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# Warioba tells leaders: Do speak more of Tanzania

By Guardian Reporter

**F**ORMER Prime Minister Judge (rtd) Joseph Warioba has demanded that cementing the Union between Tanganyika and Zanzibar requires that leaders speak more about Tanzania than showing that there are two different countries.

The former premier fielded questions at a press conference at his residence, urging that gov-

Zanzibar needs to change three-year residence clause in electoral law, he says

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President Samia Suluhu Hassan and her Turkish counterpart and host, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, look on in Ankara on Thursday as Foreign Affairs and East African Cooperation minister January Makamba (L) and Turkey's Education Council president, Prof Erol Ozvar, sign a higher education cooperation agreement between the two countries. Photo: State House

## Ministers solve four challenges in Tanzam cross-border trade

By Correspondent Joseph Mwendapole

TANZANIA and Zambia have successfully removed four out of 15 non-tariff barriers (NTBs) in order to simplify business processes between the two countries.

Omar Shaaban, the Trade and Industrial Development minister for Zanzibar, made this observation at a press briefing after recent bilateral talks at the border town of Tunduma.

The ministers meeting proceeded from instructions by the Heads of State who met in Lusaka last October, where they agreed, among other things, said that ministers

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# Tanzania, Türkiye sign up six MoUs as Samia jets out today

By Guardian Reporter

TANZANIA and Turkey have signed six memorandums of understanding (MoUs) focusing notably on education, economic diplomacy and cultural cooperation.

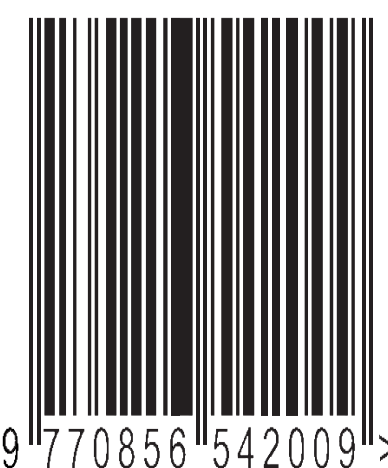
A State House statement yesterday said that the event was held on Thursday evening at the Ankara presidential complex, witnessed by the visiting President Samia Suluhu Hassan and host President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, helping to strengthen bilateral ties and reinforcing development efforts.

*An immediate and lasting ceasefire must be achieved as soon as possible, and then the world straightaway takes steps to realize the two-state solution,*

The agreed MoUs were signed before a state reception on Thursday, after President Samia was awarded an honorary doctorate citation in Economics by the University of Ankara.

At a joint press conference, Samia described Türkiye as a valued partner to Tanzania and Erdoğan said Tanzania is an important partner in East

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## Hopes lifted as WHO takes up cheaper cholera vaccine

By Guardian Reporter

THE World Health Organization (WHO) has approved a version of a widely used cholera vaccine that could help address a surge in cases that has depleted the global vaccine

stockpile and left poorer countries scrambling to contain epidemics.

The UN agency said in a statement yesterday that warming temperatures that allow the cholera bacteria to live longer has worsened outbreaks and

led to the highest death rates in a decade.

Chronicler noted that in January, WHO said the global vac-

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## Warioba wants leaders to speak more of Tanzania

FROM PAGE 1

ernment officials on both sides enhance coordination on policy matters even if the sector at issue is not a Union matter.

In a wide-ranging interview in Dar es Salaam on the 60 years of the Union being marked next Friday, he said that the general public was not complaining about the union.

"They complain about government structures therefore we need to find a way to address the matter," he said, noting that the union has helped to build unity and co-existence among the people, thus pushing development efforts.

"We have spent a lot of time speaking on the power of one country, forgetting that this is a united country," he said, citing the Indian Union where the states have plenty of autonomy but they prioritise India.

Leaders should consider refraining from showing the general public the powers of one part of the union and should instead prioritise the interests of Tanzania, he emphasised.

Similarly, leaders should strive to make the people of the two countries believe they are Tanzanians first instead of looking at which part of the union they come from, he stated, seeing the

next 60 years as focused on cementing the union by addressing challenges making life difficult for the general public.

"Even in economic planning, the two sides should work together instead of leaving either side to implement its own plans," he said, citing tourism as an area where the two sides can work together.

This can include exchanging tourists wishing to visit beaches or ancient buildings and those who want to visit national parks.

Laws that need to be changed in Zanzibar include electoral laws which allow a Zanzibari to vote if he is residing in the Isles for three years, not less, underlining that currently the union is strong. People are still in love with the union despite a few challenges, he emphasised.

"Let us focus on citizens' concerns and leave aside other things as there are too many words on Union issues. We should not lose focus thinking on issues that do not matter," the one time attorney general and Justice minister intoned.

Leaders need to focus on strengthening cooperation to bring development to people as this will enable Tanzanians to respect them and feel that they are valued, he added.



Zanzibar Building Agency engineering adviser Hassan Haji Mrisho (L) briefs Zanzibar President Dr Hussein Ali Mwinyi at Mazizini in Unguja's Urban West Region yesterday on progress in the ongoing construction of an Immigration Department building at the site. The project is being implemented as part of the commemoration of 60th anniversary of the April 26 Union of Tanganyika and Zanzibar. Right is Home Affairs minister Hamad Yussuf Masauni and third left is Commissioner General of Immigration Dr Anna Makalala. Photo: Zanzibar State House

## Tanzania, Türkiye sign up six MoUs as Samia jets out today

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Africa,

"Going forward we have agreed that our ministers and teams of experts meet and come up with a framework that can be used to strategize on the implementation of the agreed areas of cooperation," the visiting leader noted.

The two presidents also had a moment to discuss the ongoing crisis in Gaza, where President Erdoğan emphasised the need to step up efforts to stop the killings, the statement indicated.

"An immediate and lasting ceasefire must be achieved as soon as possible, and then the world straightaway takes steps to realize the two-state solution," he declared.

President Samia commended Türkiye's role in seeking a pacific settlement of the dispute, repeating the country's appeal for an immediate cessation of hostilities in Palestine and hindering access to humanitarian aid for the people of Gaza.

President Erdoğan visited Tanzania in

2017, cementing trade and investment ties, with Türkiye investments in Tanzania estimated at \$414m, with 6,062 direct jobs created.

The value of Turkish exports to Tanzania has surged from \$144m in 2013 to \$253m in 2021, ranking Tanzania at number 11 among importers of Turkish goods, while Tanzanian exports to Turkey stand at about \$15m annually.

Turkey has significantly contributed to construction projects in Tanzania, with Yapı Merkezi Inc. securing con-

tracts valued at \$5bn for the standard gauge railway project, the biggest Turkish run project in Africa.

Turkish firms have also secured several contracts in shipping and road construction, likely to be boosted further, with President Samia participating in the Türkiye-Tanzania Business Forum in Istanbul to entice more Turkish businesses to invest in Tanzania.

President Samia arrived in Ankara on Wednesday on a five day state visit ending today.



Adrera Mwijage (R), Director of Renewable Energy Technology at the Rural Energy Agency (REA), pictured in Dodoma city yesterday briefing Prime Minister Kassim Majaliwa, Deputy Prime Minister and Energy minister Dr Doto Biteko, National Assembly Speaker Dr Tulia Ackson and various other dignitaries on smart stoves known to be economical on the use of electricity and charcoal. It was at the just-ended energy exhibition organised by the Energy ministry. Photo: Correspondent Ibrahim Joseph

## Ministers solve four challenges in Tanzam cross-border trade

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from the two countries work on challenges faced by businessmen in cross border trade.

The talks started with 15 challenges and within three days four challenges were resolved, two on the Zambian side and two were on the Tanzanian side, he said, noting that Zambia was unable to speed up the delivery of cargo at the border due to the lack of a scanner to inspect the cargo.

The minister praised President Samia Suluhu Hassan for making available that scanner to put into gear the NTVs removal initiative. The Zambian authorities have written to the president that they have received the machine and are preparing to install it at the border, he said.

In Zambia there were many road blocks from the border to the city of Lusaka, now cut from 33 previously to 11, which he said was a big step as Zambia has able to

simplify cross border trade and the business environment as a whole.

Another border post is to be built in Kasesya, he said, while Chipoka Mulenga, the Industry and Trade minister for Zambia, said that the challenges solved will lead to ease of doing business.

"We have resolved some of the challenges that were not of significant interest to our two countries, to facilitate the conduct of business, thus increasing jobs by removing many obstacles on the way that were causing queues," he said.

The two countries had succeeded in solving the challenge of the scanner on account of the close ties between the two countries, thus Tanzania moved to purchase one.

"We believe that when meet again we will resolve the remaining challenges in the interests of our countries to facilitate the conduct of business," the minister asserted.

## Hopes lifted as WHO takes up cheaper cholera vaccine

FROM PAGE 1

cine stockpile was entirely depleted until the beginning of March, while at the start of this week there were 2.3m doses available.

Leila Pakkala, the UNICEF supply division director, said that the agency will be able to boost supplies by more than 25 percent following this decision.

Dr Derrick Sim, top executive for the Global Vaccine Alliance (GAVI) said the vaccine's authorization is a lifeline for vulnerable communities around the world. Approval by the agency enables donor agencies like GAVI and UNICEF up now to buy it for poorer countries, boosting supplies, with GAVI estimating that 50m doses for the global stockpile will be available this year, from 38m last year.

WHO authorized the EuBiologics vaccine, also manufacturing the more familiar vaccine, last week, explaining that Euvichol-S is a simplified version using fewer ingredients.

It is cheaper and can be made more quickly than the usual version and it is hoped that the easier-to-make vaccine will help address a surge in cases of the bacterial disease, usually spread through contaminated food or water.

The depletion of the global vaccine stockpile has left poorer countries, including several in Africa, scrambling to contain epidemics, meanwhile as left untreated, cholera can be fatal within hours, even in previously healthy people.

Since January, 14 countries affected by cholera outbreaks have requested 79m doses, with the highest numbers of cases reported in the Middle East and Africa.

Cholera is an acute diarrhea disease mostly seen in areas that have poor sanitation and lack access to clean water. Most people infected with cholera don't experience symptoms, but those with severe cases need quick treatment with intravenous fluids and antibiotics. If left untreated, cholera kills about a quarter to half of the people infected, experts affirm.

Since last January, WHO has re-

ported more than 824,000 cholera infections, including 5,900 deaths worldwide, with the highest numbers of cases reported in the Middle East and Africa, the statement indicated.

Warming temperatures that allow the cholera bacteria to live longer have worsened outbreaks and led to higher death rates than was usually the case, it added.



Tanzanian delegation led by Finance minister Dr Mwigulu Nchemba (2nd-R) holds talks in Washington, DC, yesterday with the United States Millennium Challenge Corporation leadership led by CEO Alice Albright (L) on cooperation between Tanzania and the organisation – chiefly on threshold programmes focusing on policy and institutional reforms meant to reduce poverty and stimulate economic growth in the country. The talks ran in tandem with the ongoing Spring Meetings of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. Photo: Finance ministry

## Protecting Union duty of every citizen, says Mwinyi

By Guardian Reporter, Zanzibar

ZANZIBAR President Dr Hussein Mwinyi has reiterated the role of every citizen to protect the union between Tanganyika and Zanzibar to promote national unity and peace for the benefit of the current and future generations.

