information and guidance on how to participate in the Meeting.
3. Copies of the Annual General Meeting booklet may be collected from Maendeleo Bank Head office from 14th June 2024 and will also be available at the Venue on 22nd June 2024.
4. Copies of proxy forms may be collected from Maendeleo Bank Head office and branches from 14th June 2024 and will also be available on our Bank's website (www.maendeleobank.co.tz) from 14th June 2024.
5. A member entitled to attend the meeting and who is unable to attend, is required to appoint a Proxy to attend on his/her behalf by filling in proxy forms and submit the form duly signed and affixed with revenue stamps of TZS 500 and must reach the Managing Director at Maendeleo Bank PLC, not less than 48 Hours before the date of the meeting. In case of a corporate body, the Proxy must be under its common seal and must come with the depository receipt.
6. Shareholders' proposals to be tabled to the meeting should be submitted to the Bank's Head Office or through email: shareholders@maendeleobank.co.tz not later than 48 hours before the start of the meeting.

BY THE ORDER OF THE BOARD

DR IBRAHIM MWANGALABA
28th May 2024



ADVERTISEMENT

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

TradeMark Africa (TMA) is a leading African Aid-for-Trade organization that was established in 2010. TMA aims to grow intra-African trade and increase Africa's share in global trade while helping make trade more pro-poor and more environmentally sustainable. Our focus on reducing the cost and time of trading across borders through enhanced trade policy, better trade infrastructure, standards that work for businesses, greater use of digital innovations, and a focus on creating trade access for vulnerable groups, has contributed to substantially lower cargo transit times through improved border efficiency and reduced trade barriers.

TMA recently rebranded from TradeMark East Africa (TMA), reflecting our ambitions to serve partners in driving continental-wide trade gains, and are expanding from East and the Horn of Africa to Southern and West Africa. TMA operates on a not-for-profit basis and is funded by institutional and philanthropic development partners. TMA works closely with regional and continental intergovernmental organizations, national Governments, the private sector, and civil society organizations to deliver results that drive shared prosperity and reduce poverty.

For more information, please visit www.trademarkafrika.com

TradeMark Africa (TMA), wishes to invite interested qualified, and reputable firms/consortiums to participate in the following tender opportunities:

- DEVELOPMENT OF THE NATIONAL INVESTMENT PROMOTION STRATEGY (NIPS) FOR 2024/25 - 2033/34 [PRQ20231354]

Tender documents can be obtained at <https://www.trademarkafrika.com/procurement/>. All queries quoting the above Tender Title and Number should be emailed to procurement@trademarkafrika.com. The closing date for submission is indicated in the respective tender documents.

Interested, qualified, and eligible bidders should submit bids in line with the bidding instructions in the tender document.

TMA cannot answer any query relating to this tender 7 days or less prior to the submission deadline.

Experts want AfCFTA to promote inclusive growth

By Special Correspondent, Nairobi

AFRICAN experts have said that full implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) will foster inclusive growth across the continent.

Speaking here on Monday at the 59th Annual Meeting of the Board of Governors of the African Development Bank (AfDB), they said increasing continental trade will reduce Africa's dependence on traditional Western markets.

Vincent Nmeielle, secretary general of the AfDB Group, said liberalizing trade across Africa by removing import duties on goods produced within the continent will boost intra-African commerce, benefiting small businesses. "More trade among African countries will also help the continent diversify its export basket, thereby creating more jobs and employment opportunities," he said.

John Bosco Kalisa, chief executive officer of the East African Business Council, the umbrella body of the private sector in East Africa, said the council is currently educating small and women-owned enterprises on the procedures for trading under the AfCFTA regime.

He pointed out that Africa's ex-

ports are predominantly unprocessed minerals and agricultural commodities. The AfCFTA, therefore, holds the promise of adding more value to these products within the continent, leading to inclusive growth.

Kalisa said intra-African trade currently stands at 18 percent, in contrast to 50 percent in Asia and 70 percent in Europe.

Monale Ratsoma, director-general of the BRICS New Development Bank Africa Regional Center, said his organization is prioritizing the development of infrastructure projects in Africa to facilitate easier intra-continental trade.

The AfCFTA, with an estimated population of 1.2 billion people, is expected to deliver numerous social benefits, addressing Africa's inequalities by empowering marginalized communities, he added.



He pointed out that Africa's exports are predominantly unprocessed minerals and agricultural commodities



Shinyanga Regional Police Commander Janeth Magomi pictured yesterday showing what she said were samples of expired drugs seized from a Shinyanga municipality pharmacy, with its owner now in police custody. Photo: Correspondent Marco Maduhu

Kenyan highway upgrade boosts business, enhances regional connectivity

NAIROBI

IRENE Wairimu has been selling cereals for the past 10 years along the 84-km Kenol-Sagana-Marua Highway, which links Nairobi, Kenya's capital, to the agriculturally rich central region. Before its upgrade to a four-lane dual highway, it was a congested two-lane road that travelers often avoided.

Since the new road opened, vehi-

cle traffic has more than doubled, bringing more customers to her roadside stall brimming with agricultural produce from nearby farms, Wairimu said. "I am receiving more customers because the road was widened, allowing more people to reach my stall," she said.

Wairimu is among hundreds of vendors who sell various agricultural products along the Kenol-Sagana-Marua Highway. The road im-

provement project, which began in 2020, is being undertaken by Jiangxi Transportation Engineering Group and China Wu Yi Company. It aims to link Nairobi to the agriculturally rich central regions and Moyale town, near the Ethiopian border.

The highway passes through the counties of Muranga, Kirinyaga and Nyeri, easing traffic congestion and enhancing Kenya's status as a regional transport and logistics hub.

The new road also provides people traveling from Nairobi to the Mount Kenya tourism circuit with uninterrupted dual carriageway, significantly enhancing road safety.

Cleophas Makau, deputy director of the Kenya National Highways Authority and the project's coordinator, said the four-lane highway is set to be completed by August. Makau noted that the business community along the highway is already benefit-

ing, with travel time between Sagana town and Nairobi reduced from an average of two hours to about one hour.

The road is the main artery for transporting agricultural produce, the backbone of central Kenya's economy. Food items, including bananas, rice and tomatoes, are transported from farms to feed the growing population in Nairobi and other markets in cities like Mom-

basa, Eldoret, Nakuru and Kisumu. It is also the main transport corridor for tea and coffee, two of Kenya's primary cash crops, which are mainly exported.

AbdiAziz Mohamed, human resource manager at a local avocado products company, said that since the road was expanded, farmers from central Kenya can easily access their facility and deliver their commodities.



Finance ministry workers pictured yesterday destined for Bumbire in Muleba District to conduct a financial education session for residents of the island, including on savings and loans. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

Society of planters to focus on crops value addition in Africa

By Collins Nnabuife, Abuja

THE Incorporated Society of Planters (ISP) Africa Chapter has been launched in Abuja to promote value addition in farming and general interests of the planting profession.

Launching the chapter yesterday, Minister of Agriculture and Food Security, Senator Abubakar Kyari said the occasion marks a significant milestone in the development of the agricultural sector not only in Nigeria, but across the African continent.

He said the establishment of the society underscores the collective commitment in advancing the interest of planters and promoting sustainable agricultural practices that are crucial to the prosperity and wellbeing of our people.

Over 8,000 Ogun farmers receive support to boost food production "Agriculture remains the backbone of our economy, providing livelihood for millions of farmers and contributing significantly to our nation's food security, economic growth and social development.

"The theme of today's launch 'sustainable plantation agriculture for Africa's future' resonates with our national priority and aspirations", he said.

In his keynote address, Embed Advisor (Stakeholder Engagement and Partnerships) at African Development Bank (AfDB), Richard-Mark Mbaram said the launch of the ISP Africa Chapter aligns perfectly with the Bank's objectives.

He said by bringing together agricultural experts, industry stakeholders, policymakers, and researchers, the ISP fosters a collaborative environment that promotes innovation, knowledge sharing, and the adoption of sustainable practices in agriculture.

Mbaram further stated that by supporting initiatives such as the ISP Africa Chapter, the AfDB aims to leverage agricultural development as a catalyst for broader economic transformation across the continent.

"Our goal is to modernise agriculture by introducing advanced farming techniques, improving access to quality seeds and fertilizers, and investing in irrigation infrastructure. The ISP's commitment to excellence in plantation management will play a crucial role in achieving these objectives.

Ruto defends private jet as cheaper option

NAIROBI

KENYAN President William Ruto has come in for widespread criticism after saying the private jet he used to fly to the US last week was cheaper than using the national airline.

He did not, however, say how much the jet had cost, or how much it would have cost on Kenya Airways.

"The facts that are out in the public do not seem to bear him out," political analyst Prof Herman Manyora told the BBC.

Senior opposition figure Eugene Wamalwa told local media that the president's remarks were "unpatriotic".

He said the president should instead have used the opportunity to market Kenya Airways.

Ruto went to the US on a three-day official state visit - the first such trip by an African leader in more than 15 years.

While he was there, Kenya secured a number of in-

vestment deals worth billions of dollars.

The country was also designated by the US as a major non-North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (Nato) ally, cementing its position as one of the US's closest security partners in Africa.

But the use of a luxury jet for the US trip has continued to spark criticism, prompting the president to respond.

On Sunday, a day after returning to the country, Ruto defended himself as a "steward of public resources".

"In keeping with my determination for us to live within our means and that I should lead from the front in so doing, the cost was less than travelling on [Kenya Airways]," he said on X (formerly Twitter).

Kenya Airways has not commented regarding the cost.

But it has dismissed as fake a widely circulated statement that purports to show that using the airline would have been cheaper for the president.

Despite his explanation, many Kenyans have criticised the president.

Manyora said the president should have explained himself better, to persuade people that it was right to use a private jet.

He said the president should have "considered people's perceptions" and explained the benefits of using a chartered plane, including flexibility, class and security.

"I would have expected that kind of explanation, not one that leaves people wondering," he said.

On social media some criticised the president for using an airline owned by another country.

"It is a shame as a country if the president can't use our national airlines, Kenya Airways, because it is expensive," said Alinur Mohamed.

Calculating the total cost of business class tickets for the president and his delegation, local media report

this would have been far cheaper than hiring a jet.

The president used a Dubai-owned RoyalJet company to travel to the US, along with an entourage of about 30 people.

Hiring such a jet is reported to cost \$1.5m (£1.2m) versus the \$300,000 estimated cost for business-class tickets on Kenya Airways for the entire delegation.

But Ruto told US broadcaster Voice Of America (VOA) over the weekend that the estimated cost of his trip was "completely exaggerated".

He did not respond to a direct question about how much it cost, but said the amounts being "bandied around are ridiculous".

"I'm careful about the resources that I spend," he added.

Last week, government spokesman Isaac Mwaure told the BBC that the "benefits from this visit far outweigh" the costs, without confirming the sums involved.

ABCs of East African integration have some useful avenues for region's youth

INTEGRATION in East Africa and indeed all over the world ought to be a people-to-people interactive activity, as only then will it have the energy to move along without depending on periodic signals or affirmations from political leaders.

But for that situation to be sustainable, it is vital that there are working institutions or a viable operational set-up working seamlessly.

That is in part the case for the East African Community customs union protocol, in that goods imported into East Africa or produced in the region circulate without major hitches. That is why academic authorities took more than 300 students at the Institute of Accountancy in Arusha (IAA) for a training stint on integration issues relating to the regional bloc, this in expectation that this widens their horizon and helps sharpen their skills in career planning. It is a matter of having a better grasp of the environment in the region, what is on offer and whether there are serious hurdles to what can be expected.

It is right to say that such training enables them to be more equipped to exploit opportunities available in the region, even as unemployment is rife in virtually all sectors. Those close to that event are likely to have been asked some questions by some of the students which they were not quite prepared to answer.

They could also only yield a projection for the future - for instance in relation to the free movement of labour, capital and goods. As it now stands, the EAC is a traders' hub rather than a workable hub for the liberal professions, as one moving from side of a territorial border to the other will be a free person as regards ability to set up a home or work if operating in the informal

sector where just an identity card is needed. When it comes to employment, there will be some challenges.

Some of those guiding the youths on the gradual learning on the matter pitched their remarks in a far-flung note - to the effect that youths are the driving force for regional development and so investing efforts to enable them to utilise opportunities is a matter of paramount importance. The idea of a driving force can either imply a qualified professional, say an accountant - as they aspire to be, though in that sense the particular youth would need a company that is interested in his or her skills in a reasonably enticing operational environment. That isn't exactly what there is at the moment, in which case the lessons the youths were receiving are still inward-looking - in terms of professional engagement. They would otherwise be thinking of selling actual goods, though even then it would not mean the EAC as such but wider export markets like the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) and AGOA.

From its enactment in 1999 right to the AfCFTA approval last year, the EAC has seen 24 long years of extra time after its post-independence format collapsed. The record shows that it is not easy for the bloc's partner states to agree any structures that visibly limit the freedom of operation of any of them, as by definition each country has a veto on what can be decided collectively. Thus, the partner states have succeeded in building a solid framework of regional cooperation, but it is far less evident if all have the capacity, or the stomach, for regional integration.

While this much is unlikely to have been admitted by top EAC officials, graduating youths soon learn it in practice.

Consulting engineering has a lot to do to play its role as expected

JUST what consulting engineering as a profession can do to craft solutions to untimely completion of construction projects and the corruption usually associated with the sector will take time to sort out, even assuming that those directly responsible will dwell on it properly.

The matter was squarely placed for their attention just the other day by no less a figure than Vice President Dr Philip Mpango.

The VP raised the challenge in pursuing the issue of how African consulting engineers and contractors can help in efforts to attain African Union's agenda 2063. There will predictably be no quick or easy answers.

Notable members of the profession were meeting in a continental convention of the International Federation of Consulting Engineers, where the challenges of modernising infrastructure in African countries was predominant.

The VP raised the matter of severe bottlenecks like untimely completion of projects, exorbitant pricing due to corruption in major projects, and inadequate technical capacity on the part of local engineers.

Even before matters like corruption are tackled, the consulting will have few answers about project delays, not to speak of late compliance with tax obligations, etc.

It was predictable that the professionals would focus their discussions more on provision of tenders in relation to the lack of loan financing for local engineers compared to foreign consulting engineers.

Here there is an issue of whether it is engineers or companies, as local engineers not getting finances as individuals is one thing as their certificates are usually compara-

ble to their foreign counterparts.

If it is companies, that would be a different matter, as then it is less an issue of local versus foreign - while asset sizes and unavoidably local firms have occupancy titles for individual directors and not real ownership of land.

So far, Tanzanian firms have succeeded in obtaining 48 percent of total value of total value of construction work tendered by the government, which doesn't suggest that their capacity is as low as some of the complaints suggest.

The much it signals is that the competition is healthy and that foreign firms have better endowments but not exactly a crippling situation for local firms.

The data also exclude private sector tendering which, except for some major works, is likely to be contracted to local firms as such projects don't always need some foreign consulting engineers.

How far the profession can be engaged in an ethical pursuit of the goal of infrastructure development as essential to achieving sustainable development is a matter of conjecture as the matter is not located within the profession.

They are participants in a situation where each element of its behaviour code has winners and losers, and so trying to mobilise the profession on the need for developing sustainable and climate-friendly infrastructure to attain Africa's agenda 2063 is less of a professional than an ethical rallying point.

It is thus up to the public authorities to create a construction industry way of doing business consonant with ethical needs, the premise of which is enlargement of sources of capital through land ownership rather than mere occupancy.

The Guardian Limited Key Contacts

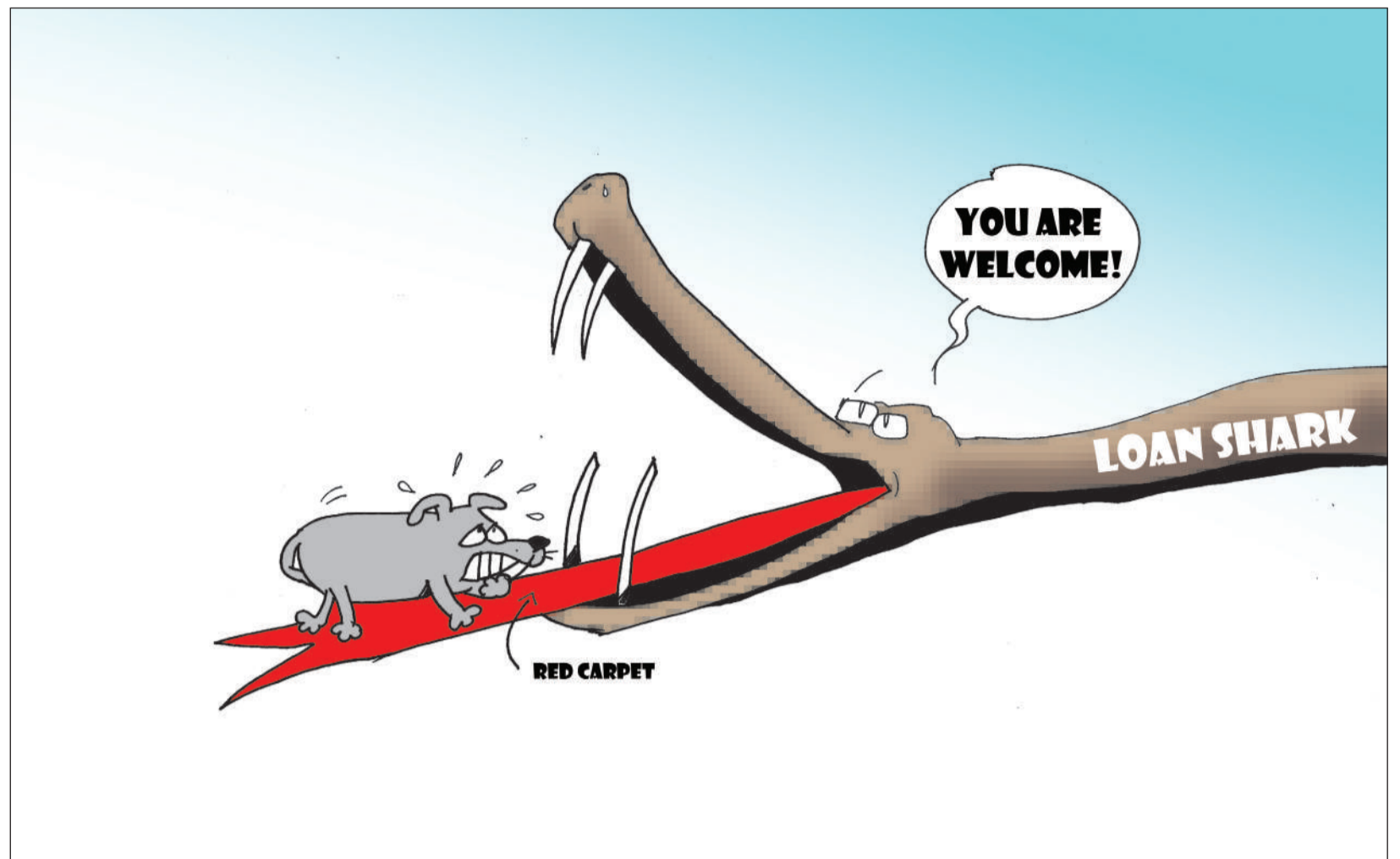
MANAGING EDITOR: WALLACE MAUGGO
CIRCULATION MANAGER: DENNIS NTAITA
feedback@guardian.co.tz

Newsdesk

General Line: 0745 700710
News Editor: LUSEKELO PHILEMON
0757 154767
E-mail: guardian@guardian.co.tz

Advertising

Cel: + 0677 020701 E-mails: Advertise@guardian.co.tz
Website: lppmedia.com, epaper.ippmedia.com



Malawi moves to regulate carbon trading amid concerns over transparency in global market

By Charles Mpaka

MALAWI is increasingly pitching carbon trading as a source of revenue it needs to bolster the economy, which is suffering from foreign exchange shortages caused by a large trade imbalance and being buffeted by several shocks, including the climate crisis.

Presenting the 2024-25 national budget in Parliament in February, Minister of Finance Simplex Chithyola Banda listed increased and more efficient carbon credit revenue generation among the strategic initiatives in the government's economic recovery blueprint.

"We want to make sure that Malawi considers carbon trading as one of the sectors where we can get revenue and boost the economy," Chithyola Banda said.

With Malawi's carbon potential estimated to be around 19 million metric tons annually, local climate lobbyists and economic analysts agree that Malawi can count on carbon offsets for revenue.

Julius Ng'oma, National Coordinator of the Civil Society Network on Climate Change (Cisonect), says carbon trading can also boost Malawi's biodiversity conservation drive and strengthen its contribution to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

"Carbon trading can provide incentives for managing trees and forests and all other initiatives that enhance carbon sequestration and are aimed at avoiding reducing greenhouse gases," he says.

However, among the experts, issues of transparency and accountability in carbon trading are an increasing concern.

In 2012, the Department of Environmental Affairs in the Ministry of Natural Resources and Climate Change evaluated 15 projects with an estimated carbon reduction potential of around 2 million tons.

More firms have entered the market since then.

Today, these questions remain: How many credits have these carbon projects thus far produced? How much revenue has been generated from those credits? How much and in what way has that revenue been shared with communities that are at the coalface of implementing the carbon projects?

Ng'oma's view is that Malawi has not benefited as much as it should have from such projects, "as the money realized mostly benefited the international project developers."

He says concerns about global carbon trading are generally focused on the determination of prices for carbon credits and accounting mechanisms.

"Very few people understand these arrangements and they favor mostly experts in the Global North," he says.

Minister of Natural Resources and Climate Change, Michael Usi, tells IPS that most of the projects that were under evaluation in 2023 were implemented under the Clean Development Mechanism and REDD+ as one way for Malawi to unlock resources from multilateral and bilateral donors for different development projects.

After the evaluation, Malawi registered 11 projects and accessed about USD 40 million in socio-economic development financing, he says.

However, Usi admits that there were no formal procedures for implementing these carbon initiatives, meaning that Malawi has not had a way to count credits and track revenue generated in an efficient way.

Most of those carbon projects were largely about the distribution of improved cooking stoves. According to the ministry, these stoves have been effective in stemming the tide of deforestation in the country and therefore reducing carbon emissions because "we believe they help in reducing the over-reliance on natural resources, especially wood."

Among the early firms in the distribution of cook stoves as a carbon project in Malawi is the United States-headquartered C-Quest Capital, which is active in 21 countries, including Tanzania, Kenya, Burundi, Zambia, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, and parts of Southeast Asia.

C-Quest Capital's Chief Executive Officer, Jules Kortenhorst, says the company, established in 2008, has issued up to 9 million credits on the voluntary carbon market and has invested more than USD 40 million in Malawi since it started its projects.

For Kortenhorst, questions over transparency and accountability in the carbon market are not invalid. Part of the challenge, he says, is that many countries have not had internal administrative systems to be able to monitor and regulate the carbon market.

"When the Paris Agreement was negotiated, there was Article 6—the idea that countries would establish carbon markets among themselves—but setting up internal administrative systems has been hard because they didn't know what the rules were.

"Unfortunately, it has taken for-

ever for negotiators to make progress in creating a rulebook for Article 6. This has been a very large frustration—until lately," he tells IPS.

Having administrative structures in place would help to organize carbon credit transactions and enable global South countries, like Malawi, to sell credits in places such as Switzerland or Singapore.

He believes that developing countries and projects, such as improved stove distribution, have the potential to have a strong impact on cutting greenhouse gas emissions.

According to Kortenhorst, the historical responsibility for reversing climate change lies with developed countries because the carbon footprint per capita in countries like Malawi is small, particularly as compared to countries like the Netherlands or the United States.

"But the good news is that everybody can make a small contribution. Worldwide, the emissions associated with the lack of clean cooking are around 2 to 3 percent. This is not huge but it is not insignificant.

"But also, we know that if we have to remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, we can use the beautiful invention of Mother Nature—trees. Looking at nature-based solutions, countries like Malawi have tremendous opportunities to combine better agriculture and restoration of ecosystems—all of which can contribute to the removal of greenhouse gases from the atmosphere while the country also generates money. So it is a win-win situation," he says.

But to achieve all this, there is need for a mechanism to count credits in an appropriate manner.

"That's where transparency and efficient verification systems come in. That's not easy because we are still learning the technology to do that. But we are getting better at it," Kortenhorst says.

The Ministry of Natural Resources and Climate Change acknowledges that without proper systems and procedures in place, Malawi has been facing difficulties in the reporting and declaration of carbon credits.

The government has now finalized the formulation of the Malawi Carbon Trading Regulatory Framework. Through this framework, the government hopes to have better oversight over the design, implementation, monitoring, and management of carbon markets.

The instrument focuses on project formulation, implementation, assessment of credits generated and benefits for the country and communities at large.

In addition, the National Determined Contributions (NDC), which the government updated in 2021 and whose implementation plan it launched in August 2022, provides a platform for carbon trading project developers to design projects that support Malawi's targets in mitigation as part of reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

In June last year, the government launched the Malawi Carbon Markets Initiative (MCMI). The institution will champion the implementation of the frameworks, action plans, and ongoing programmes that support carbon markets.

Through these efforts, Malawi is confident that it is taking carbon trading operations in its stride.

"With the coming in of organized structures and a regulatory framework for carbon trading, we have embarked on a journey to formalize and transition [earlier] respective projects into carbon trading," Usi says.

The initiatives also inspire hope in campaigners like Ng'oma, who says the regulations and guidelines could maximize the benefits of carbon trading to local communities and Malawi in general.

The Ministry of Natural Resources and Climate Change is now moving to commission a study to assess the carbon potential of Malawi and the corresponding value in terms of money.

The expectation is that the assessment will provide a good estimate of the number of carbon credits that could be generated from different activities and a range for the value of those credits.



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IPS

Activists crusade for increased number of women in leadership, candidates lists

By Getrude Mbago

WOMEN rights campaigners have underscored the need for the government to continue reviewing policies, laws and guidelines governing both civic polls and general elections as well political parties to ultimately increase women participation in various leadership positions.

Reports show that although women representation in various sectors is increasing, the pace is still slow, something which needs more efforts to ensure their massive participation.

Speaking during the two-day national forum on women and elections in Dar es Salaam recently the activists were concerned that despite progress in women inclusion, there are still gaps which hinders participation of women in various leadership positions and decision making bodies.

The symposium brought together more than 200 gender activists from across Tanzania under the coalition on Women, Constitution, Election, and Leadership (WCEL).

Prof Penina Mlama, WCEL Chairperson said that improving the laws and policies would create a more attractive environment for women to vie in positions and participate in decision making.

She called for combined efforts from stakeholders to break cycles of inequalities and increase participation of women in elections and various leadership positions

Reports show that out of 11,916 village chairpersons in the country, women are only



246 which is equivalent to 2.1 percent.

Similarly, in towns and cities where one would expect increased number of elected women leaders at local level, the trend is more like in villages because out of the 4,171 towns and cities, women mtaa chairpersons are 528 which is equivalent to 12.6 percent while out of 58,441 hamlets, women chairpersons are 4,171 (6.7 percent).

She said women especially those in remote villages and towns are not heard and considered despite their competence.

According to her, there are a good number of women who are competent and can con-

“ Many people are unaware of local government election principles, the situation that undermines efforts set to educate citizens likewise women participation in the coming elections. ”

tribute well if given the opportunity but due to various reasons including geographical locations, they fail to vie for different posts within their political parties.

“Women have rights to vie for various leadership positions in communities, the network has been working closely with the government and various development stakeholders to improve the environment and increase women participation in various fields such as of the economy, political and social,” she added.

Prof Mlama called on women across the country to actively participate in the coming civic polls and general

elections next year as well as providing opinions in the preparations of the National Economic Development Vision 2050.

She emphasized that it is crucial for women to come forward in large numbers to advance the struggle for women’s liberation, ensuring access to national and social resources, and to take part in important national decisions.

Dr Ave Maria Semakafu, country coordinator of the Tanzania Women Cross Party (TWCP) - Ulingo platform said many positions in political parties are taken by men with women having low representation.

She urged political parties

to stop giving hard times to women who are interested in leadership but rather support them to realize their goals.

Dr Semakafu noted that political parties are the major gatekeepers in determining which candidates have qualifications to vie for a certain post. Parties play a critical role in enabling or blocking women’s participation in decision-making processes, so they must ensure they increase the number of women in those positions.

“Top leaders in political parties have a big role to play to make sure that women are given opportunity without facing any kind of setbacks, because for a long time women have been complaining of being mistreated or given fewer chances to vie for leadership positions,” she noted.

She encouraged women to work hard, be confident and not hesitate to vie for leadership positions in the forthcoming elections so as to bring out their personal best to serve the public.

Tanzania Gender Networking Programme (TGNP) Board Chairperson, Gemma Akilimali underscored the need to have a strict follow up of any rising challenge during elections.

“Many people are unaware of local government election principles, the situation that undermines efforts set to educate citizens likewise women participation in the coming elections,” she added.

Rose Marandu, executive director of Women Fund Tanzania-Trust (WFT-T) called on women not to fear vying for leadership positions in the next local government elec-

tion. According to her, members of the network have a role to advocate for the change of mindsets in the society towards women’s capacities in leadership which are fuelled by cultural barriers, lack of confidence and awareness.

“It is important we continue to advocate for change, educating communities in remote areas to know the importance of valuing women power. Political party leaders also need to promote equality in their parties,” she said.

Prof Ruth Meena, women rights veteran activist claimed that there are still many gaps in elections as the competition system isn’t fair for women to compete.

She noted that Article 12(1) of Tanzania’s constitution says, “All human beings are born free, and all are equal.” Article 13 (1-5) further elaborates by prohibiting all forms of discrimination, including gender discrimination.

Reports by the President’s Office, Public Service Management and Good Governance, show that women ministers had increased from six in December 2005 cabinet to eight ministers in December 2010.

In December 2015 there were 10 ministers that dropped to four ministers in December 2020. As of April 2024 the cabinet had seven women ministers and four deputy ministers.

The National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) report for 2020 indicates a total of 264 election constituencies in the United Republic of Tanzania of which 50 are in Zanzibar islands.

It states that four popular political parties had at least 20 percent of women candidates in constituencies for the 2020 general elections.

The ruling party Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM) from the 264 constituencies picked 27 women candidates for the Member of Parliament (MP) positions.

Unseparated and random disposal of household garbage contributing to rise in environmental pollution

By Jenifer Gilla

AT 9:30 pm, Mariam Rashid (35) walks through her neighborhood in Vingunguti, Dar es Salaam Region, holding a large bundle of waste in her hand. After a five-minute walk, she arrives at a crossroads, she looks around to make sure no one is watching, dump the waste at the area and walks away quickly.

This is not the first time Mariam dumps mixed waste in the area, as she does it every two weeks when her garbage storage bag is full. Mariam does all these only because garbage trucks contracted to collect household waste do not collect them on time.

The Environmental Management Act of 2004 requires all waste to be separated at home for collection in a specific manner for recycling and processing into other materials such as fertilizer, fish feed, and charcoal, this has been difficult to implement.

According to the Dar es Salaam City Council, Dar es Salaam generates 4,600 tonnes of solid waste per day, of which 75 percent is generated at home and ends up being dumped at the Pugu Kinyamwezi dumpsite in Ilala District.

Mariam says she is unaware of the require-



A pile of waste collected on the side of Rainbow Beach in Kawe, Dar es Salaam Region

ments of the law and has never heard on the benefits of separating household waste. She says local government leaders are only insisting on them to pay monthly garbage collection fees.

“This is the first time I am hearing about the law; I know nothing about it. We can start separating our waste at home, but it will not work because contracted garbage collectors do not remove the waste on time,” narrates Mariam, adding even garbage collectors do not separate the waste when loading them in their trucks.

Mariam is not alone in being unaware of the requirements of the law,

as nine out of 10 residents of the area who were interviewed by The Guardian admitted that they were unaware of the law’s requirement especially on separation of waste at home.

Dorothy Paul, a resident of Tabata Bonyokwa says since she moved to the area from Kagera Region some five years ago, she has never been told about waste separation.

According to her, for all the five years she has lived at the area, local leaders have ever convened a meeting or visit people at their homes to provide education on the importance of separating waste at home. She adds that the lead-

ers would only knock people’s doors to ask for a monthly garbage collection fee.

Leonard Joseph, a resident of Butiama Street, Tabata in Ilala District blames the government over failure to educate people on the requirement of the law. He was optimistic that if residents are well educated on the matter they are likely to change their behaviours, thus improve waste management at their homes.

Bonyokwa local government chairman, Shabani Maliyatabu, links the random waste disposal with the resident’s limited knowledge on environmental issues as well as recycling.



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Trade Mark Africa (TMA) is a leading African Aid-for-Trade organisation that was established in 2010. TMA aims to grow intra-African trade and increase Africa’s share in global trade, while helping make trade more pro-poor and more environmentally sustainable. TMA focus is reducing the cost and time of trading across borders through enhanced trade policy, better trade infrastructure, standards that work for businesses, greater use of digital innovations and a focus on creating trade access for vulnerable groups, has contributed to substantially lower cargo transit times through improved border efficiency, and reduced trade barriers.

TMA seeks to engage the services of the qualified consultancy firms / consortiums / Individuals to participate in the following:

1. Consultancy services for the Review, Update, and Development of a New Integrated National Export Development and Promotion Strategy (NEDPS) for Kenya and the NEDPS Implementation Plan - [Tender Number: PRQ20231077]
2. Technical Assistant to Support the Design and Implementation of TradeMark Africa Funded Digital Trade Interventions in West Africa - [Tender Number: PRQ20231392]
3. Design, Supply, Installation, and Commissioning of Smart Gates. - [Tender Number: PRQ20231207]
4. Technical Assistance to Support Standards and Quality Infrastructure (SQI) Programme - [Tender Number: PRQ20230802]
5. Technical Assistance to Support Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Programme - [Tender Number: PRQ20231059]

Terms of reference and Tender document can be obtained at <http://www.trademarkafrica.com/get-involved/procurement/>. All queries quoting the above Tender Title and Number should be emailed to procurement@trademarkafrica.com. The tender deadline date and detailed submission and delivery instructions are outlined in the respective tender documents.

TMA cannot answer any query relating to this tender 7 days or less prior to the submission deadline.

Healthcare in Syria at sure risk of collapse

Valeria Gholizadeh Gajkarer

ON April 30, the European Union's eighth annual conference on "Supporting the future of Syria and the region" in Brussels started with a day of dialogue. Members of Syrian civil society, representatives of United Nations agencies and international NGOs, and political leaders from the EU and other stakeholder countries came together to debate and strategise about the most pressing humanitarian issues affecting the region.

On Monday, May 27, the conference will continue with a ministerial segment aimed at mobilising financial support for people in need in Syria. Ministers attending this important gathering will need to take urgent action to avert the escalation of the healthcare crisis affecting millions of Syrians.

Today, many Syrian communities are facing circumstances more dire than ever before. Health services - already largely dependent on chronically underfunded NGOs in the absence of an organised healthcare system - are now at risk of collapse due to the threat of significant aid cuts.

My organisation, Relief International, has been one of the main healthcare providers in Northern Syria since 2011. Yet, we have been struggling to meet the needs of people who have already endured 13 years of conflict. Like other organisations active in the region, we are being forced to focus on basic healthcare and scale down the provision of more advanced and specialist care, which is desperately needed.

Even before the cuts for this year were announced, healthcare in Syria was in ruins due to escalating hostilities, the COVID-19 pandemic and last Febru-



ary's devastating earthquake. There was already a severe lack of medical professionals, medication and equipment. In a report produced with the Syrian American Medical Society last year, we highlighted the plight of cancer patients in northwest Syria: just three oncologists serve a population of 5.1 million people and radiotherapy treatment is not freely available, leaving many patients helpless. It is not hard to imagine the devastating impact further funding cuts will have on cancer care.

Earlier this year, health

workers in one hospital reported that there haven't been any free paediatric beds since November. Mothers who have travelled more than 20 kilometres to seek care for their children are being turned away because facilities are too overrun to admit them. Hundreds of people are on waiting lists to receive prosthetics and assistive devices after being seriously injured by the war and last year's earthquake. Many families were already struggling to pay for transportation to access free health ser-

vices. Now, as there are even fewer facilities offering free care, many of these families will have to make do without any care, whatsoever.

As aid organisations, we are doing everything we can to help patients. Relief International and its partners are training existing professionals on under-served conditions, such as malnutrition and mental health, and grouping health facilities together to create networks which increase collaboration, capacity and the quality of care. But these creative so-

lutions - the best we can do with the resources available - are not enough to meet the healthcare needs of Syrian communities in desperate need.

Ministers who will come together in Brussels to discuss Syria on Monday must take a series of urgent steps to sustainably resolve the healthcare crisis in the region.

Restore funding and scale up resources

Funding must be restored as quickly as possible to keep life-saving health facilities open and dwindling resour-

es must urgently be replenished and scaled up to meet ever-increasing needs on the ground.