He made the remarks yesterday during a function to lay a foundation stone for the construction of an immigration office at Mazizini in the outskirts of Unguja as part of the events to mark 60 years of the union.

He said when the building is completed, it will enhance immigration services delivery in Zanzibar city as well as its surrounding areas.

He said immigration services in the area need special attention since Malindi seaport receives more than 20,000 while the main airport receives at least 500,000 people per year.

He said due to the increase in the number of tourists visiting the isles, there is a need to have special offices to accommodate government officials who assist visitors.

“The government will continue to strengthen other infrastructure including roads, hospitals and schools to put in place electronic systems to simplify service delivery,” he said.

Minister for Home Affairs Hamad Yussuf Masauni said the ministry was relieved to see the success of development in the 60 years of the union in many sectors.

He said that with the completion of the immigration building, services for the people of Zanzibar and the visitors will continue to improve.

Masauni talked about the challenges in the digital system for Zanzibar, calling on the immigration department to ensure that it continues to strengthen the efficiency of work and leaders to supervise officers.

The minister said services in the building will also increase revenues considering that Zanzibar is a predominantly tourist economy.

Dr Anna Makakala, Commissioner General of Immigration, commended the government for establishing immigration training college in the country.

# PM challenges MPs to lead way by shifting to CNG

By Correspondent James Kandoya

PRIME Minister Kassim Majaliwa has challenged Members of Parliament to show the way by shifting to Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) as alternative fuel for their vehicles.

The premier threw the challenge yesterday after gracing the climax of Energy Week that was held in the capital Dodoma.

He said CNG is the cheap alternative fuel in Tanzania's transport sector due to its local availability and environmental benefits.

Majaliwa said further that CNG technology is very cheap compared to diesel or petrol.

He said governments around the world implement stringent regulations for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and sustaining eco-friend-

liness

Majaliwa said that for instance, calculated consumption of CNG from Dodoma to Mwanza can be less than five times compared to other fuels.

“MP's and other public officials must be ready to show the way by shifting from other fuels to gas, which is part of the government's strategy of using clean energy,” he said.

“Even me, I'm thinking about changing and using gas to reduce unnecessary costs,” he added.

The premier issued five directives to the Ministry of Energy and Tanzania Electric Supply Company (TanESCO), including extending the Energy Week to regional and district council levels.

Other directives were to ensure the public is aware of all strategic

projects in the energy sector, to solve disputes in the respective areas involving MPs and ward councillors.

Furthermore, he said that the two come up with a precise way of dealing with customers who have submitted their applications for being connected with electricity.

He said there has been a complaint from customers who paid for electricity connection in their hous-

es but have not attended without specific reasons.

He said during the week, people and institutions get knowledge relating to the energy sector.

The government outlined its commitment to ensuring timely implementation of the energy policy with an ultimate goal of improving the quality of life of Tanzanians for many decades to come.



Business at a standstill at Dar es Salaam's Magogoni International Fish Market auction yesterday, what with the critical shortage of fish blamed on bad weather generally and the ongoing heavy rains in particular. Photo: Correspondent Imani Nathaniel

## Government 'probing' over 100 projects with smell of corruption

By Guardian Reporter

THE government has commenced investigation into 179 development projects worth 61.01bn/- found with loopholes during assessment conducted between July, 2023 and March, 2024.

The Minister of State in the President's Office (Public Service Management and Good Governance), George Simbachawene, made the statement yesterday in the National Assembly when tabling budget estimates for the 2023/24 financial year.

According to him, during the period a special assessment was conducted in 1,086 projects worth 743.9bn/- which unearthed deficiencies in the 179 projects.

He said that analysis of 446 systems has been conducted with the aim of identifying corruption loopholes in the areas of social services, finance, buildings, administration, transport, trade, electricity, agriculture and forests.

He said the projects will be investigated by the Prevention and Combating of Corruption Bureau (PCCB) as part of its responsibilities as highlighted in the Prevention of Corruption Act.

In addition, he said that during the year 2024/25, through the President's office, the Public Service Commission expects to

carry out regular inspections in 180 public institutions and special inspections in 10 public institutions with the aim of checking compliance with laws, regulations and guidelines on the management of human resources in the public service.

Simbachawene said in the financial year 2024/25, his office has continued the implementation of its primary responsibilities to enable the availability of experts among public servants in key areas.

The areas he mentioned include management of the hiring process to enable employers to employ individuals with the required qualifications according to the structure of the service involved.

Other areas include servants being supplied with tools, improvement of their welfare and training to ease the implementation of institutional tasks, reportage and issuance of public awareness to expand public understanding on the responsibilities of the commission.

He said they will also improve the performance of the institution using information communication technology to improve accessibility of employment statistics; improve accountability and regulation of utilization of funds and other operations of the employment secretariat with adherence to the law, procedures and principles.

Photo on page 4

## Samia mourns Kenya's CDF General Ogolla

By Guardian Reporter

PRESIDENT Samia Suluhu Hassan has joined leaders across Africa to mourn Kenya's Chief of Defence Forces (CDF), General Francis Ogolla and nine army officers who lost their lives in a helicopter crash on Thursday.

On her X page post Thursday evening, President Samia expressed her grief deep sadness, paying tribute to the late General Ogolla.

“I have received with great sorrow the news of the death of the Chief of Defence Forces of the Republic of Kenya, General Francis Omondi Ogolla, and nine other soldiers in a helicopter accident that occurred today (Thursday) in Elgeyo-Marakwet County,” she said.

She offered her heartfelt condolences to President William

Ruto, the Kenyan nation, and the bereaved families of all those who died in the tragic accident.

“I send my condolences to the President and Commander-in-Chief of the Defence Forces of Kenya, His Excellency William Ruto, all the citizens of Kenya, and the families, relatives and friends of all those who have lost their loved ones in this accident. My deepest sympathies,” she added.

Kenya began three days of mourning on yesterday after its defence chief and nine other senior military officers were killed in a helicopter crash, the latest accident to blight the nation's military.

General Ogolla was killed when his helicopter went down shortly after takeoff in a remote area of north western Kenya.

“A distinguished four-star general has fallen in the course of duty and service of the country,”

President William Ruto said as he announced the deaths that evening. He said the nation would observe three days of mourning from Friday, with the national flag flying at half-mast across the country and at Kenyan missions abroad. “Final salute” was the front-page headline in the leading Daily Nation newspaper.

The bodies of the victims, draped in Kenyan flags, were returned to a military base in Nairobi on an air force plane late Thursday.

Ogolla, who was born in 1962, had been appointed to the post by Ruto just a year ago and was about to mark 40 years of military service.

His daughter Lorna Ogolla said in a poignant post on LinkedIn that her father died “doing what he did best for the better part of the last 40 years – trying to keep

Kenya safe”.

Messages of condolence were sent from across the region and foreign diplomatic missions in Kenya.

Ogolla had been visiting troops deployed in Operation Maliza Uhalifu (Operation End Crime in Kiswahili) in the North Rift region, where insecurity caused by armed bandits and cattle rustlers is rife. Ruto said the Air Force had dispatched an investigation team to establish the cause of the crash that involved a Huey helicopter.

Kenyan media reports said it was the fifth armed forces chopper crash in 12 months, with claims that the country's military aircraft were old and poorly maintained.

In June 2021, at least 10 soldiers were killed when their helicopter crashed during a training exercise south of Nairobi.



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## EDUCATIONALISTS IN TANZANIA



Community Development, Gender, Women and Special Groups deputy minister Mwanaidi Ali Khamis shows progress report on Tanzania's implementation of the Maputo Protocol shortly after launching it in Dar es Salaam on Thursday. Officially known as the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa, this is an international human rights instrument established by the African Union. It went into effect in 2005. Photo courtesy of the ministry

## Cape Town airport named best on continent for 2024

CAPE TOWN

CAPE TOWN International Airport has been recognized as the top airport in Africa, according to a recent survey by Skytrax, a leading consumer ratings organization. This accolade reflects the airport's dedication to providing excellent customer service and efficient operations.

While celebrating this regional success, Cape Town International Airport has experienced a slight drop in its global ranking, currently standing at 54th place, down from 23rd in 2020. This change highlights the dynamic nature of international air travel and the evolving standards in the aviation industry.

Other South African airports also received praise in the survey, with Durban's King Shaka International Airport taking the second spot and OR Tambo International Airport in Johannesburg claiming third place on the continental list.

This showcases the high standards maintained by airports in South Africa, solidifying their reputation as key gateways to the African continent.

Beyond South Africa, Addis Ababa's Bole International Airport in Ethiopia secured a respectable seventh place in the African rankings. This reflects Ethiopia's emergence as a regional hub for international travel and trade.

Further north, Nairobi's Jomo Kenyatta International Airport secured the 10th position, highlighting Kenya's enduring role in African aviation. Nairobi continues to play a crucial role in connecting East Africa to the global air transport network.

The Skytrax survey sheds light on the broader trends shaping the African aviation landscape, as airports strive to enhance passenger experiences and operational efficiency amid evolving industry dynamics and heightened traveller expectations.

## Give ATCL ownership of govt aircraft - committee

By Francis Kajubi, Dodoma

THE Parliamentary Committee on Governance, Constitution and Legal Affairs has urged the government to fast-track handing over ownership of government aircraft to Air Tanzania Company Limited (ATCL) for it to operate independently and generate profits.

Committee's Vice Chairperson Florent Kyombo told the National Assembly yesterday that the current leasing and operational model was a setback for a national carrier in the competitive aviation business.

He said ATC currently hires air-

craft from Tanzania Government Flight Agency (TGFA), a scenario that is blamed for attracting high operational costs thus creating debts and losses in its revenue books.

"The change of ownership will increase operational efficiency and attract profits alongside cutting down debts," he said.

Kyombo was tabling a report on the President's Office (Public Service Management and Good Governance) budget implementation for 2023/24 and recommendations for the 2024/25 financial year budget estimates at 1.10trn/-.

He said in the current finan-

cial year the office was allocated 1.01trn/-. The government has paid salary arrears for 26,331 public servants valued at 39.06bn/-.

Tabling the ministry's budget, the docket minister George Simbachawene said that TGFA was established for the purpose of administering air transport for the President and other high-ranking government officials.

He said the agency has an extra task of coordinating procurement of government aircraft on behalf of the government, leasing the aircraft to ATCL and administering lease contracts.

"Between July 2023 and March

2024, a total of 53 aviation personnel were subjected to short term overseas training for the purpose of renewing their licenses. Additionally, another 23 ATCL employees were subjected to capacity building training," said Simbachawene.

In his contribution, Yahaya Masare, Manyoni West MP, argued that in hiring the aircraft, ATCL is obligated to pay the government and at the same time ATCL is owned by the government by 100 percent thus attracting controversy in operations.

"I suggest that TGFA should own and monitor operations of aircraft for top leaders while commercial

aircraft should be handled by ATCL for efficiency if profit is to be realized from the business," he said.

ATCL has seen its losses soar despite the government going on a shopping spree to buy new planes in a bid to revive the national flag carrier.