Invest in building up Syria's health workforce

Syria's healthcare workforce is in dire need of investment, including more training for new and existing health professionals as well as more accredited training programmes.

Third, they must allocate funds for more specialist equipment and medication to be made available in the region.

Healthcare workers caring for Syrians are struggling with a lack of equipment and medication required to provide secondary and higher-level care. Most healthcare facilities in north Syria do not have the necessary equipment to perform high-level surgeries or the medication necessary to treat conditions like cancer and heart disease. It is crucial to ensure that all Syrians once again have access to more than just basic healthcare in their home country

Ensure all new approaches are coordinated

For meaningful change to be achieved in Syria, all stakeholders should work together. Critically, local authorities, aid groups and the private sector must collaborate closely on new approaches. Resources must be utilised strategically, ensuring that solutions are coordinated and that healthcare does not become even more fragmented.

Today there are numerous crises which deserve our attention and support across the world, but the people of Syria must not be forgotten. Monday's meeting must mark the beginning of meaningful, long-term change.

A doctor adjusts the IV drip administering chemotherapy to a patient at the Haematology and Oncology Centre in Idlib Central Hospital.

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Malawi out to regulate carbon trading as concerns regarding transparency raised globally



Nature-based solutions in Malawi give the country opportunities to contribute to the removal of greenhouse gases from the atmosphere while also generating money.

By Charles Mpaka, Blantyre

MALAWI is increasingly pitching carbon trading as a source of revenue it needs to bolster the economy, which is suffering from foreign exchange shortages caused by a large trade imbalance and being buffeted by several shocks, including the climate crisis.

Presenting the 2024-25 national budget in Parliament in February, Minister of Finance Simplex Chithyola Banda listed increased and more efficient carbon credit revenue generation among the strategic initiatives in the government's economic recovery blueprint.

"We want to make sure that Malawi considers carbon trading as one of the sectors where we can get revenue and boost the economy," Chithyola Banda said.

With Malawi's carbon potential estimated to be around 19 million metric tonnes annually, local climate lobbyists and economic analysts agree that Malawi can count on carbon offsets for revenue.

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THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA
MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE
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ADVERTISEMENT FOR INTERNSHIP OPPORTUNITY

Tanzania Cotton Board is a statutory organization that was formed by the Act of Parliament No. 2 of 2001, and entrusted with the function of overseeing the growth and sustainability of the cotton sub-sector. Specifically, TCB deals with regulatory functions within the cotton sub-sector on behalf of the government which includes ensuring adherence to cotton farming procedures and regulations, ensuring steady supply of agro-inputs, maintaining a level playing ground for the cotton business companies and collecting, refining and disseminating information to the stakeholders.

Tanzania Cotton Board has some openings in the following positions that wants to be undertaken under INTERNSHIP basis.

1. AGRICULTURAL OFFICER (Classification) (2 POSTS)

Duty Station: Shinyanga

Education Requirement:

Holder of Bachelor Degree in any of the following: Agriculture General, Agronomy, Agricultural Engineering, Irrigation, Agro-mechanization or any other qualification from a recognised Institution.

Duties and responsibilities:

- To classify cotton in accordance with rules, regulations and International Standards.
- To conduct machine (HVI) calibration and sample testing
- To review, update and recommend any changes that may be for improvement of sampling instructions and classification techniques.
- To prepare and issue periodic reports on classification of cotton from various ginneries.
- To perform any other related duties as may be assigned by his/her Supervisor.

2. ACCOUNTANT (2 POSTS)

Duty Station: Mwanza

Education Requirement

Holder of Bachelor Degree or Advanced Diploma in one of the following fields: Accounting, Finance, Commerce or Business Administration majoring in Accountancy or Finance or equivalent qualifications from a recognized institution.

Duties and responsibilities

- To perform periodical cash accounting for each department to ascertain correctness of cash and book balances;
- To carry out examination of financial accounting and supporting documents;
- To evaluate the effectiveness of existing systems of internal control and recommend appropriate improvements; and
- To perform any other related duties as may be assigned by his/her Supervisor.

3. PROCUREMENT OFFICER (1 POST)

Duty Station: Mwanza

Education requirement:

Holder of Bachelor Degree in Materials Management, Procurement and Supplies Management, Logistics Management or equivalent qualification from a recognised Institution.

Duties and responsibilities:

- To assist in purchase or supply control of given lines of stocks;
- To assist in clearing and forwarding functions;
- To assist in record keeping for all procurement activities performed
- To support in implementing the functions of Tender Board;
- To assist in processing procurement tenders as per approved Authority's policies and procedures;
- To maintain register of approved suppliers for locally supplied items and updating it accordingly;
- To maintain register of all contracts and monitors supply of ordered goods;
- To assist in preparation of quarterly reports; and
- To perform any other related duties as may be assigned by his/her supervisor.

4. STORES OFFICER (1 POST)

Duty Station: Mwanza

Education requirements:

Holder of Bachelor Degree in any of the following field; Materials Management, Logistics Management or equivalent qualification from a recognized Institution.

Duties and responsibilities:

- To prepare bin cards and store ledger books;
- To assist in undertaking physical distribution;
- To maintain location index design;
- To carry out continuous stock checking and Annual Stock Taking;
- To assist in the preparations of quarterly reports;
- To assist in clearing and forwarding functions;
- To assist in keeping records and reports all procurement activities
- To prepare monthly stores report of all physical and card balances;
- To undertake stock review;
- To perform any other duties as may be assigned by his/her supervisor.

5. PLANNING OFFICER (1 POST)

Duty Station: Mwanza

Education requirement:

Holder of a Bachelor degree in any of the following fields: Economics or Agricultural Economics and Agribusiness or Statistics, or Project planning and Management Economics Planning or Planning and Investment or equivalent qualification from a recognized institution.

Duties and responsibilities:

- To assist in issues related to planning and budgeting;
- To assist in planning and control development projects;
- To assist in identifying income generation activities;
- To assist in the preparation of short- and long-term plan and strategies;
- To prepare guidelines for planning and assist in the coordination, preparation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the strategic plan;
- To perform any other related duties as may be assigned by his/her supervisor.

GENERAL ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR INTERNSHIP

- Should be a Tanzanian Citizen;
- Should have acquired formal qualifications like a diploma, bachelor's degree or postgraduate degree from any recognized and reputable institution and have not yet been exposed to work experience related to their area of study;
- Should submit degree or academic transcript;
- Should have completed their studies within three years from the date of this advert;
- A commitment or desire of intern to follow a career in a specific occupation that has been identified;
- Only qualified candidates will be contacted for further processes;
- Application closing date will be 31st May, 2024.

Mode of Application

Application letters for those interested should be posted, e-mailed or hand delivered to the following address:

**DIRECTOR GENERAL
TANZANIA COTTON BOARD
REGIONAL DRIVE ROAD
P.O. BOX 61,
MWANZA.
E-mail: info@tcb.go.tz**

Critical minerals: Energy transition seen paving path to new prosperity in Africa

By Guardian Reporter

AFRICA holds significant reserves of minerals critical for low-carbon technologies, like cobalt and manganese, offering opportunities for economic growth and development.

As part of its 60th anniversary celebrations, United Nations Trade and Development (UNCTAD) will hold a pre-event in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, and online on June 4th.

The event themed “Maximizing Africa’s potential: Leveraging demand for critical minerals to boost inclusive growth and sustainable development” will explore ways to optimize the development benefits of Africa’s vast deposits of minerals critical to the global energy transition, such as cobalt, copper and lithium.

UN Trade and Development Secretary-General, Rebeca Grynspan, Deputy Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Monique Nsanzabaganwa, and Deputy Executive Secretary of the UN Economic Commission for Africa, Antonio Pedro, will be joined by leaders, diplomats, experts and key stakeholders.

Forging a new path forward

UN Trade and Development’s 60th anniversary



represents a seminal moment—an opportunity to reflect on lessons learned over the past six decades and forge a new path forward, building a future that is resilient, equitable and sustainable.

Grynspan has confirmed UN Trade and Development’s commitment to Africa remains unwavering as the organization steps into the future, and reiterated the belief in the transformative power of Africa’s critical mineral wealth,

which offers boundless opportunities to catalyse sustainable development on the continent.

Through strategic partnerships and innovative solutions, UN Trade and Development stands ready to support efforts to harness the full potential of Africa’s abundant resources and shape a future where the continent stands tall on the global stage as a beacon of opportunity and hope.

Critical step towards new development course

The event in Addis Ababa is part of the critical steps towards a new development course for Africa that places the continent’s abundant mineral wealth at the service of its people.

Africa is home to sizeable reserves of the world’s critical energy transition minerals: 55 percent of cobalt, 47.65 percent of manganese, 21.6 percent of natural

graphite, 5.9 percent of copper, 5.6 percent of nickel, 1 percent of lithium, and 0.6 percent of iron ore globally.

These minerals offer an opportunity to generate revenues for governments, finance development, overcome commodity dependence, create jobs and raise living standards across Africa.

But the continent has yet to fully seize the opportunities presented by its natural resource endowments. Estimates show that African countries generate only about 40 percent of the revenue they could potentially collect from these resources.

Amid current global crises, limited fiscal space, slow growth and high debt, African countries need to maximize the financial and development benefits of these resources, especially critical energy transition minerals.

Opportunities and challenges

The event will explore opportunities and challenges in Africa’s critical minerals sector. Key areas of discussion will include ways to enhance revenue mobilization and fiscal administration as well as promote value addition and regional value chain integration on the continent.

Participants will also examine how to increase investment in infrastructure, skills and innovation to support minerals-based industrialization on the continent while promoting climate action.



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By Musonda Mumba

BY the end of the century, climate change alone could result in the loss of over half of African bird and mammal species. This could also result in a 20–30 percent reduction in lake productivity and a significant decrease in plant species.

But there cannot be a discussion about biodiversity without a discussion on wetlands.

Wetlands are incredibly biodiversity ecosystems that support a wide array of flora and fauna that we depend on. Wetlands ensure food and fresh water, in addition to providing jobs and services to local inhabitants. They protect communities from floods and storms, and even mitigate the impacts of climate change.

Yet despite these benefits, humanity is destroying wetlands at an alarming rate.

In response to this ongoing biodiversity crisis, many African nations are actively working on implementing national biodiversity strategies and action plans to meet the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework

Protecting Africa’s wetlands vital in combating loss of biodiversity

targets.

While overall advancements remain challenging, there has been progress in many areas, such as the recovery of threatened species and the effective management of protected wetland areas.

Conservation efforts at an international level

Countries are taking proactive measures to preserve and restore wetlands and are rallying through commitments like the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands. Individual citizens, NGOs, governments, and international institutions alike are working to reverse the current destructive trends.

In West Africa, Gambia and Senegal are facing the challenges of habitat loss and biodiversity decline. Their trans-boundary

conservation efforts have led to the protection of the Niimi-Saloum Wetland of International Importance, a Ramsar Site spanning both countries that is a critical area for biodiversity.

This collaboration has enabled better management of the Site’s diverse ecosystems, which include mangrove forests and a variety of fauna, such as migratory birds and the West African manatee.

Gabon has benefited from World Bank initiatives that have enhanced conservation efforts in parks and forested wetlands. These projects have expanded conservation knowledge, improved monitoring systems, and promoted eco-responsible behaviours, significantly reducing illegal activities like fishing and poaching.

In South Africa, a GEF grant to

iSimangaliso Wetland Park has not only improved the park’s ecological function but has also boosted economic opportunities for the surrounding communities. The initiative has created jobs, facilitated business training, and prepared leaders for effective resource management.

Mozambique’s conservation efforts, supported by the MozBio Program, have focused on protecting diverse habitats, including coral reefs and national parks. The program has engaged thousands of beneficiaries, promoting community involvement in conservation and raising private investment.

The power of community-led conservation

International financial institutions and governments, as seen in Gabon and South Africa, have

provided funds for sustainable wetland management. However, true strength lies at the grassroots level.

In Angola, environmentalist Fernanda Samuel has become a key figure in conservation efforts through her work with the NGO OTCHIVA. Her commitment began in 2016, driven by the alarming disappearance of flamingos in her hometown due to destructive construction practices. She was included in the first Women Changemakers in the World of Wetlands cohort in 2024, and her movement has inspired youth across the continent.

The situation in Uganda’s Achwa River basin is similarly concerning. Over the last two decades, the region has lost vast areas of wetlands, with 20% now considered degraded. This has prompted two local women,

Apio Kevin and Aol Dorcus, to step forward, creating conservation initiatives that are an example of sustainable, community-led resource management.

Madagascar has seen grassroots conservation efforts gain traction as well. Kivalo led by Justin Rakotomanahira, is an example of how community efforts can contribute to sustainable mangrove restoration.

This community has transformed 56 hectares of barren land into a haven of biodiversity, which has facilitated access to clean water and improved sanitation, while enhancing the economic benefits derived from local mangrove forests.

From local ingenuity to global solutions

Local communities, often the most affected by biodiversity loss, are at the heart of this struggle. Their local knowledge and direct stake in their natural surroundings make them powerful agents of change.

Individuals like Fernanda Samuel and NGOs like OTCHIVA are inspiring a global audience and proving that dedicated efforts can effect real change.

While African countries are facing significant challenges in terms of biodiversity loss, concerted efforts—like these—at local, national, and international levels are helping to preserve the continent’s natural heritage.

These initiatives highlight the critical importance of adaptive governance, community involvement, and international support in tackling environmental challenges.

A more robust approach involving multiple stakeholders at every level could enhance biodiversity governance and speed progress.

This approach could integrate the value of local and Indigenous knowledge and allow these experts to work closely with government authorities and international organizations.

Through the Convention on Wetlands, in collaboration with the UN Biodiversity Convention and other partners, the sustainable management and protection of wetlands—crucial for biodiversity and humanity alike—is possible, but only if we work hand-in-hand to achieve it.

BUSINESS

EU launches board to propel youth action, empowerment

By Guardian Reporter

THE European Union (EU) in Tanzania has launched the Youth Sounding Board (YSB), an initiative aimed at amplifying youth participation and empowerment in key areas such as the blue economy, human capital and employment, and governance.

The YSB comprises 25 young leaders from the Tanzanian Mainland and Zanzibar who will advise the EU Ambassador to Tanzania and the EU delegation as well as Team Europe.

The YSB was officially launched at the Europe Day celebrations in Dar es Salaam, hosted by Christine Grau, EU Ambassador to Tanzania on Monday this week.

The event was attended by Dr. Mwigulu Nchemba, Minister for Finance, ambassadors, heads of missions, senior government officials, religious representatives and members of civil society and the media.

During the event, Ambassador Grau highlighted the EU's commitment to fostering youth engagement including through providing avenues for educational growth and international exposure, notably through scholarship programs like Erasmus+ and Member States opportunities, which offer high quality sponsored education frameworks.

"We value young people, their ideas, and their energy. The Youth Sounding Board will ensure that the voices of Tanzanian youth are heard in our collaborative efforts," she said.

The YSB members were selected through a competitive process, starting with a call for applications which attracted over 700 applications.

The selection process which was conducted over several months, resulting in the appointment of 25 talented youth who were chosen based on their expertise, experiences and engagement on youth

affairs.

Aside from the launch of the YSB, Europe Day celebrations underscored the strong EU - Tanzania partnership. Ambassador Grau elaborated on various collaborative areas including business and trade, investments and inclusive development.

"Through our Global Gateways approach, we want to support our partners such as Tanzania to build the capacity, the networks and the bridges necessary to join the global markets as equal, unleashing the economic development potential of the country," she added.

Minister for Finance Dr. Nchemba acknowledged the EU as a key strategic partner, noting the substantial financial support from Tanzania.

He mentioned the Tanzanian government has received support amounting to 6.4trn/- (EUR 2,394 million) as grants and 1.5trn/- (equivalent to EUR 573 million) as concessional loans from the European Investment Bank.

"We equally appreciate the EU's significant support through regional frameworks such as the East African Community and the Southern African Development Community. The EU's commitment to uplifting African nations through these partnerships has been instrumental in our development journey," said Nchemba.

The Delegation of the European Union to Tanzania and the East African Community is a key actor in the relations between the European Union and Tanzania as well as the East African Community.

The EU has set out the Global Gateway, a new European strategy to boost smart, clean and secure links in digital, energy and transport sectors and to strengthen health, education and research systems across the world.

Global gateway is implemented jointly under the Team Europe banner, meaning the EU institutions and EU Member States.



Christine Grau, EU Ambassador to Tanzania (3rd L- front row) and Finance minister Dr Mwigulu Nchemba (to her left) pose for a group photo with Youth Sounding Board members of (YSB). Photo: EU

CMSA value surges by 23.2pc in latest report

By Correspondent James Kandoya

THE capital market value has seen a significant increase of 23.2 percent last month compared to the amount recorded in April of last year.

Nicodemus Mkama, the Chief Executive Officer of the Capital Markets and Securities Authority (CMSA), announced on Monday during the official launch of the new private sector scheme called "Timiza."

He said that new records also show that investment value has reached 43.4trn/- as of April this year compared to 35.2trn/- recorded during the corresponding period previous year.

Mkama commended the government for creating a good environment condition that has brought positive results in the development

of the country's financial sectors.

He said the sales of shares and bonds has also increased by 64.5 percent reaching 4.2 percent trn/ from 2.5 trn/- during the same corresponding previous year.

Also, he said the value of collective investment schemes increased by 44.7 percent in the past year reaching 2.1 trn/ from 1.4trn/- in April last year.

Mkama said that the launching of the scheme from the private sector aims to enable small, medium and large investment to mobilise funds from investment and benefit from the opportunities from the financial sector.

CEO said the specific objective of the fund was to empower Tanzania from different cadres including the youth, women and special groups to benefit from the financial sector, building culture of saving and investing among Tanzanians

DSE share indices open in green, with foreign inflows



source: tradingeconomics.com

By Guardian Reporter

THE Dar es Salaam Stock Exchange (DSE) share indices opened the week in green, following the increase of three local and one cross listed firms shares prices, with foreign investors appearing through purchasing shares valued 4.3m/-.

According to the daily market report, the Tanzania Share Index (TSI) closed at 4,490.47 points on Monday, after gaining by 10.93 points compared to the closing day of last week, while all share index (DSEI) closed at 2,067.98 points,

an increase of 16.99 points.

The Bank, Finance & Investment Index (BI), which has been the main driver of both local and all share indices, elevated by 36.22 points, after closing at 5,196.28 points, while the Industrial & Allied Index (IA) remained unchanged.

The improvement of three share indices resulted from appreciation of share prices in four counters including CRDB Bank, self-listed DSE, East African Breweries Limited (EABL) and KCB Bank.

Top gainers was self-listed DSE counter after appreciating by 8.6 per-

cent to 2,020/-, followed by KCB counter, whose share price closed at 720/- an increase of 4.35 percent.

CRDB counter followed after share price slightly appreciated to 510 after climbing up by 2 percent, while the EABL counter, which is the third largest listed company on DSE, saw its share price rising by 0.98 percent to close at 3,080/-.

The increase of share price has also boosted the total market capitalization to 17.2trn/- compared to 17.1trn/- recorded during the end of last week, and the domestic market capitalization

which increased to 11.89trn/- compared to 11.86trn/- respectively.

Market analysts comment that there is a keen interest in the financial stocks and prospects show further growth in coming weeks, after local banks announced fattened dividends for the financial year ended in December 2023.

In its AGM held recently in Arusha, CRDB shareholders approved a dividend of 50/- per share for 2023, while NMB has proposed a dividend of 361.18/- per share.

The daily market report shows that a total turnover of 165.77m/- was recorded, follow-

ing the transaction of 224,954 shares traded in 212 deals.

All shares were sold by local investors by 100 percent, but were bought by a combination of both foreign with 2.61 percent of total value and local investors with 97.36 percent of total value of shares that were bought.

Top movers were CRDB counter, which recorded the transaction of 171,824 shares valued 87.7m/- traded at a price ranging from 500/- to 520/- per share in 112 deals, followed by NICO counter, which transacted 31,127 shares valued 24.7m/- traded at a price ranging from 780/- to 800/- per share in 42 deals.

NMB counter, which recorded the largest transaction valued 4.9bn/- last week, through trading 957,985 shares, of which 850,000 were traded through block trade, transacted 7,582 shares valued 39.5m/- traded at a weighted average price of 5,250/- per share in eight deals.

Other active counters during the opening day of the week were DCB, which its share slightly declined, self-listed DSE, TCCIA Investment Limited, Vodacom, Tatepa, TOL Gases, Tanzania Portland Cement, Maendeleo Bank, Mkombazi Commercial Bank and Tanga Cement.



Agriculture stakeholders discuss counterfeit seeds at a nursery in Kibaha, Coast Region. File Photo

ASA warns: Beware of counterfeit seeds impacting costs, crop health

By Correspondent Cheji Bakari, Tanga

THE Agricultural Seed Agency (ASA) is advising farmers engaged in commercial agriculture to be vigilant against counterfeit improved seeds, which have led to increased expenses for purchasing chemicals for preservation and pest control.

ASA Marketing Officer, Wakiryra John, revealed this during an exclusive interview in Tanga at the ongoing National Education, Skills, and Innovation Week held at Popatlat grounds. She emphasized the importance of farmers being aware of the authenticity of the seeds they purchase, as counterfeit seeds can lead to significant financial losses.

"Many farmers have reported that while improved seeds promise good yields, they often face challenges with pest infestations and damage from birds, both in the fields and

during storage at home. This forces farmers to spend a considerable amount of money on chemicals for pest control and preservation," Wakiryra explained.

She stressed that high-quality seeds must undergo a rigorous research process and be approved by the appropriate agricultural authorities before being marketed. "Better seeds must pass through research processes and be approved by the agricultural authorized board before entering the market," she said.

Wakiryra highlighted that all seeds produced by ASA are of high quality and designed to provide farmers with better results at minimal costs. These seeds have been thoroughly researched by the Tanzania Agricultural Research Institute (TARI) and certified by the Tanzania Official Seed Certification Institute (TOSCI).

In another development, Wakiryra explained that the agency

has expanded its efforts by establishing demonstration plots in each region. These plots aim to bring services closer to the people and provide practical demonstrations of the seeds' effectiveness.

"Our future plans include introducing more demo plots in the Southern Highland regions such as Njombe, Mbeya, Manyara, Dodoma, and Iringa by next year. Our objective is to demonstrate to both small- and large-scale farmers the quality of our seeds from planting to harvesting. We also aim to train them in modern scientific farming methods that ensure high production," she stated.

Currently, the agency is involved in producing a variety of seeds including sunflower, millet, maize, beans, and other legumes, as well as sesame and vegetables. These seeds are specifically developed to meet the diverse needs of Tanza-

nian farmers and help improve agricultural productivity across the country.

Counterfeit seeds have had devastating effects on commercial farming, leading to significant financial losses and reduced agricultural productivity. These fake seeds often do not possess the necessary genetic qualities to resist pests, diseases, and environmental stresses, resulting in poor germination rates and sub-standard crop yields.

Farmers who unknowingly purchase counterfeit seeds find themselves with fields that fail to produce the expected quantity or quality of crops, ultimately undermining their ability to meet market demands and secure profitable returns.

Moreover, the presence of counterfeit seeds forces farmers to invest heavily in additional chemicals and pesticides to combat the unexpected infestations

and diseases that these inferior seeds attract.

This not only increases the cost of production but also poses environmental and health risks due to the excessive use of chemical treatments.

The financial burden of purchasing these chemicals, coupled with the loss of crops, drives many farmers into debt, creating a cycle of economic hardship that can be difficult to break. The reliability of the agricultural supply chain is compromised, eroding trust between farmers and seed suppliers.

The long-term consequences of counterfeit seeds extend beyond immediate financial losses. Repeated planting of poor-quality seeds depletes soil nutrients, reduces soil fertility, and disrupts the ecosystem, leading to a decline in overall agricultural sustainability.

Farmers are often forced to abandon previously fertile land and move to new areas, contributing to land degradation and deforestation. This not only harms the environment but also reduces the availability of arable land for future farming, posing a significant threat to food security.

As commercial farming struggles to recover from the damage inflicted by counterfeit seeds, the entire agricultural sector faces diminished growth prospects and heightened vulnerability to market fluctuations.

By according to Wakiryra ASA is committed to supporting farmers by providing high-quality seeds that have been rigorously tested and approved.

SPECIAL REPORT



A side view of Fujian Hexingwang Industry Tanzania Co. Limited complex. Photo: Francis Kajubi.

The impact of Chinese employment on Tanzanians: Is it a boon or bane?

By Francis Kajubi, Mkuranga

WITHIN the walls of Chinese factories, Tanzanians endure a harrowing ordeal as they grapple with long hours of unpaid overtime work, endure debilitating work-related injuries, and confronting the harsh reality of being deprived of vital medical care necessary for their healing and overall welfare.

China currently stands as the foremost contributor to Tanzania's foreign direct investments (FDIs) inflows, holding a substantial 30 percent share, signaling a significant economic partnership between the two nations.

In the manufacturing sector, the promise of FDIs to improve the lives of everyday Tanzanians remains unfulfilled.

Despite Chinese FDIs experiencing remarkable growth, the stimulation of Domestic Direct Investments (DDIs) stands at a mere 22 percent, falling short of the World Bank's recommended 50 percent threshold, as reported by the Tanzania Investment Center (TIC).

Disturbingly, instances of discriminatory wage and salary practices within Chinese manufacturing facilities are becoming more prevalent with each passing day.

The 2017 report "Chinese Involvement in Tanzania and Its Local Impacts" by Bucknell University highlights a troubling Chinese stereotype against Tanzanians, resulting in human rights violations at the workplace, in contradiction to local land investment regulations.

According to TIC, China-Tanzania trade volumes in goods and services reached US\$5.41 billion (13.5tn/-) as of October 2023, decreasing from US\$8.31 billion (21.2tn/-) in 2022. The United Kingdom leads with 20 percent of FDIs inflows, followed by Canada at 15 percent.

Despite these trade volumes, Chinese FDIs have not significantly improved the well-being of local employees or increased family incomes as expected.

Samson Simon, a 25-year-old resident of Mji Mpya Street in Kisemvule Ward, located in Mkuranga District, found himself inadvertently employed by Fujian Hexingwang Industry Tanzania Co. Limited on the 1st of July, 2020.

This hiring occurred after he had served as a temporary staff for the preceding 18 months. His

recruitment transpired following a surprise factory inspection by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) in mid-July 2020.

Reflecting on this experience, Simon shared, "I was among the 20 casual workers out of the estimated 300 present at that time who were compelled to sign contracts without prior consent."

As per the contract reviewed by this journalist, Simon was engaged as a Scrap Attendant for the blast furnace under a two-year agreement, guaranteeing him a lump sum of 118,000/- until the contract's conclusion on July 31, 2022.

Following the contract's expiration, Simon reverted to being a casual worker from August 1, 2022.

Another individual, Selemani Yassin Mwamba, a 28-year-old casual worker at the same factory, raised issues regarding the durability of safety gear such as boots, gloves, and helmets. He emphasized that these crucial safety items frequently deteriorate within just seven days, falling short of the expected three-month lifespan.

He also highlighted the absence of health and safety representatives, which contradicts the stipulations of the Occupational Health and Safety Act 2003, Section II (4) (b). This section mandates that for a factory or workplace, there should be a minimum of one health and safety representative for every fifty employees or part thereof.

His stance resonates with Article 23 (3) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948, emphasizing that "Everyone who works has the right to just and favorable remuneration ensuring for himself and his family an existence worthy of human dignity, and supplemented, if necessary, by other means of social protection."

Mwamba's arguments are further validated by Article 23 (1) of the Constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania 1977, which asserts that "Every person, without discrimination of any kind, is entitled to remuneration commensurate with his work, and all persons working according to their ability shall be remunerated according to the measure and qualification for the work."

Raziah Muhuwa, the Human Resource Manager at Fujian Hexingwang Industry Tanzania Co. Limited, highlighted that factory workers should receive 5,700/-

per shift based on the government's current wage benchmark. However, they are actually paid up to 12,000/-.

Muhuwa also pointed out the lack of Tanzanians in managerial roles, with Chinese individuals holding those positions. In case of workplace accidents, employees are supported during their recovery period, and they are able to take their annual leave as usual.

Mwanahawa Hassan Idd, a 24-year-old casual worker at Xingrong Plastic Waste Industry Company Limited, mentioned that she receives 8,000/- for a 12-hour shift.

She expressed frustration with the Chinese factories, citing their preference for cheap labor and lack of concern for workers' well-being. She emphasized that working in Chinese factories doesn't lead to a better life but merely helps put food on the table.

A statement by Denis Mwaneyelo, spokesperson at Unify Corporation Limited, shed light on the employment of five individuals with disabilities in the cleaning department who work regular eight-hour shifts, raising concerns.

Mwaneyelo explained that workers are paid 5,700/- for 12-hour shifts without receiving overtime pay, and emphasized the absence of contract employment opportunities at the factory. He also acknowledged the substantial turnover rate among the 200+ casual workers, with frequent exits and new hires being a common occurrence.

The spokesperson emphasized that casual workers at the factory are part of the Mkuranga District Trade Union of Industrial and Commercial Workers (TUICO), contributing 2,000/- per month to support its activities.

Expressing concern, he questioned the advocacy efforts of the TUICO Mkuranga branch in representing the rights of its members. He remarked, "It's puzzling to see the union collecting funds from members without transparency on how these funds are utilized to benefit the workers."

In defense of the fees, Mussa Kasian, Secretary of TUICO in the district, confirmed the collection of 2,000/- from members, explaining that the funds are crucial for covering legal expenses related to addressing violations of employment rights.

Kasian stated, "We work closely with ten factories that collectively employ 850 casual workers. In

the last five years, we have handled approximately 70 civil cases. Given the dynamic nature of our workforce, our union experiences a continuous turnover as members depart daily and new individuals join regularly."

He mentioned that the typical employment contracts for Tanzanians last between three to six months, essentially serving as the probation period as per regulations.

For Suleiman Seng'enge, the Labor Officer in Charge in Mkuranga, stated that the adequacy of payments is subjective and varies based on individual interpretation, although the government had previously conducted research establishing minimum eight-hour workdays and monthly wages for factory workers.

Khadija Mwenda, Chief Executive of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), urged casual workers to report any violative investors to OSHA regularly.

She emphasized that the existing OSHA law protects the identities of those reporting such incidents.

Mwenda stated, "We are actively educating factory workers about their fundamental workplace rights. Additionally, we are providing guidance to investors on compliance with OSHA regulations."

She further mentioned, "We are conducting informational sessions with the Association of Tanzania Employers to ensure their members understand and adhere to government regulations."

Moving forward, OSHA has designated Mkuranga district as a special zone for its operations. It plans to conduct regular inspections of problematic factories starting next week.

Regarding the situation, Patrobas Katambi, Deputy Minister of the Prime Minister's Office for Labour, Youth, and Employment, highlighted that factory workers have trade unions to address their grievances and uphold their rights.

Katambi mentioned, "If factory workers have welfare concerns, they should seek assistance from TUICO or the district labor officer for appropriate action."

On ensuring compliance from Chinese investors, Diana Mwamanga, the Investment Officer overseeing the China Desk, chose not to provide a comment on the measures being taken by the TIC.

Youth inspired to seize opportunity in science, technology, innovation

By Correspondent Cheji Bakari, Tanga

DEPUTY Minister in the Prime Minister's Office for Labour, Youth, and Employment, Patrobas Katambi, has urged young people to seize the scholarship opportunities available in the fields of Science, Technology, and Innovation provided by the government.

Emphasizing the significance of the said fields, Katambi highlighted the numerous opportunities they offer in the global economy and job market.

Speaking to youth from various schools, colleges, and universities gathered at a weeklong education, skills, and innovation exhibition at Papatlal School grounds in Tanga, Katambi underscored the critical importance of science and technology in driving the country's industrial economy.

The exhibition, co-organized by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, the Tanzania Commission for Universities (TCU), NACTVET, and various universities, was sponsored by both national and international institutions.

"As our country transitions into an industrial economy, the demand for skills in technology, science, and innovation is unavoidable. We need more experts in these fields to sustain and enhance our economic growth," Katambi stated.

He stressed that the global labor market increasingly requires youth with specialized skills in science, technology, and innovation. "The global labor market demands youth who are experts in various scientific and engineering fields. Even if you are a university graduate, without these skills, we will continue to lag behind."

The deputy minister encouraged the youth to focus on acquiring skills in these crucial areas.

"My advice to you is to concentrate on gaining expertise

in science and technology. The government has already unveiled scholarship initiatives for those who wish to study these subjects. The global economy and labor market present ample opportunities for those equipped with these skills," he said.

For her part, Tanga Special Seat MP, Husna Sekiboko, who also serves as the Chairperson of the Parliamentary Committee for Education and Culture, echoed Katambi's sentiments. She noted that many innovations discovered in previous exhibitions had not been fully developed.

"This is the fourth series of exhibitions focusing on science, technology, and innovation. Previously held in Dodoma and Dar es Salaam, the parliament aims to ensure that all discovered innovations are developed to enhance productivity in the country's economic sector," Sekiboko remarked.

On the other hand, Prof. Adolf Mkenda, Minister for Education, Science and Technology, provided an update on the progress of innovations discovered in previous exhibitions. "Already, 42 innovations are in the process of being formalized and introduced to the business market," Mkenda announced.

He underlined the government's commitment to fostering an environment where scientific and technological advancements can thrive and contribute to the nation's economic development.

It was therefore noted that the call to action from Katambi, Sekiboko, and Mkenda reflects a unified effort to propel Tanzania forward through science, technology, and innovation.

And by seizing the available scholarship opportunities and focusing on developing relevant skills, the youth of Tanzania can significantly contribute to the country's industrial and economic growth, ensuring a prosperous future for themselves and the nation.



Patrobas Katambi, Deputy Minister in the Prime Minister's Office Labour, Youth and Employment. File Photo

2024 Zambezi-Kilimanjaro excellence awardee unveiled

By Guardian Reporter

THE African Diplomatic Corps and leaders from the Canadian government and business gathered in Canada's capital, for the Africa day awards ceremony with the African Group of Ambassadors in Ottawa and Pont-Bridge.

A statement issued yesterday by the the Canada-Africa Chamber of Business and shared to this journalist has that Garreth Bloor, President of the Chamber,

received the 2024 Zambezi-Kilimanjaro Excellence Award, 'in recognition of your exceptional contribution to promote relations between Canada and Africa'.

Awarded by The Group of African Ambassadors in Ottawa, fellow award recipients during the evening included former Governor General of Canada Michaëlle Jean, who received the Canada-Africa Friendship Baobab Charter Menden Award.

"In the context of the 2024 Zambezi-Kilimanjaro Excellence Award, I am honoured but must recognize a few leaders who have played a key role in the Chamber's massive expansion - taking Canadian companies to African markets. By far none more so of late than retired Ambassador, Paula Caldwell St-Onge, Chair of the Board of Directors," said Bloor.

The Canada-Africa Chamber of Business recently celebrated

its 30th Anniversary, with messages from Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, Hon. Minister Mary Ng, responsible for international trade, and Premier Doug Ford, of the Province of Ontario.

In addition to recent programs in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya, South Africa and the United States, upcoming conferences in Zimbabwe as well as across Canada are among a range of events on the organization's 2024 calendar.



OBS reveals lack of transparency in global debt, social sectors spending

By Guardian Reporter

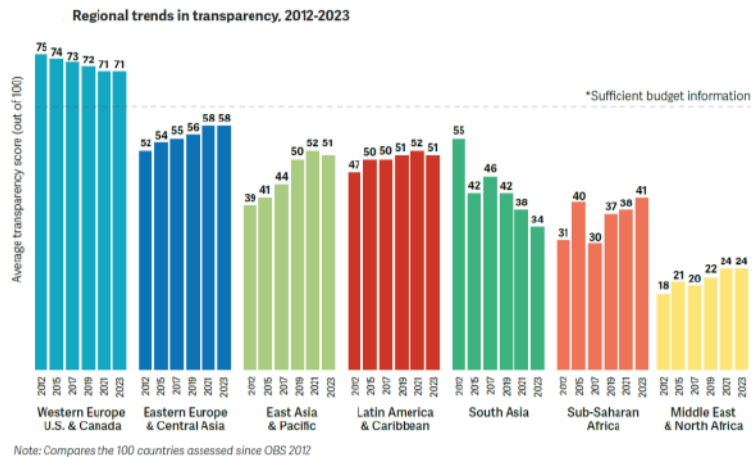
AMID historic levels of crippling global debt, the Open Budget Survey (OBS) finds that countries are not sufficiently transparent and accountable about how they are managing their debt or spending on important social sectors, like health, sanitation and other services.

“Despite modest gains in this latest OBS round, governments are not providing enough information and opportunities for engagement on how they are managing debt and executing budgets in later stages of the budget process.