According to Controller and Auditor General (CAG), Charles Kichere, ATCL lost 56.64bn/- in 2022/23, which is 61 percent higher than a year ago when it made a loss of 35.24bn/-.

The national airline suffered losses despite receiving 31.55bn/- in government subsidies during fiscal year 2022/23.

ATCL posted 9.71bn/- out of the financial bailout it received from the government in 2022/23 as part of its revenues, the CAG said in Dodoma recently while presenting the latest public audit findings to President Samia Suluhu Hassan.

Since the government launched its ambitious revival plan for ATCL about seven years ago, it has bought 14 new planes for the carrier so far. The planes are owned by the state-run TGFA and leased to ATCL.

ATCL had asked the government to transfer ownership of the planes to the national flag carrier to help shore up its balance sheet.

## Hospital links surge in respiratory illnesses to dirty energy

By Guardian Reporter

THE number of patients with respiratory diseases is increasing with the situation linked to the use of dirty fuels for cooking, especially charcoal and firewood.

Dr Zavery Benela, Medical Officer in charge of Mwananyamala Regional Referral Hospital in Dar es Salaam, said in the city yesterday when speaking shortly after receiving 50 gas cylinders and stoves which were given to nurses.

The gas cylinders were provided by Oryx Gas Tanzania Limited in collaboration with Doris Mollé Foundation after the two signed an agreement to distribute 1,000 gas cylinders to health workers in 10 regions country-wide. The move is part of initiatives geared to promote the use of clean energy for cooking.

"The hospital has in recent years witnessed an increased number of patients with respiratory illnesses. Most patients are women and children under the age of five," he said.

Dr Benela said that 30 percent of 500 patients attended by doctors at the hospital's outpatient department (OPD) had respiratory illnesses. He linked the diseases to the use of dirty energy in cooking, namely charcoal and firewood.

The energy firm has so far distributed over 32,000 gas cylinders to various groups in support of the government's efforts towards clean energy transition.

Speaking during the handover ceremony which was held at the hospital premises, the

Company's Director General, Benoit Araman said the aim is to ensure 80 percent of Tanzanians use clean energy for cooking by 2030.

He said the use of gas saves women from a number of health risks associated with the use of charcoal and firewood, adding that the move helps in conserving the environment.

"In Tanzania, over 33,000 people, mostly women, die annually from breathing smoke caused by solid fuels for cooking, including charcoal and firewood. Using charcoal or firewood is among the main causes of respiratory illnesses," he said.

Araman said that using gas saves women from spending hours in the bush searching for firewood as well as enabling them to prepare food conveniently and within a short time.

"Our company has for a long period provided gas cylinders and stoves to various groups including women and traders. By doing so, we facilitate the transition to clean energy as more community members use gas for cooking," he said.

Doris Mollé, founder and executive director of the Doris Mollé Foundation said under the agreements with Oryx, they will distribute 1,000 gas cylinders and stoves to health workers in 10 regions.

She said the programme to be implemented for two years will involve nurses working in hard to reach areas, adding that they chose to support nurses taking into consideration the good job they do in saving lives.



George Simbachawene, Minister of State in the President's Office (Public Service Management and Good Governance), tables the Office's 1.1 trillion/- Budget estimates for Financial Year 2024/2025 in the National Assembly in Dodoma city yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Ibrahim Joseph

## 'Investment in youth critical for achieving development goals'

By Correspondent James Kandoya

THE United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) has highlighted the need for sustainable investment in youth to realize the human capital that Tanzania requires to achieve its development goals.

Mark Bryan Schreiner, UNFPA country representative, said this in Dar es Salaam on Thursday during the launch of Phase II of the Safeguard

Young People (SYP) Programme in Tanzania.

The launch of SYP was done in collaboration with the government and the Embassy of Switzerland in Tanzania and attended by over 100 young people.

He said that the first phase of SYP Programme clearly brought significant impact to the lives and wellbeing of young people in Tanzania.

He said that across Tanzania, not all young people

face the same reality when it comes to their education, health, wellbeing, decision-making and participation in various platforms.

Schreiner said there remains a high rate of teenage pregnancy, child marriage, HIV and other Sexually Transmitted Infections (STI) transmission.

He said sexual, physical, emotional and psychological violence remain common forms of violence affecting

young people, adding that low education attainment and high unemployment rates continue.

Schreiner said youth with disabilities continue to be deprived of the opportunities for accessing education, health and employment that can help them reach their full potential.

"The SYP programme is a critical contribution, supporting Tanzania to unlock a unique opportunity to invest

in the young human capital and reap the social and economic benefits - harnessing the so-called demographic dividend. Now is the time for Tanzania!" he said.

He said young people must be supported holistically in their own diverse and often complex environments, so they can make informed decisions and realize their full potential.

Patrobas Katambi, Deputy Minister of State in the Prime

Minister's Office (Labour, Youth, Employment and Persons with Disability) commended the continued efforts by the UNFPA and the Embassy of Switzerland in Tanzania.

He said the programme is crucial to support youth in education and provide opportunities to overcome different challenges standing between them and their dreams.

Ambassador of Switzerland to Tanzania Didier Chasot said that his government

as a partner recognizes the challenges that exist due to the high rate of population growth in Tanzania, especially young people.

He said the challenges affect health outcomes, especially related to reproductive health and nutritional issues.

The envoy said they also affect economic outcomes, especially due to lack of adequate skills, unemployment and psychological and social outcomes.



National Environment Management Council officials (facing camera) pictured yesterday attending to visitors at the council's pavilion in the course of the 60th Tanganyika and Zanzibar Union Anniversary business exhibition in progress in Dar es Salaam. Photo: Correspondent Joseph Mwendapole

## Independence Day: Zimbabwe frees more than 4000 prisoners

HARARE

ZIMBABWE President Emmerson Mnangagwa granted clemency to more than 4,000 prisoners, including some who were on death row in an Independence Day amnesty on Thursday.

Zimbabwe marked 44 years of independence from white minority rule, which ended in 1980 after a bloody bush war. The country's name was changed from Rhodesia to Zimbabwe.

The presidential amnesty, the second in less than a year, benefits female, older and juvenile inmates, the terminally ill and some who were originally sentenced to death.

Those once on death row but who had their sentences commuted to life terms in previous clemency orders or through court appeals are to be freed provided they have been in prison for at least 20 years, according to the clemency order, which was announced Wednesday and due to take effect on Thursday.

All female prisoners who had served at least a third of their sentence by Independence Day are be-

ing freed, as are juvenile inmates who have served the same period.

Prisoners age 60 and older who have served one tenth of their sentences will also be released.

Mnangagwa also pardoned the blind and others with disabilities who have served a third of their sentence.

The prisoners are being released in batches across the country.

However, those jailed for "specified" offences that include sexual offences, robbery, public violence, unlawful possession of firearms, human trafficking and theft or vandalism of electricity and telecommunications infrastructure won't benefit from the amnesty.

All death row prisoners who have been in jail for at least 10 years had their sentences commuted to life in prison under the amnesty.

Zimbabwe has more than 60 inmates on death row. It wasn't immediately clear how many of those had their sentences commuted to life under the amnesty.

Zimbabwe is one of more than a dozen countries in Africa and more than 50 across the world that have the death penalty, although the country's last hanging was in 2005.

## NEMC warns against implementation of big projects without EIA

By Correspondent Joseph Mwendapole

THE National Environment Management Council (NEMC) has warned businesspeople who implement big projects without obtaining the mandatory Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) from the council.

The council said that project implementers found guilty of not having EIA certificate face a fine of

10m/-.

This was said in Dar es Salaam yesterday by the council's environmental management officer Suzan Chawe when speaking at the opening of a business exhibition to celebrate the forthcoming 60th anniversary of the union between Tanganyika and Zanzibar.

The exhibition was opened by the Second Vice President of Zanzibar Hemed Suleiman Abdulla.

Chawe said NEMC has been conducting regular inspections in various parts of the country to fine those who introduce projects without EIA certificate.

She said NEMC has been running public education campaigns about the importance of EIA for those implementing projects to avoid being caught by inspectors and fined.

"For example, you may find

that someone is building a fuel station in a residential area which is dangerous if there is an emergency; we emphasize the importance of EIA before starting construction activities," she said.

Chawe said that for 60 years of independence, NEMC is proud of many things, including fighting for the protection of the environment by ensuring that trees are

planted and protected.

She said that the council has made improvements to its information systems for evaluation and environmental impact assessments by strengthening the IT infrastructure in line with the requirements of the electronic government system.

She said NEMC manages projects that conduct environmental impact assessment electroni-

cally through online registration.

She said that this method enables an investor to initiate the process of obtaining an EIA certificate through the project management system.

"Before registering a project, the investor must ensure that ideas of the stakeholders have been obtained regarding implementation of the project in the respective area," she said.

## Z'bar pledges heavy investment to modernise seaweed farming

By Guardian Reporter, Zanzibar

THE government of Zanzibar has is to invest modern methods of seaweed cultivation to promote economic development in the isles.

Dr Salum Soud Hamed, director of fisheries development and marine products department in the Ministry of Blue Economy and Fisheries, made the remarks yesterday in Unguja South Region while handing over a seaweed harvesting boat provided by The Nature Conservancy (TNC) which is responsible for international environmental protection, ahead of forthcoming celebrations of union between Tanganyika and Zanzibar on April 26.

He said that seaweed has many benefits in the economic growth of an individual and the nation and that is why the government is eager to work with development stakeholders to find alternative ways to help farmers increase their income.

Furthermore, he said that one of the strategies of the Ministry of Blue Economy and Fisheries is to ensure that farmers increase production of seaweed as a cash crop.

"The ministry continues to provide education to farmers on skilled approaches as well as providing them with professional equipment with the aim of seeing that they do their work easily by using professional methods," he said.

Speaking on the price of seaweed, Salum said the ministry continues with the construction of a seaweed processing factory, noting that when the construction is completed, farmers will have a special place to sell their seaweed for value addition.

TNC institute representative Ayubu Singoye said the goal of providing boats to seaweed farmers was to facilitate harvesting activities of the crop during harvest seasons.

Singoye added that the institution will continue to cooperate with the governments to provide education on preservation of marine environment to see that seaweed farming activities do not affect marine ecosystem.



Kigoma regional administrative secretary Hassan Rugwe (2nd-L) holds a banner alongside USAID Mission Director (Tanzania) Craig Hart (L) and USAID Representative Erick Lindemalm (C) at the launch of USAID's Lishe (Nutrition) project in Kigoma-Ujiji municipality earlier this week. With them are USAID Mission officials Dr Joyceline Kaganda (2nd-R) and Janeth Said. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

## WB pledges health services to 1.5 billion people by 2030

By Guardian Reporter

THE World Bank Group has announced an ambitious plan to support countries in delivering quality, affordable health services to 1.5 billion people by 2030.

This is part of a larger global effort to provide a basic standard of care through every stage of a person's life—infancy, childhood, adolescence, and adulthood.

In a statement availed to the media on Thursday, Ajay Banga, the World Bank Group President said: "Providing a basic standard of care for

people throughout their lives is critical for development," said He added: "This ambition won't be realized with a solo effort. It will require partners, a coalition of public and private sector, working together to expand access to health care services."