A statement released today by OBS and shared to this reporter has that these are two key areas that impact whether governments can effectively deliver reliable, quality healthcare, sanitation, and other public services,” said Austin Ndiokwelu, Director of Policy and Global Advocacy at the International Budget Partnership.

This latest round of the survey found a modest one-point increase in global budget transparency scores compared to the previous round. Nevertheless, regional trends show two stories—one of sustained progress and one of downward peril.

Since 2012, East Asia & the Pacific and Sub-Saharan Africa have had the steepest increases over time. Their progress, along with that of Eastern Europe &



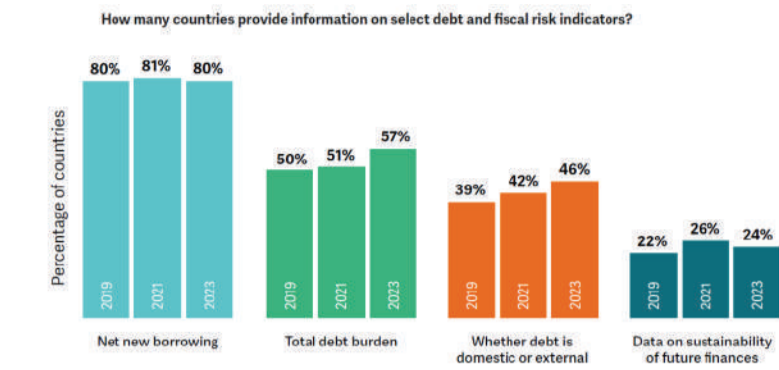
Central Asia and Latin America & the Caribbean, contrast with a significant fall over time in South Asia, stagnation in Western Europe, US & Canada, and continued low performance in the Middle East & North Africa (albeit with improvements).

Major conflicts and other factors contributed to drops in the publication of two key documents—Citizens Budgets and In-Year Reports. Citizen Budgets are a more accessible version of the budget that everyday people can engage with. In-Year Reports are a perfect opportunity to assess whether countries are underspending or overspending compared to their initial budgets on social programs and other sectors that are important to everyday people.

We also found that governments could be more accountable about how they are managing debt and the longer-term ramifications of their debt on their finances. Providing more

space for public scrutiny of this information is critical to avoid recurring debt crises.

Only about half of countries surveyed provide data in their budget proposals on their total debt burden. And less than a quarter offer information on the long-term sustainability of government finances. Even fewer—11 percent—include a projection of financial sustainability in their Executive Budget Proposal that covers a period of at least 10



Note: Compares the 117 countries assessed in the OBS 2019, OBS 2021, and OBS 2023. The OBS asks whether six of the eight key budget documents required by international standards to be published throughout the budget cycle—the Pre-Budget Statement, Executive Budget Proposal, Enacted Budget, In-Year Reports, Mid-Year Review and Year-End Report—provide information on the country's debt, such as the amount of net new borrowing used to finance deficits in the budget year; the country's total debt burden; interest payments on the debt; and the composition of the debt, including interest rates, maturity profiles and whether or not the debt is domestic or external. In addition, it asks questions on fiscal risk, such as whether or not countries provide any analysis of the long-term sustainability of their public finances.

years. Worryingly, legislative oversight has steadily declined over the last two survey rounds, falling three points from its pre-COVID pandemic mark. The pandemic provided an excuse for many executive governments to sidestep the legislature in its budget practices and legislative oversight practices have not bounced back since.

Participation practices are still nascent, although 83 percent of

countries have at least one mechanism for the public to engage in the budget process. Importantly, line ministries have much fewer spaces for people to have a say on sector budgets.

Less than a third of line ministries invite people's input into sector budgets, compared to a little under three-fifths of finance ministries and a little under three-fifths of legislatures. This is a reform opportunity as line ministries make important decisions

around social spending that directly impacts people's lives.

“Engaging the public is a winning proposition,” said Ndiokwelu. “The budgetary process offers many opportunities for governments to share information about public resource decisions they are making and to seek community generated evidence that can help them make better decisions that reflect people's priorities. This can help restore the public's trust in government's ability to deliver economic dividends and improve people's lives.”

The OBS is the world's only independent, comparative assessment of transparency, oversight and participation in national budgets. The latest round of the biennial survey assessed 125 countries, which are home to 7.5 billion people (95 percent of the world's population) and encompassed budgets totaling more than US\$33.5 trillion in spending in Fiscal Year 2022.

It is conducted in partnership with local researchers, peer reviewers, and government reviewers who completed 30,000 indicators across all surveyed countries, assessing 672 publicly available budget documents and 299 participation mechanisms.

ATE initiatives do to empower 1006 youths

By Francis Kajubi

THE Association of Tanzania Employers (ATE), in collaboration with its partners, has effectively delivered skills development programmes to empower 1,006 young individuals since the beginning of 2021. This initiative aims to enhance employability and foster economic growth in the region.

The initiative, known as the Technical and Vocational Education and Training project (TVET), has enabled these youths to acquire the necessary skills for both employment and self-employment opportunities.

ATE, in conjunction with the Trade Union Congress of Tanzania (TUCTA), Danish Industries (DI), and Danish Trade Union Development Agency (DTDA), is working towards bridging the skill gap in Tanzania.

The project focuses on sectors such as fitter mechanics, domestic and industrial electrical installation, food production, hotel management, bakery, and refrigeration and air conditioning (cooling).

ATE Chief Executive Officer, Suzanne Ndomba told the press yesterday in Dar es Salaam that the project features key players in the skills development Initiatives from the private sector.

Ndomba said that ATE has been working with TVET in implementation of the project for it to impact young graduates.

“The project is ongoing as today we are signing a new memorandum of understanding with TVET institutions such as the Confederation of Tanzania Industries (CTI),” she said.

The MoU verifies the collaboration between ATE and TVET for enrollment of graduates in their institutions to pursue practical training for a period of three months.

She asserted that ATE also signed MoU with the Hotel Association of Tanzania, TAHA, and the Tea Association of Tanzania.

She said the project is being implemented with TVET such as VETA, Mzingo Vocational Training College, Kihonda VTC, Mikumi VTC and Don Bosco Vocational Training College in Dar es Salaam and Morogoro regions.

“The purpose is to reduce the skills gap. Our recruitment is done through the VTC. We have successfully trained 19 mentors in the areas of project focus,” said Ndomba.

According to her, the project has so far featured 57 companies from various economic sectors through placement of interns' agreements.

The first batch featured 270 of whom 237 had successfully attached to companies for skills development. For the second batch 436 of whom 324 students were successfully attached to companies as interns.

For the third batch almost 300 students have enrolled.

The project further at enabling youths to acquire skills that enables them to take part in self-employment from the quality practical skills they are being exposed to. Hery Mkunda, Trade Union Congress of Tanzania (TUCTA) Secretary General commended ATE for coming up with project that plays a major role in bridging the skills gap among young Tanzanians.



MONDAY - WEDNESDAY FROM 10:30 PM



ITV

WED 28 FEB

- 06:00 Al Jazeera
- 09:00 Kumekucha Michezo rpt
- 10:00 Meza Huru Rpt
- 11:30 Tomorrow Today rpt
- 12:00 Dw News Africa rpt
- 12:30 Our Earth
- 13:00 Telenovela I Plead Guilty rpt
- 14:00 Capchat
- 15:00 Out & About rpt
- 15:30 Eco@Africa
- 16:00 Bussines Edition Rpt
- 16:30 Culinary delight rpt
- 17:00 Innovation rpt
- 17:30 Meza huru
- 19:00 Sports Gazette
- 19:30 Chetu ni chetu
- 20:00 Monday Agenda Rpt
- 20:45 Telenovela: I Plead Guilty 21:30 Capital Prime News
- 22:00 Dakika 45:
- 22:45 The Décor
- 23:15 Al Jazeera

THURS 29 FEB

- 06:00 Al Jazeera
- 09:00 Kumekucha Michezo rpt
- 10:00 Meza Huru Rpt
- 11:30 Spots gazette
- 12:00 Innovation
- 12:30 Culinary
- 13:00 Telenovela rpt: I Plead Guilty rpt
- 14:00 Our Earth rpt
- 14:30 DW news Africa rpt
- 15:00 Jagina rpt
- 15:30 Mizengwe rpt
- 16:00 Tomorrow Today
- 16:30 Business edition rpt
- 17:00 In good shape
- 17:30 Meza huru
- 19:00 Out & About Rpt
- 19:30 Eco@Africa
- 20:00 Our Earth Rpt
- 20:45 Telenovela: I Plead Guilty 21:30 Capital Prime News
- 22:00 Capchat rpt
- 23:00 Al Jazeera

FRID 01 MARCH

- 06:00 Al Jazeera

- 09:00 Kumekucha Michezo rpt
- 10:00 Meza Huru Rpt
- 11:30 Capchat
- 12:30 Decor
- 13:00 Telenovela I Plead Guilty rpt
- 14:00 Culinary rpt
- 14:30 Ripoti Maalum
- 15:00 Dk 45 rpt
- 16:00 Dw News Africa rpt
- 16:30 The Monday Agenda rpt
- 17:30 Meza huru
- 19:00 Rev
- 19:00 Out & About Rpt
- 20:00 Aibu Yako
- 20:15 Local Pgm: Business Edition
- 20:45 Telenovela: I Plead Guilty 21:30 Capital Prime News
- 22:00 Malumbano ya hoja rpt
- 00:00 Al Jazeera

SAT 02 MARCH

- 08:00 Al Jazeera
- 09:00 Rev rpt
- 09:30 Jagina rpt
- 10:00 Culinary delight rpt
- 10:30 Innovation rpt
- 11:00 Out n'about rpt
- 11:30 Sports Gazette rpt
- 12:00 Shamba Lulu rpt
- 12:30 Our Earth rpt
- 13:00 Business edition rpt
- 13:30 Aljazeera
- 14:30 Telenovela I Plead Guilty rpt
- 17:15 Eco@Africa
- 17:45 Bundesliga kick off
- 18:15 Capchat rpt
- 19:15 Mizengwe
- 19:30 The Decor
- 20:00 Ripoti Maalum
- 20:30 Tomorrow Today
- 21:00 Out n'About
- 21:30 Capchat Rpt
- 23:00 Al Jazeera
- 01:00 Al Jazeera

SUN 03 MARCH

- 08:00 Aljazeera
- 09:00 In good shape
- 10:00 Capchat rpt
- 11:00 Sports Gazette rpt

- 11:30 Dw
- 12:00 Jagina rpt
- 12:30 Bundesliga Kick Off rpt
- 13:00 In good shape rpt
- 13:30 Dw
- 15:15 Aibu yako
- 15:30 Rev rpt
- 16:00 Dakika 45 rpt
- 16:45 Mizengwe rpt
- 17:00 The Decor rpt
- 17:30 Meza huru
- 19:00 Eco@Africa
- 19:30 Cookery pgm: Culinary Delights
- 20:00 Jagina
- 20:30 Out & About rpt
- 21:00 Dw News Africa
- 21:30 Capchat live
- 22:15 Telenovela rpt: I Plead Guilty rpt
- 00:00 Al Jazeera

CAPITAL TV

THURSDAY 29 FEB

- 5:00 Soap rpt: Uzalo
- 5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi
- 6:00 HABARI
- 6:40 Kumekucha
- 7:30 HABARI
- 8:00 Kumekucha Michezo
- 8:55 Habari za saa
- 9:00 Kumekucha Kishindo
- 9:30 Soap rpt: Laws of love
- 9:55 Habari za saa
- 10:00 Watoto wetu
- 10:30 Shamba lulu
- 10:55 Habari za saa
- 11:00 Ripoti maalum
- 11:55 Habari za saa
- 12:00 Al Jazeera
- 12:30 Jarida la wanawake rpt
- 12:55 Habari za saa
- 13:00 Kipindi maalum rpt: BOT
- 13:30 Art and Lifestyle
- 13:55 Habari za saa
- 14:00 Shamsam za pwani rpt
- 14:55 Habari za saa
- 15:00 Meza huru
- 16:30 Watoto wetu

- 17:00 The Base
- 18:00 Hapa na Pale
- 18:15 Mapishi
- 18:30 Jagina
- 19:00 Usafiri wako
- 19:30 Soap: Laws of love
- 20:00 Habari
- 21:05 Malumbano ya hoja
- 23:00 Jiji letu
- 23:30 Music: The Base
- 00:30 Al Jazeera

FRIDAY 1 MARCH

- 5:00 Soap rpt: Uzalo
- 5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi
- 6:00 HABARI
- 6:40 Kumekucha
- 7:30 HABARI
- 8:00 Kumekucha Michezo
- 8:55 Habari za saa
- 9:00 Kumekucha kishindo
- 9:30 Soap rpt: Laws of love
- 9:55 Habari za saa
- 10:00 Watoto wetu
- 10:30 Usafiri wako
- 10:55 Habari za saa
- 11:00 Kipindi maalum: Watumishi housing
- 11:20 Jagina rpt
- 11:55 Habari za saa
- 12:00 Al Jazeera
- 12:30 Kipindi maalum rpt: Tanesco
- 12:55 Habari za saa
- 13:00 Kipindi Maalum: Maisha ni Nyumba rpt
- 13:30 Kipindi Maalum rpt: Sema na Mahakama
- 13:55 Habari za saa
- 14:00 Kipindi Maalum rpt: Sema na Mahakama
- 14:30 DW: Afrimax rpt
- 14:55 Habari za saa
- 15:00 Meza huru:
- 16:30 Watoto Wetu
- 17:00 The Base (DJ Show)
- 17:30 Kisiam
- 18:00 Hapa na Pale
- 18:15 Top ten
- 19:00 Shamba lulu
- 19:30 Soap: Laws of love
- 20:00 Habari
- 21:05 Kipima Joto
- 23:00 Jiji letu
- 23:30 The Base
- 00:30 Al Jazeera

SATURDAY 2 MARCH

- 5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi
- 6:00 HABARI
- 6:40 Kumekucha
- 7:00 Habari
- 8:00 Al Jazeera
- 9:00 Watoto wetu
- 10:05 Shika Bamba 5
- 10:35 Mjue Zaidi rpt
- 11:15 Chetu ni chetu rpt
- 11:50 Hawavumi lakini wamo
- 12:50 Art and lifestyle
- 13:20 Shamba lulu
- 13:50 Soap rpt: Laws of love
- 15:45 Igizo: Mizengwe
- 16:10 Igizo: Slay Queen
- 17:00 Shamsam za Pwani
- 18:00 Hapa na Pale
- 18:15 ITV Top 10 rpt
- 19:00 Jungu kuu
- 19:30 Shika Bamba
- 20:00 Habari
- 21:05 Igizo: Slay Queen
- 21:40 Art and Lifestyle
- 22:10 ITV Top 10
- 22:50 Hawavumi lakini wamo
- 23:40 Soap: Uzalo rpt
- 00:30 Al Jazeera

SUNDAY 3 MARCH

- 5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi
- 6:00 HABARI
- 6:40 Kumekucha
- 7:00 Habari
- 8:00 Al Jazeera
- 09:00 Watoto Wetu
- 10:00 Soap rpt: Laws of love
- 11:45 Hawavumi lakini wamo rpt:
- 12:45 Mjue zaidi
- 13:30 Usafiri wako
- 14:00 Tamasha la Michezo
- 15:30 Mwangaza
- 16:30 ITV Top 10 rpt
- 17:20 Kipindi cha kikristo
- 18:00 Hapa na Pale
- 18:15 Mapishi
- 18:30 Matukio ya wiki
- 19:30 Igizo: Slay Queen
- 20:00 Habari
- 21:05 Kipindi maalum: Biko
- 21:10 Igizo: Mizengwe
- 21:25 Mchezo Supa Jackpot
- 21:40 Mjue Zaidi
- 22:20 Soap: Uzalo rpt
- 00:30 Al Jazeera



Job seekers eagerly await their opportunity. File Photo

WORLD

Tanks reach Rafah's center as Israel presses assault

CAIRO

ISRAELI tanks reached the center of Rafah for the first time yesterday, witnesses said, three weeks into a ground operation in the southern Gaza city that has sparked global condemnation.

The tanks were spotted near Al-Awda mosque, a central Rafah landmark, the witnesses told Reuters. The Israeli military said its forces continued to operate in the Rafah area without commenting on reported advancements into the city center.

Overnight, its forces pounded the city with airstrikes and tank fire, residents said, pressing its offensive despite an international outcry over an attack on Sunday that sparked a blaze in a tent camp, killing at least 45 Palestinians, more than half of them children, women and the elderly.

Since that strike, at least 26 more people have been killed by Israeli fire in Rafah, officials in the enclave run by

Hamas militants said.

Israeli tanks pushed towards western neighbourhoods and took positions on the Zurub hilltop in western Rafah in one of the worst nights of bombardment reported by residents. Yesterday, witnesses reported gunbattles between Israeli troops and Hamas-led fighters in the Zurub area.

Witnesses in Rafah said the Israeli military appeared to have brought in remote-operated armoured vehicles and there was no immediate sign of personnel in or around them. An Israeli military spokesperson had no immediate response.

Since Israel launched its incursion by taking control of the border crossing with Egypt three weeks ago, tanks had probed around the edges of Rafah and entered some of its eastern districts but had not yet entered the city in full force.

Reacting to Sunday night's attack in a camp where families displaced



Palestinian children on a vehicle fleeing the area of Tal al-Sultan in Rafah yesterday following Israeli strikes.

from assaults elsewhere in Gaza had sought shelter, global leaders urged the implementation of a World Court order to halt Israel's assault.

Residents said the Tel Al-Sultan area, the scene of Sunday's deadly strike, was still being heavily bombarded.

"Tank shells are falling everywhere in Tel Al-Sultan. Many families have fled their houses in western Rafah under fire throughout the night," one resident told Reuters over a chat app. Around one million people have fled the Israeli offensive in Rafah since early May, the UN agency for Palestinian refugees (UNRWA) reported yesterday.

Israel has kept up attacks despite a ruling by the top UN court on Friday ordering it to stop, arguing that the court's ruling grants it some scope for military action there.

Spain, Ireland and Norway will officially recognize a Palestinian state yesterday, despite an angry reaction from Israel, which has found itself increasingly isolated after more than seven months of conflict in Gaza. The three nations have painted their decision as a way to speed efforts to secure a ceasefire in Israel's conflict with Hamas.

More than 36,000 Palestinians have been killed in Israel's offensive, Gaza's health ministry says. Israel launched the operation after Hamas-led militants attacked southern Israeli communities on Oct 7, killing around 1,200 people and seizing more than 250 hostages, according to Israeli tallies.

Israel says it wants to root out Hamas fighters holed up in Rafah and rescue hostages it says are being held in the area. **Agencies**

UK's Sunak proposes tax cuts for pensioners in new election pledge

LONDON

BRITISH Prime Minister Rishi Sunak on Monday proposed tax cuts for millions of pensioners in his latest campaign pledge, highlighting the importance of older voters in the upcoming July election.

Sunak's Conservative Party said it would introduce a new age-related allowance and deliver a tax cut of around 100 pounds (\$128) for each of 8 million pensioners in 2025, rising to almost 300 pounds a year by the end of the next parliament.

"This bold action demonstrates we are on the side of pensioners. The alternative is Labour dragging everyone in receipt of the full state pension into income tax for the first time in history," Sunak, who last week called a general election for July 4, said in the statement.

The number of pensioners in Britain rose by 140,000 to 12.6 million in the year to February 2023. Close to 50 million Britons will be eligible to vote in the election, which opinion polls predict is likely to end 14 years of Conservative rule in the country.

The Conservative Party said the proposal comes alongside its commitment to the so-called triple lock, which guarantees increases to publicly funded pensions by the level of earnings, inflation or 2.5 percent, whichever is highest. Labour has also committed to retain the policy, which was introduced by a Conservative government in 2011 to prevent pensioners from falling into poverty.

However, costs associated with it have come under increased scrutiny in recent years after British inflation soared, pushing up the government bill for state pensions by an additional 11 billion pounds last year.

The new proposal, which the party termed "triple lock plus", will cost 2.4 billion pounds a year by 2029/30 and be funded through the government's previously announced plan to raise an extra 6 billion pounds a year by clamping down on tax avoidance and evasion, the party said.

"This is just another desperate move from a chaotic Tory party torching any remaining facade of its claims to economic credibility," Labour shadow paymaster general Jonathan Ashworth said in a statement on the plans.



BRICS confident of Russia's chairmanship, special attention to solving problems of 'Global South'

MOSCOW

THE International Scientific and Practical Conference "BRICS in the Era of Global Social Transformations" was held in Russia, where an Indian professor expressed his confidence that during Russia's BRICS chairmanship, special attention will be paid to solving the problems of the global south.

The International Scientific and Practical Conference "BRICS in the Era of Global Social Transformations" was held in Moscow at the Faculty of Global Studies, Lomonosov Moscow State University (MSU), TV BRICS reported.

The conference was held in three parts, the opening ceremony, the plenary session, and the session.

Viktor Sadovnichy, Rector of Lomonosov Moscow State University, opened the conference with a welcoming video address.

Moreover, the event was attended by scientists from Russia, China, South Africa, and India.

During the plenary session, Sanjay Kumar Pandey, Professor at the Institute of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), made a presentation on the theme "BRICS and Global South: Perspective from India". Pandey stressed that the Asian, African, and Latin American countries are increasingly prominent in this dynamically changing world, TV BRICS reported.

The Professor also highlighted that there is a need to



pay more attention on solving the problems that arise in this region. "I am sure that during Russia's BRICS chairmanship, special attention will be paid to solving the problems of the global south," he said.

Meanwhile, Sadovnichy said, "Today BRICS is the vanguard, the core of the formation of a certain world order based on deep respect, civilizational identity and values of the peoples of all countries, on the desire for

equal dialogue and mutually beneficial cooperation".

Candidate of Historical Sciences, Doctor of Political Sciences, UNESCO Chairholder of the Faculty of Global Processes of MSU Yuriy Sayamov explained what role the BRICS countries can play in solving global social problems, TV BRICS reported.

"BRICS represents a format that opens up the possibility of fair participation of countries in international relations and

world processes. The countries of the group should focus on the need to fulfil the global development agenda approved in 2015 by the UN General Assembly until 2030. However, we should already think about a renewed global agenda, which will reflect the new configuration of the global world," Sayamov said.

He further emphasized that the organic integration of the new participants in BRICS is one of the goals of Russia's BRICS chairmanship in 2024.

ANI

African officials root for human capital development to spur growth

NAIROBI

THE next phase of socio-economic transformation in Africa will hinge on upgrading the vocational and soft skills of the continent's youthful workforce, senior officials said on Monday.

Speaking on the sidelines of the African Development Bank's (AfDB) 2024 Annual Meetings underway in the Kenyan capital of Nairobi, the officials pressed the case for skills development as a prerequisite for achieving Africa's envisaged growth targets.

Kenyan Cabinet Secretary for National Treasury and Economic Planning Njuguna Ndung'u said that as Africa transitions to a knowledge-based economy, the imperative to improve access to advanced training among the youth has become urgent.

"We need to harness education and training as we embark on modernizing our economies, making them resilient and responsive to the needs of the next generation of Africa's workforce," Ndung'u said.

Kenya is hosting the AfDB's Annual

Meetings under the theme "Africa's Transformation, the African Development Bank Group, and the Reform of the Global Financial Architecture."

More than 3,000 delegates, including heads of state and government, ministers, central bank governors, representatives of regional blocs, civil society, the private sector and academia, are expected to attend the five-day event starting Monday.

Martha Phiri, director of human capital at the Youth and Skills Development of the AfDB Group, said the continent

should leverage innovation and digital skills of the youth to realize inclusive growth.

According to Phiri, many African countries stand a higher chance of leaping into middle-income status once they absorb a critical mass of the skilled workforce in the mainstream economy.

She called for reorienting the continent's education system to market demands to tackle unemployment and security threats including crime and civil strife.

Xinhua

Chinese foreign minister meets with Yemeni counterpart

BEIJING

CHINESE Foreign Minister Wang Yi met with Shaye'a Mohsen Al-Zindani, Yemen's minister of foreign affairs and expatriates, in Beijing yesterday, who is here for the 10th ministerial meeting of the China-Arab States Cooperation Forum.

Wang, also a member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China Central Committee, said that China firmly supports the sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity of Yemen, and always cherishes its traditional friendship with Yemen.

Noting that the upcoming 10th ministerial meeting of the China-Arab States Cooperation Forum is an important meeting that builds on the past heritage and opens up the future, Wang said it serves the common interests of both China and the Arab States to strengthen solidarity and coordination to jointly meet challenges under the current international situation.

The tense situation in the Red Sea is a prominent manifestation of the spillover from the Gaza conflict, and the urgent task is to promote an immediate ceasefire in Gaza. China calls for an end to the harassment of civilian vessels and to ensure the safety of waterways in the Red Sea, Wang said.

China hopes that all parties involved in the Yemen issue will be committed to a political settlement, continue to resolve disputes and differences through dialogue and negotiation, and strive for early reconciliation, Wang added.

Al-Zindani said that Yemen attaches great importance to its relations with China, and abides by the one-China principle. Yemen hopes that China will continue to play a greater role in cooling down the situation in the Red Sea and promoting reconciliation and reconstruction of Yemen. It is believed that the 10th ministerial meeting of the China-Arab States Cooperation Forum will elevate China-Arab collective cooperation to a new level, Al-Zindani said.



China sees continuous development of comprehensive bonded zones

COMPREHENSIVE bonded zones (CBZs), known for their high-level openness and streamlined customs clearance procedures, are special customs supervision areas established by the Chinese government.

Many preferential policies are available in China's CBZs, including tax refunds upon entry, bonded imports, and free movement of goods within the zones, which can significantly reduce the institutional costs of transactions.

Over the past decade, the number of CBZs in China has been steadily growing since the first one became operational in 2007. So far, over 160 CBZs have been set up in 31 provinces, autonomous

regions, and municipalities across the country.

The Beijing Zhongguancun comprehensive bonded zone (hereafter referred to as "Zhongguancun CBZ"), the first one in China featuring research and development (R&D) and innovation, has passed acceptance review in April. The bonded zone has a planned area of 0.4 square kilometers and an industrial space of 660,000 square meters. It will develop integrated circuit and pharmaceutical industries as the core, and artificial intelligence and technology service industries as the focus. Besides, it aims to expand bonded service formats, including headquarters economy, cross-border

e-commerce, among others.

The first phase of the Zhongguancun CBZ involves an industrial space covering 100,000 square meters, which will accommodate the main facilities of 11 enterprises, including HyperStrong, Naton Technology Group, and Agile Robots.

"The Zhongguancun CBZ is a crucial experiment to examine how CBZs can contribute to sci-tech innovation," said Feng Bin, deputy head of Beijing Customs.

According to Feng, by leveraging the policy advantages, the Zhongguancun CBZ aims to cultivate new business models that integrate bonded trade with other elements, drive technological innova-

tion and foster new quality productive forces within the zone, while also strengthening industry collaboration inside and outside the zone.

Here is a vivid example to showcase the efficiency of China's CBZs. In the past, Suzuki cars manufactured in India had to pass through South Korea before being exported to Central and South America, which involved multiple transfers, customs declarations, and other intricate processes.

Today, things are not the same anymore. The vehicles can be temporarily stored in the Yangshan special comprehensive bonded zone (hereafter referred to as "Yangshan special CBZ") in east China's

Shanghai municipality, and later shipped to their final destinations.

Shou Shunyang, an official with Yangshan Customs, used a recent batch of goods as an example to illustrate the bonded vehicle transit business within the zone, where the production and market ends are both outside of China.

On April 26, a total of 2,687 Indian-made Suzuki vehicles arrived at the Nangang terminal of Shanghai and were immediately transferred in bulk to the adjacent Yangshan special CBZ for bonded storage.

Among them, 1,379 were shipped to Guatemala, Mexico, and Honduras on May 5, while the rest were destined

for Chile and Nicaragua.

It is reported that since starting independent customs operation in May 2020, the Yangshan special CBZ has made continuous breakthroughs in building a new type of trade demonstration zone, a global shipping hub, and an incubator for innovative business.

Additionally, the dense shipping routes and frequent sailings at the ports in Shanghai provide more options for consolidated shipping, significantly improving efficiency and reducing costs for businesses.

It is estimated that compared to traditional routes, this shipping route can reduce the logistics cost of ex-

porting these vehicles by 12 percent and shorten the shipping time by 25 percent.

After four years of development, the number of registered enterprises in the Yangshan special CBZ has reached 1,591, with a total import and export value exceeding 780 billion yuan (\$107.73 billion), and an average compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of over 40 percent.

The continuously growing and upgrading CBZs are bringing new opportunities and injecting new momentum into the development of foreign trade across China. For instance, there are 13 CBZs in south China's Guangdong province.

People's Daily

WHA: Over 100 nations back China's position on Taiwan

BEIJING

CHINA'S position on Taiwan-related issues at the World Health Assembly is widely understood and supported by the international community and over 100 countries explicitly expressed support for China's position by writing to the WHO director-general and through other means, said a Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson on Monday.

The spokesperson made the remarks regarding that the 77th World Health Assembly rejected the so-called proposal of "inviting Taiwan to participate in the WHA as an observer" submitted by certain countries.

The General Committee and the Plenary Session of the 77th WHA respectively decided to reject the so-called proposal, said the spokesperson, adding that this has been the eighth year

in a row that the WHA has rejected the so-called proposal concerning Taiwan.

This fully demonstrated that the one-China principle is where global opinion trends and the arc of history bends, and must not be challenged, the spokesperson added.

The Chinese central government attaches great importance to the health and well-being of our compatriots in Taiwan, said the spokesperson, adding that Taiwan's medical and health experts can participate in the World Health Organization technical meetings under the prerequisite that the one-China principle is upheld.

Over the past year alone, medical and technical experts from China's Taiwan region took part in WHO technical activities 24 times, and all the applications were approved by the central government, the spokesperson



This file photo taken on June 20, 2019 shows the night view of Taipei, Southeast China's Taiwan. XINHUA

stressed.

There is an International Health Regulations Contact Point in the Taiwan region for it to promptly access and report to the WHO concerning information related to health emergencies and the Taiwan region has sufficient and unimpeded channels to partici-

pate in the technical communication and cooperation in the WHO, the spokesperson said, adding that there is no such thing as a "gap" in global anti-epidemic efforts.

Compared with a handful of countries' political manipulation that trumpets Taiwan's participation in the

WHA, the central government's proper arrangement and concrete actions demonstrate real meaning and sincerity for the livelihood and well-being of our compatriots in Taiwan, said the spokesperson.

"Once again we would like to make it clear to the Dem-

ocratic Progressive Party authorities: the abiding commitment of the international community to the one-China principle is unshakable and the trend that China will be reunified is not to be reversed.

"Taiwan independence" runs contrary to the interests of our compatriots in Taiwan, and any attempt to seek "Taiwan independence" by relying on external forces leads nowhere," the spokesperson said.

"We urge certain countries to stop distorting and challenging United Nations General Assembly Resolution 2758, stop fudging and hollowing out the one-China principle, stop politicizing health issues, and stop interfering in China's internal affairs by exploiting the Taiwan question. Using Taiwan to contain China will only end in failure," the spokesperson said.

Xinhua

Conference in Switzerland not to settle situation in Ukraine – Kremlin

TASKHENT

THE Kremlin thinks that a conference on Ukraine slated to take place in Switzerland in June is futile, Kremlin Spokesman Dmitry Peskov told the RT TV channel.

"So far, we've seen an attempt to prepare a conference in Switzerland. A conference which, from our point of view, is absolutely futile in terms of seeking some ways of settling the conflict around Ukraine," he said.

The Kremlin official branded the idea to discuss these issues at a summit without Russia as absurd. He noted that, however, Western countries "decided to get involved in this absurd affair anyway."

Agencies



EU sanctions come as attempt to punish Russia for its independent policy – Russian envoy

BRUSSELS

THE new restrictions imposed by the European Union are indefinite, and in fact, come as an attempt by Brussels to punish Russia for its independent foreign policy, Acting Russian Permanent Representative to the EU Kirill Logvinov said in a commentary to Russian journalists.

"It is surprising that the EU took so long to finally establish a sanc-

tions regime specifically against our country - in view of the situation in Russia'. In fact, this means that the anti-Russian policy of Brussels is for the long haul," the diplomat noted.

"The illegitimate restrictions introduced today and, obviously, waiting for their turn new ones, are seen by the EU as the punishment of Russia for its independent policy, for its defending its

sovereign choice and refusing to compromise its national interests. The very name of the regime [of restrictions] is seen by the EU as a formal basis for blacklisting any Russian and any legal entity that does not fit within Western ideas about Russia and its future," he said.

"Alas, the West does not realize that no matter how hard it tries, no restrictions can impose on

our country a model of development that is at odds with its own priorities," Logvinov summed up.

The European Union on Monday imposed sanctions on Russia's Federal Penitentiary Service and on 19 investigators, prosecutors and judges involved in the cases of Alexey Navalny, Memorial co-chairman Oleg Orlov, artist Sasha Skolichenko and other prisoners.

The sanctions apply to, among others, Moscow City Court judge Tatiana Dodonova, Federal Penitentiary Service's inspection chief Alexander Yermolenko, prosecutor Alexander Gladyshev, Russian Investigative Committee's investigator Ilya Savchenko, Moscow Golovivsky district court judge Elena Astakhova and Supreme Court judge Nikolay Dubovik.

Agencies

UAE's media, broadcast conference successfully concludes its 30th edition

JOHANNESBURG

SOUTH Africans began casting their special votes in the 2024 national and provincial elections on Monday, according to the Electoral Commission of South Africa (IEC).

Masego Sheburi, the IEC's deputy chief electoral officer, briefed the media in Johannesburg about the special voting process, which is available for those who are infirm, have impaired mobility, or wish to vote early due to potential unavailability on the general election day.

The IEC reported that a total of 1,668,076 South Africans have been approved for special votes, including 624,593 voters who will be visited by trained election officers



Electoral workers put up signs to indicate a polling station at Zibambeleni old age home in KwaDadeka, near Durban, South Africa, May 27, 2024. (PHOTO / AP)

at their homes or places of confinement. The special voting period will conclude on Tuesday.

"As at 2:00 pm (1200 GMT) today, an estimated 201,794 voting station visits of

special votes were processed in 22,626 service points. The Electoral Commission is happy with the turnout and urges South Africans to continue to go out in their numbers to vote on May 29, 2024,"

Sheburi said.

He said that out of the 435 voting stations that experienced problems on Monday morning, only 107 remained closed due to external factors. The IEC is working to ensure these stations will be open on Tuesday. "The special voting process adheres to all security and integrity protocols of regular voting, including scrutiny by party agents and observers. Special votes will be reconciled against the voters' roll and the list of approved special votes.

Additional checks include the use of a double envelope system to preserve the secrecy of the voters' ballots," Sheburi explained.

He added that all special votes will be securely collected and stored overnight before being transported to voting stations on May 29.

Among those who voted on Monday were Minister of Health Joe Phaahla in Limpopo Province and African National Congress Chairperson Gwede Mantashe in Johannesburg.

Kenyan highway upgrade boosts business, enhances regional connectivity

NAIROBI

IRENE Wairimu has been selling cereals for the past 10 years along the 84-km Kenol-Sagana-Marua Highway, which links Nairobi, Kenya's capital, to the agriculturally rich central region. Before its upgrade to a four-lane dual highway, it was a congested two-lane road that travelers often avoided.

Since the new road opened, vehicle traffic has more than doubled, bringing more customers to her roadside stall brimming with agricultural produce from nearby farms, Wairimu said. "I am receiving more customers because the road was widened, allowing more people to reach my stall," she said.

Wairimu is among hundreds of vendors who sell various agricultural products along the Kenol-Sagana-Marua Highway. The road improvement project, which began in 2020, is being undertaken by Jiangxi Transportation Engineering Group and China Wu Yi Company.

It aims to link Nairobi to the agriculturally rich central regions and Moyale town, near the Ethiopian border. The highway passes through the counties of Muranga, Kirinyaga and Nyeri, easing traffic congestion and enhancing Kenya's status as a regional transport and logistics hub. The new road also provides people traveling from Nairobi to the Mount Kenya tourism circuit with uninterrupted dual carriageway, significantly enhancing road safety.

Cleophas Makau, deputy director of the Kenya National Highways Authority and the project's coordina-

tor, said the four-lane highway is set to be completed by August.

Makau noted that the business community along the highway is already benefiting, with travel time between Sagana town and Nairobi reduced from an average of two hours to about one hour.

The road is the main artery for transporting agricultural produce, the backbone of central Kenya's economy.

Food items, including bananas, rice and tomatoes, are transported from farms to feed the growing population in Nairobi and other markets in cities like Mombasa, Eldoret, Nakuru and Kisumu. It is also the main transport corridor for tea and coffee, two of Kenya's primary cash crops, which are mainly exported.