He said the strategy to reach 1.5 billion people is focused on three core elements which include expanding focus from maternal and child health to include coverage throughout a person's lifetime, including non-communicable diseases.

Others are expanding oper-

ations to hard-to-reach areas, including remote villages, cities, and countries as well as working with governments to cut unnecessary fees and other financial barriers to health care.

To be counted toward this goal, a person must be seen and treated by a health-care worker via an in-person visit or telehealth.

Today, around 2 billion people face severe financial hardship when paying for health services. Intertwined challenges, such as climate change, pandemics, conflicts, societal aging, and a

projected shortfall of 10 million health-care workers by 2030, exacerbate the cycle of poverty and inequality.

The World Bank Group will combine financing, knowledge, and partnerships to address this challenge.

All elements of the Bank's financing capabilities are positioned to be called upon depending on a country's unique need and stage of development to reach 1.5 billion people.

For countries most in need, IDA financing will make it possible to bring

health-care workers into communities where people may otherwise have no access to services. In middle-income countries, IBRD will deploy financing to incentivize government investments in health and regulations that move a country forward.

With regulatory certainty and reliable governance in place, it opens the door for more private sector investments, especially in local production of medications and protective gear.

Strong partnerships will be critical for the World

Bank Group to achieve results in health. The World Bank Group will fall short if it does not work hand-in-hand—faster and better—with non-government organizations, the private sector, and civil society.

The World Bank Group welcomes Japan's announcement to launch a Universal Health Coverage (UHC) Knowledge Hub to enhance health and finance ministries' capacity, an initiative supported by the Bank and the World Health Organization.

The goal to deliver quality, affordable health services to

1.5 billion people by 2030 is one of the more recent examples of the World Bank Group's commitment to become more impact-oriented and is the by-product of a concerted effort to build a better bank.

For decades, the World Bank Group has helped provide health services for women and children in more than 100 countries. A focused effort to become faster, work better with partners, and bring in the private sector has enabled the 80-year-old institution to pursue greater scale and impact.



Members of the opposition Chadema in Nyasa Zone carry their zonal chairman, Rev Peter Msigwa, shoulder high on Thursday shortly after members of the party's women's council in Mbeya Region had handed over to him a nomination form in Iringa municipality to enable him to vie for the position again. Photo: Correspondent Francis Godwin

## UAE's recovery hindered by floods as Dubai delays flights

DUBAI

THE United Arab Emirates tried to wring itself out on Thursday after the heaviest recorded rainfall ever to hit the desert country, with its main airport allowing more flights.

Dubai International Airport, the World's busiest for international travel, allowed global carriers to again fly into Terminal 1 at the airfield.

And long-haul carrier Emirates, crucial to East-West travel, began allowing local passengers to arrive at Terminal 3, their base of operations.

However, Dubai Airports CEO Paul Griffiths told The Associated Press that the airfield needed at least another 24 hours to resume operations close to its usual schedule.

The airport ended up needing 22 tankers with vacuum pumps to get water off its grounds.

Griffiths acknowledged that taxiways flooded during the rains, though the airport's runways remained free of water to safely operate.

Emirates, whose operations had been struggling since the storm Tuesday, had stopped travelers flying out of the UAE from checking into their flights as they tried to move out connecting passengers. Pilots and flight crews also had a hard time reaching the airport given the water on roadways. But on Thursday, Emirates lifted that order to allow customers into the airport.

That saw some 2,000 people come into Terminal 3, again sparking long lines, Griffiths acknowledged.

Some travellers who arrived in Dubai described hours-long waits to get their baggage, with some just giving up to head home or to whatever hotel would have them.

## New award celebrates excellence in reporting population, health

By Guardian Reporter

THE USAID-funded Building Capacity for Integrated Family Planning and Reproductive Health and Population, Environment and Development Action (BUILD) project has launched a journalism award to amplify media engagement with population, health, environment and sustainable development programmes in Africa.

Launched on Wednesday and co-created by journalists from the East Africa region, the PHED African Me-

dia (PAM) award aims to recognize and celebrate journalists and media houses that demonstrate excellence in covering the complex and interconnected issues of population, health, environment, and sustainable development (PHED) in Africa.

In a statement availed in the media on Thursday, Clive Mutunga, director of BUILD project said: "By showcasing exceptional reporting on these critical issues, we hope to inspire a greater depth and breadth of coverage, amplifying the visibility of these matters and their impact on

the lived realities and experiences of people across the region."

He said journalists from Eastern Africa will pilot the first phase of the award and have until June 30 2024 to submit entries of stories, photographs, and multimedia content that have been done 12 months before the official call.

By highlighting exemplary reporting on these crucial topics, the award seeks to encourage and inspire further high-quality, nuanced coverage of PHED matters across the continent.

The award was launched with a co-creation session, where media stake-

holders detailed criteria, the process for selection, categories, the role and responsibility of the panel, and the relevant non-monetary prizes attached to the award.

The co-creators noted that stories must capture the integration of population, family planning, sexual rights and reproductive health rights (SRHR), climate change, and sustainable development, which should be presented in innovative ways such as the use of multimedia formats.

The BUILD Project also hosted training for the journalists and other stake-

holders from the region to enhance their capacity to comprehend the nexus and integration of health, including voluntary family planning and reproductive health and environment and climate change.

"Through this award, we aim to recognize and celebrate the vital role journalists play in shaping narratives around the complex, interconnected challenges and solutions within the population, health, environment, and sustainable development sectors.

In addition to recognizing journal-

ists committed to covering PHED issues, this PHED African Media award will boost policy dialogues across East Africa on the benefits of cross-sectoral solutions for regional policy and program action.

The BUILD project is led by the African Institute for Development Policy (AFIDEP) (prime) in partnership with Leadership for Environment and Development Southern and Eastern Africa (LEAD SEA); PATH Foundation Philippines Inc. (PFPD); FHI 360; and Pan-African Climate Justice Alliance (PACJA).

## Canada avails \$7.3 million for smallholder farmers in Africa

By Special Correspondent

GLOBAL Affairs Canada has provided \$7.3 million in funding to the Africa Fertilizer Financing Mechanism (AFFM) to enhance sustainable agricultural productivity and smallholder farmer livelihoods, particularly women and youth across Africa.

The financing will aid the mechanism in replicating its credit guarantee programmes, enabling fertilizer importers and aggregators to access the product on credit. It will also boost efforts to improve soil health and provide technical assistance to farmers.

Signed on 25 March 2024, the funding agreement earmarks CAD\$10 million specifically to the Mechanism's 'Fostering Africa's agricultural productivity through fertilizer value chain financing' (FOSTER) programme.

Administered by the African Development Bank Group, the mechanism provides innovative financing to accelerate fertilizer use in Africa and improve agricultural productivity across the bank's regional member countries.

"We thank Global Affairs Canada for its support to advance the Africa Fertilizer Financing Mechanism's

implementation of its Strategic Plan 2022-2028, which focuses on broadening access to finance through capital investments and policy reforms, among other priorities that benefit Africa's smallholder farmers," said Dr Beth Dunford, the bank's Vice President for Agriculture, Human and Social Development.

Fertilizer is essential for food production, yet it is significantly underutilized in sub-Saharan Africa's agriculture sector due to limited financing and technical know-how among farmers.

The FOSTER program targets 800,000 smallholder farmers, with 40 percent of beneficiaries expected to be women and 10 percent youth. It aims to provide access to and improve the utilization of 80,000 tons of organic and inorganic fertilizer, which is expected to increase yields by 30 percent.

Canada's Minister of International Development, Ahmed Hussen, said: "Canada is proud to support resilient, climate-smart agriculture and adaptable food production systems in Africa. We remain committed to promoting inclusive, green growth in partnership with the African Development Bank, including through our contribution to the Africa Fertilizer Financing Mechanism."



Kinondoni district commissioner Saad Mtambule opens an Occupational Safety and Health Agency (OSHA) consultative meeting with editors in Dar es Salaam yesterday. Right is OSHA director of business services Netiwe Mhando, followed by director general Khadija Mwenda. Photo: Correspondent Joseph Mwendapole

## Ferry owners urged to abide by set safety standards

By Correspondent James Kandoya

DEPUTY Minister for Transport David Kihenzile has called on public and private owners of ferries in the country to abide by safety regulations to avoid accidents.

Kihenzile made the call in Dar es Salaam on Wednesday at the closure of the Africa Ferry Safety Seminar that focused on ferry safety on the continent.

The three-day seminar was organized by the Ministry for Transport in collaboration with International Maritime Organization (IMO) and Interterry brought together ex-

perts, policy makers and other stakeholders from 67 countries in Africa and across the globe to discuss multifaceted aspects of ferry safety.

He said Tanzania recorded deaths resulting from ferry accidents that occurred in both Mainland and Zanzibar.

Kihenzile said it was time to end the accidents by operators and regulators to ensure compliance with all maritime regulations. He acknowledged the critical role of the government in ferry safety, adding that it was imperative to highlight as it marks 50 years anniversaries of membership of IMO.

He said the ongoing development of National Maritime Transport Policy was a testament to the country's commitment to not only ensuring the safety of maritime transportation but also securing maritime domain and protecting the majestic beauty of marine environment.

Furthermore, the ongoing review of the Merchant Shipping Act 2003 signifies the stance in aligning the national legislation with international standards.

"The government is fully committed to collaborating with international organisations to enhance ferry safety," he said

He called on the Tanzania Shipping Agencies Corporation (TASAC) to strengthen surveillance across the water bodies to trace ferries operating without meeting standard operating procedures.

Stella Katondo, director of transport, environment and safety in the Ministry for Transport, said the seminar was an important platform to seek further knowledge and experience from leading experts on how to protect people against avoidable marine accidents.

She said that marine safety knowledge to operators and regulators of vessels was

necessary and must always be given top priority. Katondo said like other countries, Tanzania has to implement safety conventions to protect its people against marine accidents.

"The seminar is a catalyst for players to make some changes and enhance ferry safety to ensure sustainability for African maritime sector" she said.

"As member states, good working procedures will help us enhance ferry safety operations." Currently, there are 62 public and private-owned ferries operating in Tanzania's water bodies.

## Devastating floods ravage parts of East Africa, displacing thousands

By Special Correspondent, Nairobi

HEAVY rains and flooding have wreaked havoc across East Africa, claiming lives and displacing thousands of people in Kenya and Tanzania.

In Kakola Ombaka, Kenya, residents like Juliana Atieno Ochieng and Duncan Onyango recount the tragic toll of the floods on their lives. Ochieng, who lost her leg due to an injury sustained during the 2019 floods, remains immobilized by the waters that continue to inundate her home. Onyango has suffered substantial livestock and property losses, with his house destroyed five times by the relentless floods.

Assistant Chief Augustine Neto Awich reports that 646 households have been displaced in Kakola Ombaka, with hundreds seeking refuge in evacuation centers or with relatives on higher ground.

The situation is dire across the region, with Kenya reporting at least 13 fatalities from flooding, while Tanzania has recorded 58 deaths in the past two weeks alone. Infrastructure has been severely damaged, exacerbating the crisis.

Authorities are urging residents in flood-prone areas to relocate as the rains persist. The Kenyan meteorological department had issued warnings about the impending heavy rainfall, urging preparedness for potential floods.

As the region braces for further rainfall, the plight of those affected by the floods underscores the urgent need for coordinated disaster response efforts to mitigate the impact on vulnerable communities.



**Authorities are urging residents in flood-prone areas to relocate as the rains persist. The Kenyan meteorological department had issued warnings about the impending heavy rainfall, urging preparedness for potential floods**



Hanang' constituency legislator Samwel Hhayuma (L, gesturing) has a word with energy experts while on a tour of an energy exhibition at Katesh township on Thursday. Photo: Correspondent Gift Thadey

## UK lawmakers pass bill seeking to phase out smoking

LONDON

THE British government's plan for a landmark smoking ban that aims to stop young people from ever smoking cleared its first hurdle in Parliament on Tuesday despite vocal opposition from within Prime Minister Rishi Sunak's Conservative Party.

The bill, a key policy announced by Sunak last year, would make it illegal to sell tobacco products to anyone born after January 1, 2009. If passed, the bill will give Britain some of the toughest anti-smoking measures in the world. Authorities

say it will create modern Britain's "first smoke-free generation."

Under the Tobacco and Vapes Bill, children turning 15 this year or younger will never be legally sold tobacco. Once implemented – officials aim for 2027 – the legal age of sale that people in England can buy cigarettes will be raised by one year, every year until it is eventually illegal for the whole population.

The bill also includes measures to crack down on youth vaping, such as banning the sale of cheap disposable vapes and restricting their flavours to prevent children

from becoming addicted to nicotine.

It is currently illegal for anyone to sell cigarettes or tobacco products and vapes to people under 18 years old throughout the UK.

Lawmakers voted 383 to 67 to give the bill a second reading late on Tuesday after an afternoon of debate. Although the bill was widely praised by health experts and had the support of the opposition Labour Party, Sunak faced rebellion from more libertarian-minded members of his party, who criticized the proposals as "unconservative."

Conservative lawmakers were granted a free vote, meaning they could vote with their personal conscience rather than follow the official party line.

Opponents, such as the smokers' rights lobbying group FOR-EST, said the move risks creating a black market and will "treat future generations of adults like kids."

Prominent voices within the Conservative Party, including two of Sunak's predecessors Boris Johnson and Liz Truss, said the plans went against conservative values by limiting people's personal freedoms.

The bill was a "virtue-signalling piece of legislation about protecting adults from themselves in the future," Truss told Parliament during Tuesday's debate.

Other high-profile Tories, including business secretary Kemi Badenoch, a Cabinet minister, also opposed the bill.

The plans were believed to have been inspired by similar policies proposed by New Zealand under former Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern, but the country's new coalition government repealed the bill earlier this year.

The government said that smok-

ing won't be criminalized, and the phased changes mean that anyone who can legally buy cigarettes now won't be prevented from doing so in the future.

The number of people who smoke in the UK has declined by two-thirds since the 1970s, but some 6.4 million people in the country – or about 13 percent of the population – still smoke, according to official figures.

Authorities say smoking causes some 80,000 deaths a year in the UK, and remains the number one preventable cause of death, disability and poor health.



With such a gaping pothole in place, what road would be 'friendly' enough to vehicular traffic? Yet, this is the state this Mbezi Mwisho section of Malamba Mawili Road in suburban Dar es Salaam has been in reportedly for over three months now. Correspondent Sabato Kasika captured the scene yesterday.

## Africa nations urged to harness opportunities in electric vehicles

By Special Correspondent, Addis Ababa

THE United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) has called on African countries to harness the opportunities presented in recent developments in the global battery and electric vehicle (EV) industry.

The UNECA made the call as it held a technical review meeting on the implementation of a cross-border special economic zone for the battery and EV industry, which will be established in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and Zambia, with the support of the UNECA and the African Export-Import Bank, according to a statement issued late on Monday.

Eunice Kamwendo, director of the UNECA Sub-Regional Office for Southern Africa, emphasized the benefits of the battery and EV initiative in the two countries for its contribution to socio-economic development and structural transformation.

She said the initiative will add value to the minerals crucial to manufacturing EVs, attract domestic and foreign direct investment in the sector, create sustainable jobs, and contribute to overall economic transformation.

The planned joint special economic zone will promote manufacturing agglomeration in the two countries and across the continent, while also bridging the technological gap in the sector, Kamwendo said.

"This initiative presents an immense opportunity for transforming regional economies and the entire continent through mineral-based development," she said.

The UNECA said the surge in demand for rechargeable batteries, driven by smartphone use and the need to store renewable energy, represents a huge opportunity for the African continent to drive development based on a clean energy transition.

## UN for women participation to boost climate resilience in Africa

By Special Correspondent, Nairobi

THE dream of a green, resilient and inclusive future for Africa is within reach once governments harness the ingenuity of grassroots women and girls to boost action on the escalating climate crisis, United Nations officials said on Tuesday at a forum in Nairobi, Kenya.

Mehjabeen Alarakhia, the

UN Women's regional advisor on women's economic empowerment for East and Southern Africa, stressed the critical role of women in boosting the continent's ability to withstand climatic shocks.

Climate change has disproportionately impacted Africa's rural women and girls, and they could be tapped to implement resilient measures, including natural re-

sources conservation, Alarakhia said.

"Climate change threatens the livelihoods of African women and girls, intensifying their health risks and inability to access clean water," she said. "But women's input should be at the heart of climate response."

Convened by UN Women, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), and the United Nations Frame-

work Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the three-day forum, which runs from April 16 to 18, will discuss the critical role of gender-responsive climate policies in advancing Africa's green agenda.

Delegates from more than 30 African countries, drawn from governments, civil society, academia, and indigenous communities, are attending the conference to chart a new gender-inclusive and green fu-

ture pathway for Africa.

Alarakhia emphasized the need for climate-proof sectors that are critical to the survival and well-being of Africa's grassroots, including agriculture, water, health, forestry, and energy.

William Otieno, the UNFCCC regional lead for East and Southern Africa, said that empowering African women and girls will be key to achieving the continents'

desired outcomes during global climate negotiations.

According to Otieno, gender inclusivity should inform national and regional processes geared toward a just and sustainable transition in a continent reeling from a host of climate disasters.

Evelyn Koech, the team leader of environment and resilience at UNDP Kenya, said African countries re-

quire gender-inclusive policies to tame the devastating impacts of climate change, including floods, droughts, forced displacement, and resource-based conflicts, which exact a heavier toll on women.

For the continent to transition to a more resilient and green future, governments should integrate gender parity in climate finance and efforts to achieve net-zero targets, Koech added.

SATURDAY 20 APRIL 2024

**Taking A New Look  
At The News  
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## Plastic bottles collected for sale pose no particular risk

STAKEHOLDERS are not saying much on intentions by the government to review the Solid Waste Management (Regulations) of 2009.

The environment ministerial docket says the idea is to compel producers of plastic bottles to manage their waste more closely, thus protecting the environment more keenly.

It is said that this position was decided at a meeting with stakeholders producing products packed in plastic bottles or other packaging material.

The meeting is understood to have explored usable methods of tackling the problem, even as it is disputable if the problem is real.

Questions are being raised on whether there was need for action geared at the sustainable management of environmental pollution when the government decided on banning flimsy plastic carrier bags as no one was collecting them and they had no second use.

Other bags looking the same can at least store waste or some items, not those which used to wrap fried potatoes and the like, whereas most plastic bottles have stakeholders who make some sort of living collecting them.

It is hard to see what the respective ministerial permanent secretary bringing together various experts and the relevant stakeholders will be discussing in trying to see how to spruce up applicable regulations.

That the time limit is the end of this financial year suggests that some new tax is being organised in like manner as a whole range of curious 'corporate social responsibility' levies as it is a byword for undeclared taxes.

Let's hear what will be divulged when the first draft is relayed to the public late next week, as the equation is forbidding.

There is a maxim that law or legislation has to with a reasonably

wide section of society, not targeting individuals or a class of persons in a vertical, stand-alone manner.

There is already taxation on all manner of produce placed in bottles, with shops or bars that sell those products paying levies to local government authorities and households also paying to have their waste collected.

It appears that the problem is tied to open spaces like waste water dugouts and collecting such bottles at end points. Evidently, that is the work of local governments - meant to clear up all such areas.

Suggestions that discussion between producers of plastic products and key regulatory authorities like NEMC "has increased the momentum of reviewing the regulations" is not evidence of fruitful exchanges.

Rather, they represent an implicit one-sided reading of issues and discussing the rates to be paid.

There was no mention of the role of bottle pickers and recycling as well as local authorities outsourcing waste collection.

The focus was on plastic bottles and warnings relating to what might happen if a company's bottles were seen littering the streets.

If one drives a car drunk and hits a pole, are brewers charged with paying his hospital bills, the argument being that the 'intoxicant' was their product?

There is a tendency of letting waste water canals be turned into chambers for emptying cesspits and for all sorts of refuse to be thrown there, often cleared when it rains heavily.

The reason is lack of interest on the part of street/locality or ward authorities in ensuring that the waste there is collected, and the fall guy becomes the plastic waste producer, that they follow 'their' bottles everywhere. So, after one has bought a shirt and is wearing it, the shirt still belongs to the supermarket, right?

## Disaster committees making donation reports public reasonable, even if rare

DISTRICT and regional disaster management committees have been directed to issue detailed reports on items, including amounts of money, donated to help disaster victims.

It is not the first time that this kind of demand has been made, and at times one wonders if this position realises precisely what it is doing.

Psychologically, it is almost as if we wish to hear if they have had enough donations and desist from placing further assistance or support, or someone is envying those who obtained more donations, etc.

The key initiative on the matter came from the National Assembly's backbenches, during the premier's weekly (Thursdays) question and answer session.

Explanation was sought as to why public officials were not giving comprehensive feedback on money raised with intent to help disaster victims.

For one thing, few of us remember when such details were given in the case of wedding ceremonies and, closer to this scenario, contributions to funeral situations - where no accountability is demanded. When a family has been hit with disaster, no one would dare say 'we have given enough'.

This is the risk that administrators at the Prime Minister's Office are taking by demanding close-up viewing of what has been donated as, in the first place, it is intrusion into privacy.

The government may wish to canvass for public donations when disasters such as fires and floods strike, and proceed to affirm that people have the right to be informed about

the administration of the donations.

That would hold some validity. It all depends on who was given the cash, if it is other public authorities or people hit by disaster.

If it is the families concerned, no accounting comes up. However, if it is public officials, there is cause for worry, though the sentiment seems to be the reverse in what officials say. The families would likely be more at peace with authorities distributing help than taking assistance to the site. That's why calls for accountability risk being embarrassing to the wider public.

Rather than hearing that disaster management committees from the village level to the regional level need to make sure that reports on use of donations and even what has been donated are made public, most people would have liked to hear that no families were budgeted out of assistance.

It is more enlightening to hear what each family has ended up with in terms of food stocks, shelter or clothing than to hear how much was actually donated.

People do not ask what each of a top official's luxury vehicles costs; administrators want to know of each shilling given to people.