AbdiAziz Mohamed, human resource manager at a local avocado products company, said that since the road was expanded, farmers from central Kenya can easily access their facility and deliver their commodities.

As a result, the company has expanded its capacity and can now process about 70 tons of avocados daily. Gladys Wairimu, another trader of agricultural produce along the road, also benefits from the project. She said that her business has picked up since the road was expanded from a single lane to a double lane.

The road project is a key artery in Kenya, forming part of the Trans-African Highway that runs from Egypt to South Africa, said Richard Malinga, principal transport engineer at the African Development Bank that financed the project.

Xinhua

WHO chief addresses World Health Assembly, mentions Global Traditional Medicine Centre established in India

GENEVA

WORLD Health Organisation (WHO) Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus on Monday mentioned the Global Traditional Medicine Centre established in India, and the first global summit on traditional medicine, organised by the WHO and co-hosted by the Ministry of Ayush, in his address at the 77th World Health Assembly in Geneva.

While presenting his report to the 77th World Health Assembly in Geneva, Ghebreyesus said, "With WHO leadership, opportunities for technology transfer and geographically diversified manufacturing continue to expand.

15 partners joined the mRNA Technology Transfer Programme, and with WHO support, have started expanding the technology pipeline to include new vaccines of regional and global interest."

"We also established the Global Traditional Medicine Centre in India, and hosted the first global summit on traditional medicine," he added. In 2022, the WHO and the Government of India signed an agreement to establish the WHO Global Centre for Traditional Medicine. Supported by an investment of USD 250 million from the Indian government, this global knowledge centre for traditional medicine aims to harness the potential of tra-

ditional medicine from across the world through modern science and technology to improve the health of people and the planet, according to a WHO press release.

In his address to the World Health Assembly, he noted that 2023 was a year of many challenges, but also of many achievements. He called 2023 a productive year in WHO's work supporting access to medicines and other health products.

ANI

Trilateral summit witnesses China-Japan-S. Korea joint efforts to revitalise cooperation

SEOUL

CHINA, Japan and South Korea on Monday cemented trilateral cooperation and reiterated that amity and mutual trust should be the key tone of the trio's relations to benefit themselves as well as peace and prosperity of the region and beyond.

Chinese Premier Li Qiang, South Korean President Yoon Suk-yeol and Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida had in-depth exchanges at the ninth trilateral summit meeting and the eighth trilateral business summit among the three countries in Seoul.

The trilateral meeting, stalled for more than four years due to the pandemic and geopolitical interferences, yielded abundant results on deepening cooperation in various fields.

Major tangible outcomes include the issuance of the Joint Declaration of the Ninth China-Japan-ROK Trilateral Summit, the Joint Statement on a 10-Year Vision for Trilateral IP Cooperation, and the Joint Statement on Future Pandemic Prevention, Preparedness and Response, among others.

The trio also agreed to deliver on the Trilateral Cooperation Vision for the Next Decade adopted at the eighth trilateral summit in China's southwestern city

of Chengdu in December 2019. A keynote of this year's trilateral gathering is the three parties' commitment to harmonious coexistence and mutual support based on good neighborliness and close partnership, as this year marks the 25th anniversary of the China-Japan-South Korea trilateral cooperation mechanism.

External disruption should not stand in the way of trilateral cooperation or overshadow solidarity among the three Asian neighbors.

Notably, leaders of the three countries refocused on economic integration as the ballast of their cooperation. They vowed to strengthen trade connectivity, maintain stable and smooth industrial and supply chains, and resume the negotiations of the China-Japan-South Korea free trade agreement as soon as possible.

The leaders reaffirmed endeavors to foster a free, open, fair, non-discriminatory, transparent, inclusive, and predictable trade and investment environment.

Chey Tae-won, chairman of the Korea Chamber of Commerce and Industry, said the summit meeting marks a significant milestone as the three economies have recovered from the pandemic and are now on a growth trajectory.

Ren Hongbin, head of the China Council for the Pro-

motion of International Trade, stressed the importance of improving the investment environment, stabilizing supply chains and advancing industrial cooperation.

These efforts are expected to boost trade and sales, which will further solidify the region's economic resilience and unleash growth potential, Ren said.

As Asian manufacturing powerhouses, the three countries also aim for stronger technological cooperation. Echoing the countries' decision to enhance collaboration in this domain, business leaders from the trio also pledged to jointly drive digital transformation at the business summit.

Recognizing the cultivation of cutting-edge industries and industrial digital cooperation as key engines for economic growth, the trilateral commitment aims to foster a robust regional economy, said Ren.

In addition to economic and trade as well as scientific and technological cooperation, the three leaders hoped that the three countries will take this summit as a new starting point to maintain the stability and continuity of cooperation and deepen cooperation in six key areas: culture and people-to-people exchanges, sustainable development, economy and trade, public health, science and technology, and disaster relief.

Cultural exchanges, for example, are gaining fresh momentum for development to foster mutual understanding and trust.

Monday's meeting witnessed the designation of 2025-2026 as the China-Japan-South Korea Year of Cultural Exchange. The three sides also vowed to increase the number of people-to-people exchanges among the three countries to 40 million by 2030 through promoting exchange including culture, tourism and education.

To chart a sustainable future, the countries reiterated their commitment to carbon neutrality and proposed tangible ways to protect the environment, such as collaborating with Mongolia on reducing dust and sandstorms in East Asia, and promoting collaboration on marine environmental conservation. Managing the aging society is also on their list of expertise sharing.

The three major countries in Northeast Asia play a pivotal role in maintaining regional peace and stability. In the joint declaration of the trilateral summit, the three parties agreed to continue to make positive efforts for the political settlement of the Korean Peninsula issue. They also highlighted efforts to expand cooperation within ASEAN and other multilateral frameworks.

Xinhua

Promotion and relegation playoff fixtures now boost competition in PL, Championship League

By Correspondent Nassir Nchimbi

IN the first quarter of 2018 heading to the 2018/19 Mainland Tanzania Premier League season, the Tanzania Premier League Board (TPLB) introduced a format in the top-tier domestic soccer showdown that was quite fascinating.

The board came up with the idea of having a relegation playoff game to determine a club that would play in the Championship League the following season.

Such a format was later introduced in the Championship League to decide teams that would play in the Premier League the following season.

Generally, these were good ideas for the development of soccer in Tanzania, for raising the sport's standard and seeing to it that all other activities take place.

Football has to be played, laws and regulations of the game all come to life when the ball rolls on the pitch.

The playoffs have added excitement to the fans, as more matches are played, and the games, which pit Premier League teams against Championship League teams, are always characterized by intense competition.

Domestic soccer is now more engaging, unlike the seasons which had some teams garnering automatic promotion to the top flight and others being subjected to straight relegation to the lower tier.

The absence of the playoff games meant there would have been a reduction in competitiveness - especially after the completion of the regular season. The situation was not healthy for the sport and fans' engagement.

These games provide financial and marketing opportunities to teams, the clubs' grounds need to be improved so the squads can benefit from Television rights.

Championship League teams have, for the first time, enjoyed Television rights this season just like



The 2024/25 NBC Premier League's newly-promoted side, Mbeya's Ken Gold FC. Photo: Agencies

the way Premier League teams have enjoyed such rights for over a decade.

Tanzania Football Federation (TFF) has signed a three-year Television broadcasting rights for the second tier, now known as NBC Championship League, with TV3 worth 613m/-.

The NBC Championship League, in total, has 240 matches but, this season, Tanzanians witnessed live television broadcasts of over 170 games.

Heading into the playoffs, TFF should carefully look at major deals, individual team deals, as well as TV rights to enhance good coordination of the playoffs.

Countries that have used the playoff format - be it relegation or promotion - have succeeded a lot.

Last weekend, the promotion playoff match for the English Premier League pitting Leeds United versus Southampton had more viewers than the English FA Cup final between Manchester United and Manchester City that was played the same weekend.

Such an incident came up because these games evoke emotions among the supporters and there is an opportunity for business to come in so the league board and teams can earn profits from fans and sponsorship.

The Tanzania playoffs bring together all teams under the TPLB, battling it out in NBC Premier

League, NBC Championship League, First League, and Regional Champions League.

Some of the playoffs witness Premier League teams facing Championship League teams, whereas others involve Championship League teams and First League teams.

There are, further, playoffs pitting First League teams against Regional Champions League teams.

The clubs battling it out in the playoffs are aiming for either promotion or survival in their respective leagues, and this is where the playoffs bring about the connection of all teams under the TPLB.

The TPLB's rules and regulations stipulate that clubs taking part in the Regional Champions League will receive automatic promotion to the Premier League, Championship League, or First League.

The same rules that govern all teams allow outfits that finish second and third in the mentioned league divisions to feature in the promotion playoff matches to have another opportunity for advancing to the higher division.

This adds competition and value to each opportunity and position in the league. If teams placed first to third would have automatic promotion, the fourth position, which is currently a valued spot, would not have any value.

Tanzania has been at

the forefront of efforts to advocate for changes in the CECAFA Zone since 2006.

The TFF under Leodgar Tenga had, in 2006, reformed the previous league format that had seen the league run from January to December to operate akin to the globally acknowledged league format that has the league run from August to May.

As the new format was put in place in the 2007/8 season, it aligned with the FIFA calendar and league formats applied all over the world and saw other countries in the CECAFA Zone make changes and adopt the TFF reform.

It is good to see a country's top flight, which was once not powerful in East Africa, let alone the CECAFA Zone is now ranked sixth in CAF's league rankings.

Tanzania's rise to the sixth place in CAF's league rankings has come about due to competition found in the domestic Premier League - which has witnessed some of its clubs go as far as excelling in the CAF inter-club show downs.

However, there is an aspect that hinders other teams' progress in the playoff system. The majority of local soccer fraternity members know that in every good side of the story, there is always a bad side to it.

The playoff system hinders the development of teams seeking promotion because they have to play two legs against each other

in the same division and, later on, play two-leg ties against teams in the upper division to gain promotion.

Soccer fanatics have witnessed some Premier League teams lose to Championship League sides in the playoffs because of the level of competition.

It would make more sense if NBC Premier League teams positioned 13th and 14th face each other in either two-leg clashes or one-off clashes and the loser gets relegated automatically. The same approach should be used in the rest of the league divisions.

Championship League teams that finish third and fourth should take on each other on either a two-leg encounter or a one-off tie and the winner will secure promotion to the Premier League.

The same approach should be applied to the First League's third-placed and fourth-placed clubs, and the Regional Champions League's teams finishing third and fourth.

This approach would bring fairness to all teams in the country. If a Premier League outfit plays 30 games a season and finishes 14th in the 16-team league, why should that particular team get a chance to feature in a playoff match against a 13th-placed team and, later on, secure another chance to take part in a playoff clash against Championship League team once it has lost the previous playoff?

Pitting upper-division teams seeking survival against lower-division teams seeking promotion brings about unfair competition and reduces the lower-division clubs' chances to progress.

So far the promotion and relegation playoff system has been fascinating and sparking debates - a situation which is important for the sport.

With this being the topic in the domestic football followers' conversations every season, I would not be surprised to see the changes made to the playoff system

Over 12 teams participate in the 2024 Swimming Gala

By Guardian Correspondent

THE third edition of the FK Blue Marlins Invitational Gala 2024, held over the weekend at FK International Schools - Secondary campus at Bahari Beach in Dar es Salaam.

The swimming gala was hosted by FK Blue Marlins Swim Club and is endorsed by the Tanzania Swimming Association (TSA).

The 2024 Gala saw 13 swim clubs participate, with a total of 227 swimmers competing from across Tanzania. 52.4% were female swimmers and 47.5% were male.

In the spirit of diversity and inclusion, six special-needs swimmers participated in inclusive swimming.

David Mwasoye, the TSA chairperson, awarded medals to the inclusive swimming swimmers.

He commended the swimmers and coaches and encouraged the swimming community to keep up good sportsmanship in the swimming sport.

"I believe that an Olympic swimming gold medalist will come from Tanzania. They will be amongst the

swimmers participating here today at the FK Blue Marlins Invitational Gala 2024," Humphrey Kiuruwi, the FK International Schools Principal, said during the opening ceremony.

Justin Mitchell McLean from Australia was an exhibition swimmer at the Invitational Gala, through Riptide Swim Club from Arusha.

FK Blue Marlins Swim Club is among the three Tanzanian swim clubs to host an invitational gala in the country. The FK Blue Marlins Invitational Gala 2024 was sponsored by Osaka Construction Company, FK International Schools, Coca-Cola Kwanza, JustFit Tanzania and Garda World Tanzania.

Participating swim clubs were Bluefins Swim Club, Braeburn Sharks, Dar Swim Club, Lake Victoria Swim Club (Mwanza), Maji Maji Swim Club, Pigeon Swim Club (Kigamboni), Premier Swim Club, Riptide Swim Club (Arusha), Taliss-IST, Train 2 Gain Swim Club, Wahoo Swim Club (Zanzibar) and FK Blue Marlins as the host.

Male team scores totaled 3,810 points while female team scores were 3,344 points.

Sudanese soccer giants now set for Mauritania

By Correspondent Nassir Nchimbi

THE Mauritanian Football Federation and Premier League Board have given the green light for Sudanese soccer giants - Al Hilal and Al Merriekh - to participate in their league starting from the 2024/25 season.

All football-related activities in Sudan have been suspended since the war broke out in April 2023, leading the last season and the current one of the Sudanese Premier League to be called off.

As a result, several Sudanese clubs have requested to play in leagues of neighboring countries, with the country's biggest club Al-Hilal previously seeking to participate in the Tanzanian Premier League.

According to a statement issued from Al-Hilal, the Tanzanian Football Federation gave preliminary approval, pending the adjustment of the rules and regulations.

Al Hilal initially planned to use Ithefu's Highlands Estate as their home turf but now they are out heading into the Mauritanian Premier League, due to offers and

terms that they find suitable for their growth from the Islamic Republic of Mauritania Football Federation (FFRIM).

According to a letter from FFRIM, written by Ahmed Ould Yahya, President of the Mauritanian football body, and addressed to the Secretary General of the Sudan Football Federation, they will cover the expenses of the two Sudanese giants when they play in the league and also in the Champions League next season.

"With reference to your letter No. Ref. No. GS 24 dated 2 May 2024, I am honored to inform you that our Federation welcomes the participation of the Sudanese clubs Al Merriekh and Al Hilal in the National Premier League starting from next season," the letter said.

"Please note that our Federation will cover the costs of accommodation in Mauritania, training pitches and internal transportation.

"These procedures remain conditional on the acceptance by CAF to the Mauritanian League project for the 2024/2025 season, which we have submitted to them and are awaiting their response."

After completing first quest by reaching NBA Finals, Celtics can begin thinking about championship

INDIANAPOLIS

THE Boston Celtics completed one quest Monday night by returning to the NBA Finals.

Now, they'll chase an even bigger goal, the one that's eluded this team for more than a decade - capturing the franchise's 18th championship.

Yes, despite playing for six conference titles in eight seasons, this marks only the second time Boston has advanced to The Finals during that span. And since winning their first NBA title in 1957, the Celtics' current 16-year drought is the second-longest in franchise history.

It would be the crowning achievement to what has already been a remarkable season.

"Boston has a great team. They led the league from wire to wire," Indiana Pacers coach Rick Carlisle said after his team was swept 4-0 in its first conference finals ap-



Boston Celtics guard Jaylen Brown, center, celebrates with his teammates after Game 4 of the NBA Eastern Conference basketball finals against the Indiana Pacers on Monday, May 27, 2024, in Indianapolis. The Celtics won 105-102. AP Photo

pearance since 2014. "They didn't want this thing to go on any longer. They blocked shots, they got offensive rebounds, they made key shots."

Boston has excelled in seemingly every possible way in this year's playoffs.

The Celtics have won seven straight games overall, they improved to 6-0 on

the road with yet another comeback victory, 105-102 in Game 4 against Indiana, and they are 3-0 in elimination games. They beat Indiana three times down

the stretch, rallying in the last two games with decisive 13-2 and 7-0 closing spurts to end the Pacers' perfect 2024 playoff run at home - and their season.

Next up will be the Dallas Mavericks or Minnesota Timberwolves. Dallas leads the Western Conference finals 3-0 and can clinch the series on its home court Tuesday night. And Boston has been finding help in all corners.

While Jayson Tatum garnered the usual headlines for two 36-point outings and a near triple-double in Game 4, 37-year-old Al Horford defied the odds by making seven 3-pointers in Game 3, Jrue Holiday overcame an illness to deftly pick Andrew Nembhard's pocket, and Derrick White delivered the go-ahead 3-pointer in Game 4, everyone seemed genuinely happy it was Jaylen Brown who was chosen series MVP.

"I didn't expect that at all," Brown said before explain-

ing the emotions of being left off the all-NBA teams. "But as time has gone by and I got to this point, I just stopped caring and I don't care who sees what as long as my team knows my value, my city knows my value, my family knows my value. That's all I really care about."

There's little doubt the Celtics understand where they would be - and where they wouldn't be - without Brown.

He scored 29 points and grabbed six rebounds to help Boston erase an eight-point deficit in the final six minutes Monday night. And after the defense forced two late turnovers, Brown helped close it out with a brilliant block of Nembhard just before White's big shot.

The reaction was telling for Holiday, who won an NBA title with the 2020-21 Milwaukee Bucks.

"I think it's even better that he didn't expect it. That really means that didn't matter to him," Holiday said. "It was about winning and whatever it took, however long it took. That's what was important to him and I think

when you have that mentality and that mindset, you see great people rewarded for the things they do."

Holiday understands.

When the Bucks traded him to Portland in September to acquire Damian Lillard, he wasn't sure what would happen next. Four days later, the Celtics made another deal with the Trail Blazers to get the two-time All-Star and defensive whiz, hoping he could help them complete their championship quest.

So far, the Celtics' investment in Holiday has delivered big dividends. And now everyone's about to find out if the addition of Holiday and the possible return of starting center Kristaps Porzingis from a strained right calf that has kept him out since April 29 just might help Boston earn another crowning achievement.

"Obviously, we fell short of our ultimate goal last year, lost in the conference finals," Tatum said. "So I think we've just applied everything we learned to this season and this postseason and it's been working really well."

AP

Germany begin pre-Euro 2024 training camp in front of 15,000 fans

THURINGIA, Germany

WITH the smell of bratwurst floating through the air, Germany kicked off their Euro 2024 training camp under blue skies in front of 15,000 fans in the central town of Jena.

Germany are based in Thuringia, part of the former East, for their pre-Euros training camp. England will be based at the same venue during the tournament itself, while Germany will head south to Herzogenaurach -- the small Bavarian village where clothing giant Adidas is headquartered.