Indeed, it is normal that if someone assists another person and then goes public about it, there is a chance of bad blood developing between them.

There is wisdom in fighting to ensure that, in this, what the right hand offers in helping the needy the left hand should not know about. Indeed, those hit by disaster are distressed and need both assistance and peace of mind.

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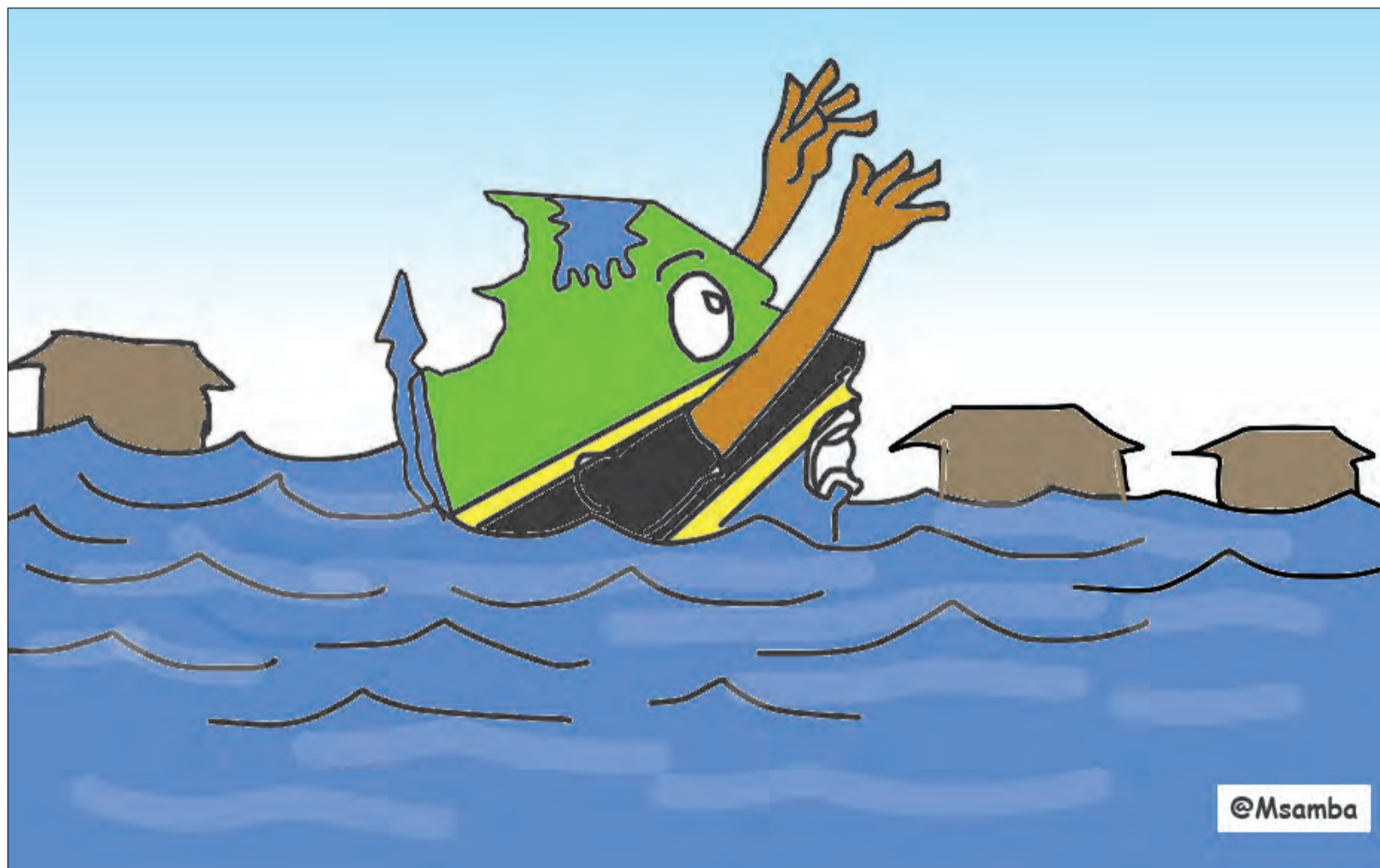
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## 'No victor, no vanquished': Lessons of war which helped Obasanjo guide other nations towards peace

By Ellen Johnson Sirleaf

PRESIDENT Olusegun Obasanjo, "Baba" to his admirers, is Africa's man of peace. How he got to this role is unusual, since it was via a military background. But both these vocations share many skills, not least the ability to bring people together, to prioritise and organise and to place the greater good of society, of a country and of the continent of Africa ahead of short-term motives.

He is able to do this in his own life, but also to inspire others to take the same approach. As another great statesman, Colin Powell, put it: "Leadership is solving problems."

There are very few statesmen who can be called on to intervene when conflicts appear incapable of resolution. Baba is the exception to this rule.

I have very direct experience of this in Liberia where President Obasanjo was able to bring his vision to bear. By offering one of the leading perpetrators of the war, Charles Taylor, exile in Nigeria, he conjured a way of ending a conflict which devastated my country, Liberia.

His critics said he should not have offered a warlord asylum, but I knew, and he knew, that without this compromise there would be no peace. He was prepared to weather the criticism because he knew the outcome would be to the benefit of the majority of Liberians.

History has proven him right. With Taylor in exile, Liberia was able to move forward and has now become a beacon of stable democracy in West Africa, with two peaceful changes of government at the polls since then. No one would have imagined that was possible just 20 years ago.

President Obasanjo's ability to find a way when there seems to be none has helped him craft peace across the continent.

### Ethiopia

When the war in Ethiopia between the central government and the authorities in its Tigray region appeared set to continue indefinitely, becoming yet another attritional conflict that could have dragged on for decades, the African Union's (AU) Peace and Security Council called on President Obasanjo to step in.

As AU special envoy, President Obasanjo brought seniority, experience and a cool, calm demeanour to bear on this conflict. His approach was to hear all sides, frequently travelling to the war zone to hear the Tigrayan point of view and consulting extensively with the government in Addis Ababa.

He has summarised his philosophy as follows: "Everyone has to accept the truth that there is 'no victor, no van-



Then Liberian president Ellen Johnson Sirleaf (left) welcomes former Nigerian president Olusegun Obasanjo to Monrovia on 11 February 2017. (Photo: EPA / Ahmed Jalanzo)

quished' if the possibility of peace, common security and shared prosperity, development and progress for all concerned is to be realised."

It took time, courage and persistence to engineer a settlement and, when both sides had reached a military stalemate, President Obasanjo was able to bring the sides to an agreement to halt fighting.

The Pretoria Agreement of 2 November 2022 was formally facilitated by the AU and signed by representatives of the Ethiopian government, the Tigray People's Liberation Front and the Tigray people. This was followed by an agreement, concluded a week later in Nairobi, between the military commanders on the modalities of the ceasefire agreement.

### Biafran war

President Obasanjo's ability to make such peace deals possible is built on the fact that he is a military man and had fought in Nigeria's Biafran civil war, leading the government forces.

When the war broke out in 1967, Nigeria was led by General Yakubu Gowon, and Biafra by Lieutenant-Colonel Chukwuemeka "Emeka" Odumegwu Ojukwu.

While negotiations in January 1967 between Emeka and Gowon had produced the Aburi Accord, signed in Ghana, by which a new federal arrangement would have been implemented, this was still-born.

On 30 May 1967, Emeka declared eastern Nigeria a sovereign state as the Republic of Biafra and, on 6 July 1967, Gowon declared war and attacked Biafra.

Nigeria's civil war cost an over-

all estimate of 100,000 military casualties while the human-caused famine resulted in perhaps as many as two million civilians dying of starvation, the scale of devastation making Biafra synonymous with humanitarian calamity. Like America's War in Vietnam, the Biafran War was one of the first to be televised to a global audience.

Baba learnt bitter lessons from this conflict. "Our first mistake was not to accept the Aburi Accord. If this had been accepted, we would not have gone to war. It would have given up a federation not as tight as we have now, but a looser version, but it would have avoided war."

When the war broke out, the former president maintained: "We were not strong enough, and the coordination of the war effort was poor." And, at the end of the war, "we did not put the lessons of peace- and nation-building into action. We did not attempt to buy inclusiveness, with the result that this is still a part of the political problem today."

### Conflict experience

Being able to speak from his experience on the front line of a devastating conflict, of lessons learnt, gives him the authority to press conflicting parties to seek peace in a way in which few other leaders can. He speaks of several key aspects to facilitate peace.

The first is the imperative for "even-handedness" on the part of an outside mediator, not only in terms of what you do "but what you are seen to do".

There is, secondly, a need "to know both the remote and the immediate causes" of conflict, which

means "you have to understand the history".

He says that "you can't just deal with the immediate cause, since that can often be trumped by the remote". This informed his recent efforts to quell the post-election distrust and violence in Kenya by forming a Committee of Ten comprising equal numbers of the political protagonists.

His third tip is to find the issues that can create momentum for the process, and build confidence, "so ramifying among the rest" of the points of difference.

In the case of Ethiopia, he recalls, by dealing with the issue of humanitarian access into Tigray and having the Tigrayans acknowledge the authority of the federal government on key issues, confidence grew. "Nothing succeeds like success," he notes. Even "small catalysts like carrying a message from Ethiopian prime minister Abiy [Ahmed] to the president of Tigray, Debretsion Gebremichael, can create goodwill".

Fourth, there is a need to be "conscious of local spoilers, domestic, regional and international, even local". While he was never, finally, that concerned about the presence of large numbers of cooks with many fingers in the pie, "there must be only one chief cook who will have the final say on matters".

There is also the need to ensure that the conditions that give rise to conflict are dealt with at their root. Gender equity is a critical component, one which I am only too familiar with. He has been a strong supporter of the Ellen Johnson Sirleaf Centre for Women and Development since its inception in March 2018.

Finally, President Obasanjo is alert to avoid the pitfall of nationalist pride. "Security for us in Africa means that we Africans must be in the forefront but we cannot do it alone."

In the years that I have known him, from when we were in office to our efforts to improve economic growth and development on the continent as members of the board of organisations such as the Brenthurst Foundation, which he has long chaired, I have come to appreciate Baba as a man of peace.

More than that, he is a man who knows how to not only plant the seed of peace, but to nurture it and see it flourish. DM

**Ellen Johnson Sirleaf is the former president of Liberia and a Nobel peace laureate.**



# Children need to be responsible and indeed law-abiding persons

By Telesphor Magobe

LAST week, we briefly looked at the Court of Appeal of Tanzania's judgement on principal debtor defaults on loan repayment and saw that to guarantee a person who asks for a personal bank loan requires good knowledge of personal bank loan terms and conditions. This is because in case the principal debtor fails to repay his or her loan, the position of the law in Tanzania is that the guarantor bears the burden of loan repayment.

Today, I invite you to look at good child upbringing. The Law of the Child Act (R.E 2019) provides for parental duty and responsibility. It requires parents or guardians to ensure children are brought up in a healthy and safe environment. Parental duty and responsibility includes providing good guidance, care, assistance and maintenance and assurance of children's survival and development.

In practice, this does not always go well because many parents or guardians treat children harshly. Often children grow up in a difficult environment and are beaten even when they don't deserve it simply because they are children and don't harbour grudges. When children make mistakes some parents or guardians use abusive language to correct them. But is it necessary for correction?

Harsh behaviour is like a contagious disease and a harsh parent or guardian induces it to the child he or she



In one of the sessions participants asked about the trainer's family and whether he had ever beaten his wife and children. He replied that he had six children and had never beaten any of them, including his loving wife. He said there were many ways of passing a message across and beating was not the only way of correcting children or even a wife. He also said he prepares a special meal for his family once a month and when his children misbehave he punishes them by not preparing the special meal they love so much and when he stops preparing it they look remorseful. So, he said that was the only punishment he gives to his children and they love and respect him very much. This shows that being harsh to children is not necessary and is not the only way of grooming children to be responsible and law-abiding persons.

Section 13 of the Law of the Child Act provides for protection from torture and degrading treatment. Subsection (1) prohibits subjecting children to torture, or other cruel, inhuman punishment or degrading treatment, including any cultural practice which dehumanises or is injurious to their physical and mental well-being.

Subsection (2) states that: "No correction of a child is justifiable which is unreasonable in kind or in degree according to the age, physical and mental condition of the child and no correction is justifiable if the child is by reason of tender age or otherwise incapable of understanding the purpose of the correction."

The frequently quoted proverb "Spare the rod and spoil the child" doesn't entitle a parent or guardian to cane a child it simply means correction is needed when a child makes mistakes and correction doesn't mean only beating a child. If caning were effective then all of us would have been shining examples of moral strength.

**Today's proverb: "If wishes were horses, beggars might ride."**

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mistreats and the child also harbours it so much so that when he or she becomes a parent or guardian he or she will also induce it to his or her children and it becomes a vicious circle. But when children make mistakes it is possible to correct them in a positive way. We don't have to be harsh to correct our children.

We can correct them in a loving manner. Children are good learners, they will understand and change. This reminds me of one incident when I was in secondary school. I studied at a seminary from Form I-VI and at our school it was prohibited to beat students, but in other secondary schools it was allowed. One day we had a social gathering at one school.

During break time we were served tea with bans, but students from other schools where caning was common scrambling for the bans as if they had not eaten for a week. Although each participant was entitled to one ban which was big enough, my col-

leagues and I just watched them as each of them was scrambling to get more than one ban. Some of them took up to three bans. This means other students had to drink just tea.

From that time I started thinking that caning a child doesn't help it to behave well. We don't have to force children to be good people, but we can train and guide them. Otherwise, those scrambling students wouldn't have behaved the way they did because they came from schools in which caning was a means of disciplining them. I have used this example just to show that caning or harsh treatment doesn't turn a child into a good person.

Child upbringing needs good parental skills. In December last year I was invited to help at a training workshop at one institution in the city centre. The workshop was about workplace ethics and the trainer was a lecturer from University of Dar es Salaam College of Education (DUCE).

## The Law and You



# Promoting mathematical literacy: From Pi Day celebrations to pursuit of excellence

By Adonis Byemelwa

TANZANIA'S educational landscape is aglow with enthusiasm and achievement, fueled by the recent celebration of "3.14 Formulae Days" - a vibrant homage to the mathematical constant  $\pi$ . This annual event, held on March 14th, serves as a testament to Tanzania's dedication to promoting mathematical literacy and nurturing the intellectual curiosity of its students.

March 14th, globally celebrated as Pi Day, assumed an extraordinary significance in Tanzanian schools this year, as students and educators delved deep into a myriad of activities aimed at honoring the profound significance of  $\pi$  in mathematics.

From unraveling its historical origins to exploring its practical applications across diverse fields, the day unfolded as a vibrant tapestry of learning and discovery, igniting intellectual curiosity and fostering a deeper appreciation for the beauty of mathematics.

Top of Form  
In classrooms across Tanzania, students engaged in a myriad of fun and educational activities, from Pi recitation contests to Pi-themed quizzes. Teachers seized the opportunity to underscore the relevance of mathematics in everyday life, fostering an appreciation for its beauty and practicality among their students.

Beyond the festivities lies a deeper purpose - to instill a profound understanding of mathematical concepts and cultivate a culture of curiosity and exploration among Tanzanian students. Through "3.14 Formulae Days," schools across the nation aim not only to celebrate the significance of  $\pi$  but also to ignite a passion for mathematics that transcends the confines of the classroom.

This year's celebration comes on the heels of another significant event in Tanzania's education sector - the announcement of the results of the national form four examination for January 2023. These results, heralded a promising upward trend in academic achievement, signaling a newfound momentum in Tanzania's pursuit of educational excellence.

Athuman Amasi, the then acting executive secretary of the National Examinations Council of Tanzania (Necta), unveiled the encouraging news, revealing that the pass rate had risen to 87.79 percent. Out of the 566,636 candidates who undertook the exam, 306,052 were girls, constituting 54.01 percent, while 260,584 were boys, accounting for 45.99 percent of all candidates.

Amasi emphasized the quality of the pass, highlighting that 36.95 percent of candidates achieved good performance, securing grades one to three. This marked a significant increase of 1.11 percent compared to the previous year, indicating a positive trajectory in academic excellence.

However, amidst the jubilation over the improved pass rate, challenges persist in subject proficiency, particularly in mathematics. A staggering 79.92 percent of candidates failed the mathematics examination, highlighting the need for concerted efforts to enhance mathematical literacy and proficiency among students.

The results also revealed challenges in language proficiency, with 4.42 percent failing Kiswahili and

31.28% failing English. These findings underlined the importance of holistic approaches to education that address not only academic subjects but also language skills crucial for communication and comprehension.

Despite the commendable participation rate of 97.66 percent among school candidates, a concerning number of students, totaling 12,536, did not sit for the exam due to various reasons. Efforts to understand and mitigate factors contributing to absenteeism would be crucial in ensuring equitable access to education for all students.

Amidst the unveiling of the examination results, Tanzania's educational landscape continues to witness initiatives aimed at nurturing talent and promoting mathematical literacy. "3.14 Formulae Days" exemplifies this commitment, providing a platform for students to engage in hands-on learning experiences that transcend the boundaries of traditional classroom instruction.

The Tanzania Mathematics Association (Chahita) has been instrumental in organizing national mathematics competitions, recognizing top performers, and preparing them for international competitions. Plans to broaden regional participation and identify talented students to represent Tanzania internationally accentuate a commitment to nurturing excellence in mathematics education.

As Tanzania's education sector undergoes transformation and strives for excellence, stakeholders recognize the critical importance of enhancing the quality of education to equip students with the skills and knowledge necessary for success in the

21st century. Quality education encompasses various aspects, including curriculum design, teaching methodologies, teacher training, infrastructure, and access to resources.

One key area of focus is curriculum design, where efforts are made to ensure alignment with global standards and the needs of the modern workforce. By incorporating relevant and practical skills into the curriculum, Tanzania can better prepare students for the challenges and opportunities of the future.

Countries renowned for their excellence in mathematics education, such as Singapore and Japan, offer valuable insights into effective curriculum design strategies. These nations emphasize a holistic approach to mathematics education, integrating real-world applications and problem-solving skills into the curriculum.

Additionally, the adoption of innovative teaching methodologies is essential in enhancing the quality of education. Active learning approaches, collaborative projects, and inquiry-based learning methods empower students to take ownership of their learning journey, fostering critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving skills.

Models adopted by countries like South Korea and Japan, where students consistently excel in mathematics, prioritize interactive and student-centered teaching practices that stimulate curiosity and engagement.

Teacher training and professional development programs play a pivotal role in enhancing educational outcomes. Investing in the continuous training and support of educators equips them with the ped-

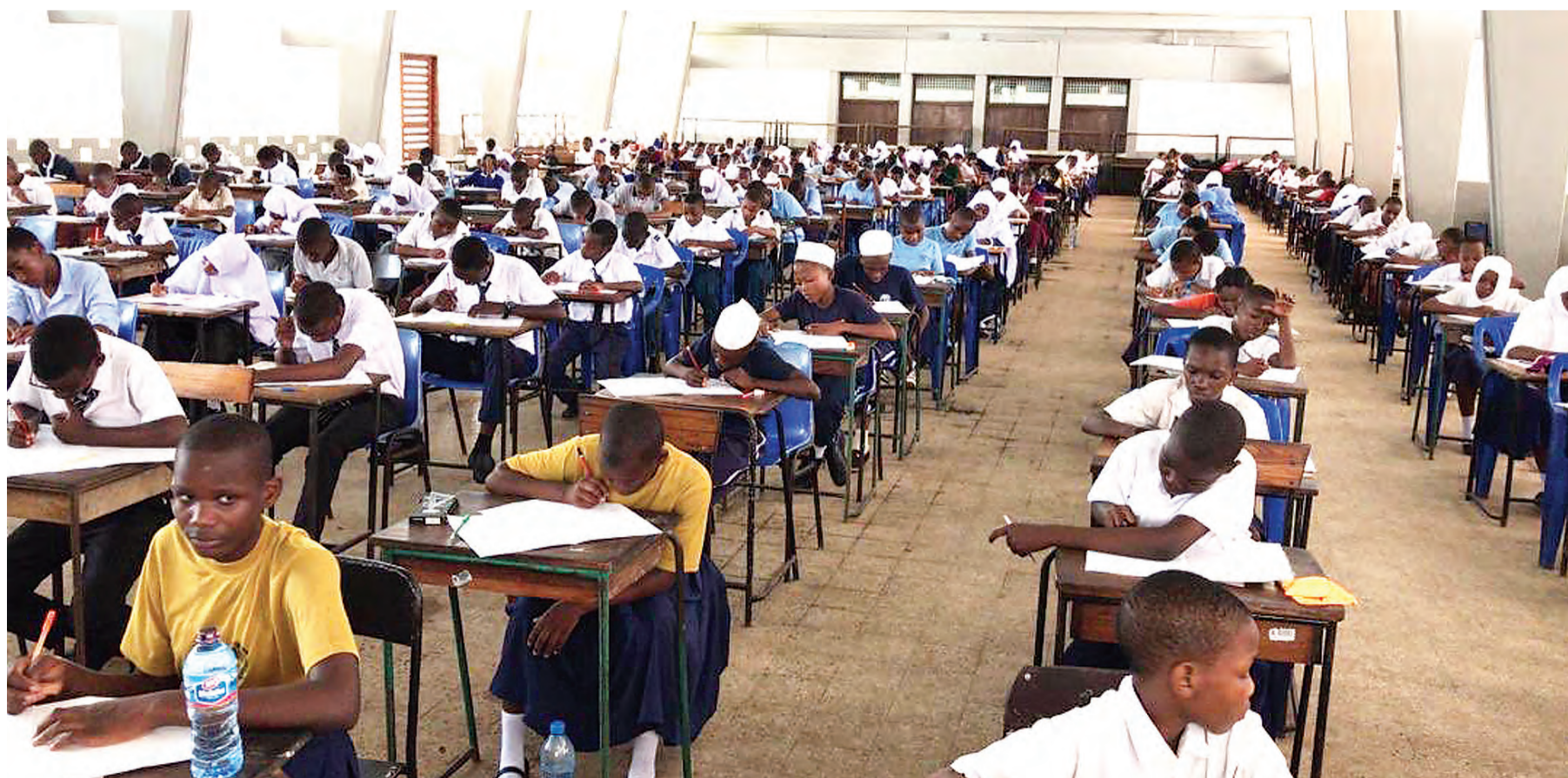
agogical skills and subject knowledge necessary to effectively engage students and facilitate meaningful learning experiences. Finland's education system, often hailed as a global benchmark for excellence, places a strong emphasis on teacher autonomy, professional collaboration, and ongoing professional development.