"It gives the team a great feeling that the country is behind us and everyone supports us," coach Julian Nagelsmann said on Monday.

After disappointing group-stage exits at the last two World Cups and a last-16 elimination by England at the most recent Euros, Germany's wins over France and the Netherlands in March have boosted optimism ahead of the home tournament.

Germany sporting director Rudi Voeller said the hosts were "burning hot" for the tournament.

"It's a great opportunity to show ourselves and be approachable. That's very important."

Tickets to the training session sold out in minutes.

"We would have liked to go to an even bigger stadium. The demand was unbelievable," Voeller said Monday.

More than 16,000 people watched a livestream of the training session online.

Three weeks out from the tournament opener against Scotland in Munich, Germany's training camp started with several members of the squad missing due to club duties, with only 19 of the 27 squad members available.

The injured Leroy Sane, Jamal Musiala, Aleksandar Pavlovic and David Raum did not take part in the full session.

The players stayed afterwards and signed autographs while posing for pictures with fans.

Four players will take part in Saturday's Champions League final at Wembley -- Real Madrid's Toni Kroos and Antonio Rudiger as well as Borussia Dortmund's Nico Schlotterbeck and Niclas Fuellkrug. Bayer Leverkusen players Robert Andrich, Florian Wirtz and Jonathan Tah, who on Sunday celebrated winning the league and cup double for the first time, will arrive Wednesday.

AFP

Real Madrid's Champions League aura masks fear behind Super League pursuit

MADRID

SELF-APPOINTED kings of the Champions League, Real Madrid go for a 15th European crown against Borussia Dortmund in Saturday's final, but the competition may cease to exist if the Spanish giants get their way.

Madrid and rivals Barcelona have pressed ahead in their wish to create a European Super League, defying the condemnation of the project from around the rest of the continent.

That includes from their opponents at Wembley this weekend with Dortmund CEO Hans-Joachim Watzke repeatedly stressing his club will have no truck with a Super League.

An initial attempt to launch a closed-shop breakaway league in 2021 collapsed within days after a backlash from fans, governments and the game's authorities.

But supporters of the Super League have already had a victory this week as a Madrid court found governing bodies FIFA and UEFA had "abused their dominant position" and "prevented free competition" by opposing a breakaway division.

- State-backed threat -

Madrid's reasons for pursuing an earthquake in European football may seem confusing.

Los Blancos have won



Real Madrid have won the Champions League 14 times but are pursuing the creation of a European Super League. Agencies

the Champions League five times in the past 10 years.

At the same time, they have managed to modernise the 85,000 capacity Santiago Bernabeu into a world class stadium and remain a go-to destination for the planet's best players.

Jude Bellingham was plucked from Dortmund 12 months ago for a fee in excess of 100 million euros (\$108 million) despite the riches and home comforts offered by Premier League clubs for the England international.

Kylian Mbappe is ex-

pected to complete his move to the Spanish capital in the coming days after turning his back on Qatar-funded Paris Saint-Germain.

Madrid's aura in the Champions League may strike fear into their competitors. Yet, inside the club there is concern that their position as the competition's most successful club could eventually come under threat without structural change to the sport.

For the first time last season one of European football's state-backed projects, Abu Dhabi-

backed Manchester City, lifted the Champions League -- thrashing Madrid 5-1 on aggregate in the semi-finals.

City also benefit from the billions of television revenue that pours into England's Premier League that has financially left Europe's other major leagues trailing in its wake.

Dortmund feel that financial disparity even more keenly with a wage bill around one third of Madrid's.

Real topped Deloitte's football money league last season with 831 million euros in revenue to

Dortmund's 420 million euros.

- Dortmund run 'unbelievable' -

The Germans have had first-hand experience of the difficulties in competing with state-backed clubs during their fairytale run to the final, for just the third time in their history.

Edin Terzic's men saw off both PSG and Saudi-funded Newcastle in the group stages before beating the French champions once more in the semi-finals.

"It is unbelievable," Dortmund managing di-

rector Carsten Cramer told The Athletic of his club's run to the final.

"We never complain about the situation and that others spend more in their budget. But when we reach a final like this, it brings even more pride to everyone at the club.

"We are competitive even though the tools and weapons we have in our bucket are not the same ones the others have."

Dortmund, though, are all too aware of the need to make a rare final appearance count.

Their last taste of Wembley was a bitter one as they lost the 2013 Champions League final to rivals Bayern Munich.

Yet, they may be able to draw inspiration from Atalanta, who shocked German champions Bayer Leverkusen in last week's Europa League final, to win their first ever European trophy.

"To win it with Atalanta is perhaps one of football's fairytales, that rarely gives scope for meritocracy," said Atalanta boss Gian Piero Gasperini.

"It doesn't always come down to cold hard numbers or Super Leagues but shows teams without huge budgets can achieve big things."

Dortmund are 90 minutes away from achieving their dream, they just need to knock the kings of Europe off their throne to do so.

AFP

Real aim to add to Champions League legend before Mbappe arrival

MADRID

WHETHER they admit it or not, there is no doubt Real Madrid consider themselves favourites to beat Borussia Dortmund on Saturday and win a record-extending 15th Champions League trophy.

Not only because the German side are shock finalists, but simply because the kings of Europe would feel the same way regardless of the opposition.

Another triumph on the biggest stage would be the perfect showcase of their power and prestige to superstar striker Kylian Mbappe, set to join from Paris Saint-Germain in the summer.

Madrid play with a belief that they will prevail, but also with the humility to know that to do so requires flexibility in the 'how'.

They demonstrated as much in the quarter-finals against champions Manchester City, keeping their backs to the wall and squeezing through on penalties.

They delivered a trademark last-gasp sucker-punch on Bayern Munich to reach the final after falling behind, with substitute Joselu netting a late brace for Carlo Ancelotti's team.

That is precisely when comeback experts Madrid strike -- just when opponents start to believe that they can't do it, that they are finally

defeated, that they are out.

"We're not thinking about whether we're favourites, but about playing against a team that deserves it too," Madrid coach Ancelotti told reporters Monday.

"We know that we will have to suffer and fight like in all finals."

Madrid have established an astonishing European hegemony, with five triumphs in the last decade.

The next closest side to Los Blancos in overall victories is AC Milan with seven, the most recent of those 17 years ago.

Ancelotti pointed out one of the principal reasons for Madrid's dominance -- the club's president.

"Here there is a captain and he's called Florentino Perez," said the Italian earlier in May. "The rest of us are sailors."

The chief has been the constant in Madrid's most recent era of success, although their love affair with the European Cup started long before his reign.

The competition began in the 1950s, when Santiago Bernabeu was the club's chief, and Madrid took to it like a duck to water.

They won the first five editions of the tournament, between 1956 and 1960.

"Madrid's history is born in the 50s, in this competition," said An-

celotti.

"It's a competition where you concentrate more, you are more focussed."

Madrid added a sixth in 1966 but had to wait more than 30 years for the seventh, achieved in 1998 after beating Juventus.

The eighth soon followed, in 2000 with a comfortable victory over Valencia, shortly before Perez became Madrid's president.

- Stars and silverware -

The construction magnate led Madrid into the Galactico era, with Zinedine Zidane's superb volley the highlight of the 2002 final, their ninth victory.

It established Madrid as the world's most glamorous club, allowing them to continue attracting the biggest star names in the game.

While the early 2000s era was underwhelming in terms of trophies, it laid the groundwork for Madrid's future success.

With Perez reappointed as president in 2009, Ancelotti and Zidane, turned coach, drove them on to many more glories, with star forwards Cristiano Ronaldo, Karim Benzema and Gareth Bale vital components.

They achieved 'La Decima' -- the deeply craved 10th -- in 2014 against rivals Atletico Madrid, the first of their



Kylian Mbappe (Agencies)

recent string of successes.

Ronaldo became the top scorer in Champions League history with Madrid, his own appetite matching the club's hunger for glory.

Their new stars

are Jude Bellingham and Vinicius Junior, young players keen to write their own names in the club's history books and continue Madrid's legacy of dominance.

Vinicius scored the

winner in Madrid's most recent success, edging Liverpool 1-0 in the 2022 final in Paris.

Perez is always looking forward, plotting how Madrid can keep expanding their dynasty.

The club's renovated Santiago Bernabeu stadium will provide bountiful streams of revenue, while Madrid have been rejuvenating their squad.

- Mbappe message -
The next star arrival

is expected to be PSG striker Mbappe, arguably the world's most devastating forward.

Victory in London against Dortmund would be a well-timed flexing of muscles before Mbappe's move is sealed.

It would make obvious to the French forward that he is not needed to turn them into the greatest club in the world -- they already are.

With some concerns among supporters over how well Mbappe will potentially gel with his team-mates, demonstrating the club's might would set a perfect tone. Mbappe tried and failed to bring a first, badly coveted Champions League trophy to Paris over the past seven years.

To arrive at an institution lifting their 15th would certainly keep any ego in check.

AFP

Gwiji by David Chikoko



SPORT

Real aim to add to
Champions League
legend before
Mbappe arrival



Stars to start World Cup qualifier camp without key players



Taifa Stars acting head coach Hemed 'Morocco' Suleiman. Agencies

By Correspondent Seth Mapoli

THE Tanzanian national football team, Taifa Stars, is gearing up for a crucial World Cup qualifying match against Zambia, but the team will be without some key players until after the CRDB Bank Federation Cup final on June 2.

According to sources within the Young Africans camp, their players will join the Taifa Stars squad after the Federation Cup final, which is scheduled for Sunday.

This slight delay in joining the national team training camp means that the players will have limited preparation time before the important qualifier.

Taifa Stars have set to face Zambia in a Group E match for the 2026 World Cup qualifiers which will take place on June 11 at Levy Mwana-wasa Stadium in Zambia.

The 2026 World Cup fi-

nals, which will be hosted by the United States, Canada, and Mexico, will see nine teams from Africa qualify, an increase from the previous five.

The qualification process involves nine groups, with the winner of each group earning a spot in the finals.

So far, Taifa Stars have played two matches in their group. The team started their campaign with a 1-0 away victory against Niger on November 18, last year, at the Marrakech Stadium in Morocco, thanks to a goal from Charles M'mombwa.

However, they faced a setback in their second match, losing 2-0 to Morocco at the Benjamin Mkapa Stadium in Dar es Salaam on November 21, last year.

Group E comprises Mo-

rocco, Zambia, Niger, Tanzania, and Congo, while Eritrea was excluded from the competition for reasons that remain unclear.

Acting head coach Hemed 'Morocco' Suleiman announced a 34-player provisional squad for the upcoming camp. Notably, the squad does not include team captain Mbwana Ally Samatta, a decision that has raised eyebrows among fans and analysts alike.

Additionally, Yanga defender Dickson Job has been left out following a disagreement with Hemed Morocco during the Africa Cup of Nations Finals in Ivory Coast earlier this year.

Job had refused to play as a right back, insisting on his preferred central defense position.

Taifa Stars face a challenging task ahead as they seek to qualify for the World Cup. The absence of key players from Yanga in the early stages of the camp may pose an initial setback, but the team remains focused on their goal.

Coach Hemed Morocco, despite controversies and challenges, has confidence in the squad's ability to perform and secure a vital win against Zambia.

The Tanzanian football community will be closely watching the team's preparations and hoping for a positive outcome in their quest to reach the 2026 World Cup finals.

The upcoming match against Zambia is a crucial step in this journey, and Taifa Stars will need to

bring their best to the pitch to keep their qualification hopes alive.

The full provisional squad called up for the Zambia match is as follows:

Goalkeepers:

Ally Salim (Simba), About-waleeb Mshery (Yanga), Kwesi Kawawa (Syrianska FC, Sweden), Yona Geoffrey (Tanzania Prisons)

Defenders:

Haji Mnoga (Aldershot Town, England), Bakari Mwamnyeto (Yanga), Ibrahim Bacca (Yanga), Nickson Kibabage (Yanga), Mohamed Hussein (Simba), Lameck Lawi (Coastal Union), Israel Mwenda (Simba), Mukrim Issa (Ihefu), Lusajo Mwaikenda (Azam), Pascal Msindo (Azam), Nathaniel Chilambo (Azam)

Midfielders:

Novatus Dismas (Shakhtar Donetsk, Ukraine), Yussuf Kagoma (Singida Fountain Gate), Morice Michael (RFK Novi Sad, Serbia), Himid Mao (Tala'ea El Gaish, Egypt), Feisal Salum (Azam), Mudathir Yahya (Yanga), Yahya Zayd (Azam), Abel Josiah (TDS - TFF Academy)

Forwards:

Edwin Balua (Simba), Simon Msuva (Alnajmah, Saudi Arabia), Kibu Denis (Simba), Cyprian Kachwele (Whitecaps 2, USA), Ben Starkie (Ilkeston Town, England), Charles M'mombwa (Macarthur, Australia), Wazir Junior (KMC), Ibrahim Hamad (Zimamoto), Kelvin John (Genk, Belgium), Abdul Suleiman (Azam), Clement Mzize (Yanga)

Coastal Union FC focus on retaining their star players

By Correspondent Seth Mapoli

AFTER securing a spot in the CAF Confederation Cup next season, Coastal Union have made it clear that they will not easily let go of their star players who have demonstrated top-tier performance.

The team insists that any departures will be in the broader interest of the club.

The Tanga-based side's impressive fourth-place finish in the NBC Premier League has earned them the opportunity to participate in the CAF Confederation Cup, marking their return to international competition after a 36-year hiatus.

Their last appearance was in 1988 when they clinched the then Tanzania Mainland First Division League championship.

The team's resurgence can be largely attributed to their strategic changes on the technical bench. Mwinyi Zahera was replaced by Kenyan coach David Ouma, who has guided the team to the semi-finals of the CRDB Bank Federation Cup (FA) and a commendable fourth-place finish in the Premier League.

Ouma's impact has been profound, particularly in refining the team's tactical and technical prowess. His emphasis on enhancing individual player skills, especially in defense, has paid off. Coastal Union has conceded only 19 goals this season, a marked improvement and just six more than the league leaders, Young Africans, who have conceded 13.

Goalkeeper Ley Matampi has been exceptional, securing 12 clean sheets and significantly contributing to the team's defensive solidity.

Ouma took over as head coach on November 9, last year, succeeding Zahera, who struggled to keep up with the team's ambitions. Since his appointment, Ouma has begun to carve his name into the club's history, leading them to perform significantly better than in previous seasons.

Recently, rumors have been circulating about some of the team's stars, including goalkeeper Matampi and defender Lameck Lawi, being linked to football giants Young Africans and Simba SC due to their stellar performances. A trusted source within the club, who wished to remain anonymous, mentioned that the team is currently focused on finishing the season strong.

"We are waiting to complete the closing game of the season," he said. "We play against KMC at CCM Mkwakwani Stadium on Tuesday and await the technical bench's report."

He added that following their success, the club will make necessary changes to strengthen the squad, retaining those who have performed well while letting go of those who have not kept pace.

"For the interest of the team, we will allow players to leave if the teams that want them offer significant compensation that will enable Coastal Union to find replacements," he explained.

"Sometimes football is a business. If there are teams that will put reasonable money on the table that can allow us to enter the market and find replacements, we have no problem with that. But our position is to remove those who played below standards and keep the ones who shine," he emphasized.

As for potential changes on the technical bench, the source confirmed that the club has no plans to replace Ouma.

"Ouma is still a legitimate asset of the Tanga side. He signed a two-year contract and has performed admirably," he said.

Coastal Union's leadership is clearly committed to building on their recent success. Their participation in the CAF Confederation Cup next season is a testament to their progress and ambition.

Retaining their key players and maintaining stability in the technical team under Ouma's guidance will be crucial as they prepare to compete on an international stage once again.

The club's recent performance has reinvigorated their fan base, bringing hope and excitement back to Tanga. The last time Coastal Union competed internationally, many of the current players and fans had not even been born.



Children entertain during the African Schools Football Championship final match at the Hew Amaan Complex in Zanzibar over the weekend. Tanzania won 1-0 against Guinea. Photo: Jumanne Juma

Twiga Stars face South Sudan in international friendly

By Correspondent Michael Mwebe

TANZANIA senior women's national football team, Twiga Stars, hosts South Sudan in an international friendly at Chamazi Stadium this evening. The match will kick off at 7 PM.

The match will be preceded by an early kick-off involving Mali and Seychelles at the same venue.

The two nations, alongside hosts Tanzania and South Sudan, are taking part in a four-team mini-tournament. Each team will play two games.

The South Sudan fixtures come hot on the heels of a friendly match against Mali on Friday and is also part of Twiga Stars's preparations for the Women's African Cup of Nations finals (WAFCON) to be held in Morocco.

Coach Bakari Shime said he is excited to play the two international friendlies as this is a great opportunity for his side to pit its

strength against good opponents ahead of the Women's Africa Cup of Nations finals.

Twiga Stars under head coach Shime qualified for the women's Africa Cup of Nations following a 3-2 aggregate victory over Togo in November last year.

It will be the first time Twiga Stars will be playing in the Women's Africa Cup of Nations since

their debut in 2011.

Tanzania is joined by defending champions South Africa, hosts Morocco, Zambia, Ghana, Botswana, Tunisia, Nigeria, DR Congo, Algeria, Senegal and Mali in the finals.

However, the dates of the start of the continent's most prestigious women's competition are yet to be announced though June and July

have been hinted by the continent football governing body, CAF.

The squad for the two international friendlies:

Goalkeepers:

Najat Abasi (JKT Queens), Asha Mrisho (Amani Queens) and Husna Mtunda (Yanga Princess)

Defenders:

Juletha Singano (Juarez, Mexico), Anastazia Katunzi (JKT

Queens), Christer Bahera (JKT Queens), Fatuma Issa (Simba Queens), Violeth Nicholas (Simba Queens), Maimuna Kaimu (Egypt) and Asha Omary (Yanga Princess).

Midfielders:

Stumai Abdallah (JKT Queens), Enekia Kasonga (Eastern Flames, Saudi Arabia), Joyce Lema (JKT Queens), Lidya Maximilian, Joyce Lema

(JKT Queens), Diana Lucas (Ame, Turkey) and Ester Maseke (JKT Queens).

Forwards:

Opa Clement (Besiktas, Turkey), Aisha Mnunka (Simba Queens), Aisha Mashaka (BK Hacken, Sweden), Winfrida Gerald (JKT Queens), Jamila Rajab (JKT Queens) and Clara Luvanga (Al Nassr, Saudi Arabia).

Flexibles by David Chikoko