Besides, ensuring equitable access to quality education requires addressing disparities in infrastructure, resources, and educational opportunities. Investing in school infrastructure, providing access to technology, textbooks, and learning materials, and implementing targeted interventions to support marginalized and underprivileged communities are essential steps in promoting inclusivity and equity in education.

By drawing inspiration from successful educational models worldwide and tailoring strategies to suit the unique context of Tanzania, stakeholders can chart a path toward educational excellence and equip students with the skills, knowledge, and mindset needed to thrive in the rapidly evolving landscape of the 21st century.

Therefore, enhancing the quality of education in Tanzania requires a multi-faceted approach that encompasses curriculum reform, innovative teaching practices, teacher training, and equitable access to resources.

By learning from the experiences of countries known for their excellence in mathematics education and leveraging best practices, Tanzania can nurture a generation of empowered learners poised to contribute meaningfully to society and thrive in an increasingly interconnected world.



# Extortion and kidnaps: A deadly journey across Mexico

By Linda Pressly

**T**HE influx of migrants across the southern US border has become a critical factor in the US presidential election. But what is little known is the role of drug cartels in making a dangerous journey across Mexico even more perilous.

With its strip clubs, taco stands and buzzing motorbikes, San Luis Rio Colorado is typical of Mexican border communities.

In a migrant shelter, a stone's throw from the towering, rust-red fence that separates the town from the US state of Arizona, Eduardo rests on a shady patio.

On one wall, there's a large wooden cross. And it's here that Eduardo began to process - and recover from - his terrifying ordeal in Mexico.

Eduardo, who is in his 50s, used to run a fast-food restaurant in Ecuador. But organised crime has tightened its grip in his former, mostly peaceful, South American home.

"As business people we were extorted," he says. Eduardo was threatened with death if he didn't pay a 'tax' to the gang. "What could we do? To save our lives we had to leave."

Eduardo never wanted to migrate, but he was frightened and decided to head to the US to ask for asylum.

His story is typical of thousands of people from many parts of the world fleeing violence and seeking a new life in the US.

After a record number of arrivals at the end of 2023, Democratic President Joe Biden proposed stricter immigration measures which include shutting the border when it's overwhelmed. His opponent Republican Donald Trump says he will introduce mass deportations if elected in November.

What has stayed mostly under the radar in the debate about mass migration to the US is the role of Mexico's deadly drug trafficking organisations.

Eduardo began his journey by flying from the Ecuadorian capital Quito to Mexico City. Then he boarded a bus north to Sonoyta on the US border, a journey of more than 30 hours.

The passengers were a mix of migrants and Mexicans. But what Eduardo didn't appreciate was that his trip



Queue of migrants outside processing centre in Arizona after crossing the border.

would take him across terrain controlled by some of Mexico's most violent drug cartels and their associates - malevolent forces that dominate the business of migration.

Three reasons why US border crossings at record high

The first time the bus was stopped, it was early morning, around 6am. Ten armed men wearing balaclavas got on board.

The bus was driven off-road towards the mountains. The men asked to see everyone's papers. Once they established who the migrants were, they asked each of them for 1500 pesos (US\$90) or they would be detained.

The migrants pooled their cash but were short by 200 pesos (US\$12). The men let them off and 11 hours after being stopped, the bus was allowed to go on its way.

San Luis Rio Colorado, the border town where Eduardo recuperated at the migrant shelter, has also gained a reputation for the kidnap of migrants. In May last year, neighbours of a modern, two-storey house on the edge of town reported unusual comings and goings. When the Mexican authorities swooped, five people were arrested and more than 100 migrants freed. Some of them had been held in the house for three weeks.

"They didn't have food and water, and they were maltreated physically and psychologically," says Teresa Flores Munoz, a local

police officer involved in the operation.

She remembers a woman from India. "She was crying and holding her baby. She pushed the baby at me - she said I should take him, because they were going to kill him. It was really desperate."

Twenty-three nationalities were represented among the captives, including people from Bangladesh, Uzbekistan, China, Mauritania and Senegal.

According to local reports, the kidnappers demanded US\$2,500 from each migrant, double from pregnant women.

If the migrants do not have the money, the gangs demand it from relatives either back home or north of the border in the US.

These extortionists and hostage-takers are not only professional criminals - some are also law enforcement. As Eduardo's bus continued north through the Mexican states of Sinaloa and Sonora, he says they were stopped at six police checkpoints where officers demanded money from the migrants.

"If you didn't have cash they called you over. They said, 'take off your trousers, take off your clothes', and you have to give them everything, like your suitcase. If you didn't have money they took your papers - that's how I lost some documents."

Bus holdups targeting migrants aren't unusual. In San Luis Rio Colorado, we worked with a local Mexican journalist. After he left

us, he sent us photos, taken secretly, of his bus home being stopped by a gang, their faces covered.

"Everyone on the bus knew they were sicarios [hitmen] for the drug and migrant trafficking mafia," he said.

The masked men only questioned people they suspected weren't Mexican - those in poor clothing, their faces fearful. The five or six migrants taken off the bus were each extorted of up to US\$50.

The door of the men's truck bore the logo of an agency of Sonora's State Prosecutor - AMIC (Agencia Ministerial de Investigaciones Criminales) - can be seen. Our journalist colleague thinks it was faked.

Eduardo's most distressing experience on his journey from Mexico City north to the border happened in the state of Sonora too, around three hours from Sonoyta.

Again, the bus was stopped by armed men. And because there was not enough cash to hand over, two Colombian families, including five children, were forced off the bus, loaded into a truck and driven away.

"We didn't have enough money to save everyone," says Eduardo, his voice breaking. He was now penniless, his \$3,000 savings gone. This meant he couldn't pay a "coyote" or people smuggler in Sonoyta to get him across the border illegally into the US.

The bus driver told Eduardo he risked being kidnapped if he stayed there, and dropped him in San Luis Rio Colorado instead, where Eduardo made his way to the migrant shelter.

BBC

## Telecommunications and technology stand to drive feasible social, economic development across SSA

By A Special Correspondent

SUB-SAHARAN Africa stands at the brink of a digital revolution, where telecommunications and technology are poised to be the driving forces behind sustainable socio-economic development.

With a youthful population and vast economic opportunities, the region is embracing digital transformation as a pathway to inclusive growth and prosperity.

We believe there will be a few key drivers of this digital transformation on the continent that will unlock significant economic value in the years to come.

### AU digital transformation strategy

The first is the African Union's Digital Transformation Strategy which outlines a bold vision for an integrated and inclusive digital society and economy in Africa. Key objectives include building a secured Digital Single Market, ensuring digital em-

powerment for all citizens, and creating a harmonised environment for investment and innovation.

Central to this vision is the development of digital infrastructure, including telecommunications networks, broadband connectivity, and digital platforms, to facilitate inclusive growth and development.

For this to be achieved, a number of elements will need to be integrated. This includes the implementation of laws and regulations required to stimulate and accelerate digital transformation for national, regional, and continental development - particularly in the context of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). To this end, there is a desire to develop policies and regulations and establish and improve digital networks and services with a view to strengthening intra-Africa trade, intra-investment and capital flows and the socio-economic integration of the continent, while maintaining a relational balance with other continents in the context of



networked economies.

### Digital infrastructure and connectivity

Access to affordable, reliable digital infrastructure is fundamental to achieving inclusive digital transformation. Despite significant progress, nearly 300 million Africans still lack access to high-speed broadband internet. Mobile devices remain the primary means of internet access, highlighting the importance of mobile networks in bridging the digital divide. However, high taxes and levies on the mobile sector pose challenges to affordability and accessibility, hindering widespread adoption of digital services.

### 5G technology and future prospects

While 5G technology holds promise for enhancing connectivity and driving innovation, its adoption in Africa remains nascent.

As of now, only a few countries have launched commercial 5G services, with South Africa and Nigeria leading the way.

However, expanding 5G coverage and spectrum allocation are critical steps toward unlocking its full potential. The benefits of 5G, including increased productivity, innovation, and economic growth, are expected to be substantial, particularly in sectors such as manufacturing and ser-

vices. With the right investment and regulatory frameworks, 5G technology has the potential to propel Sub-Saharan Africa into the forefront of the global digital economy.

### Building digital skills

To realize the full benefits of digital transformation, Sub-Saharan Africa must overcome various challenges, including limited access to infrastructure, high tax burdens on the mobile sector, and a lack of digital skills.

Investing in human capital and cultivating a skilled workforce is crucial for harnessing the potential of emerging technologies. Moreover, addressing regulatory barriers and

promoting collaboration between governments, businesses, and civil society is essential for fostering an enabling environment for digital innovation and entrepreneurship.

Absa has recognised this challenge and has invested in a number of digital initiatives across the continent including a world-class Cyber-Security academy aimed at tackling a rising global scourge of Cyber-crime.

### The role of mobile money and financial inclusion

Mobile Money has emerged as a powerful tool for promoting financial inclusion and driving economic growth in Africa.

In countries like Ghana, the growth of mobile money has led to significant improvements in financial access and inclusion. However, the imposition of taxes and levies on mobile services, such as the E-levy in Ghana, poses risks to the affordability and accessibility of mobile money services. Balancing the need for revenue generation with the goal of promoting financial inclusion is crucial for sustaining the momentum of digital transformation.

Telecommunications and technology have the potential to catalyse sustainable development and inclusive growth in Sub-Saharan Africa. As a leading Pan-African banking group, we are passionate about the role that technology will play in economic growth and we look forward to being a partner of choice to technology entrepreneurs across Africa.

**CAPITAL RADIO**

**RATIBA YA VIPINDI JUMATATU - JUMAPILI**

MONDAY TIME PROGRAMME	TUESDAY TIME PROGRAMME	WEDNESDAY TIME PROGRAMME	THURSDAY TIME PROGRAMME	FRIDAY TIME PROGRAMME	SATURDAY TIME PROGRAMME	SUNDAY TIME PROGRAMME
05:00-09:00HRS MORNING JAM 09:00-13:00HRS LETE RAHA 13:00-14:00HRS DW-RADIO 14:00-16:00HRS CLUB 101 16:00-18:00HRS DALA DALA 18:00-18:10HRS HABARI 18:10-20:00HRS BOZOUK TIME 20:00-21:00HRS HALI HALISI 21:00-22:00HRS SPORTS  22:00-05:00HRS MUZIKI (MCHAGANGANYIKO)	05:00-09:00HRS MORNING JAM 09:00-13:00HRS LETE RAHA 13:00-14:00HRS DW-RADIO 14:00-16:00HRS CLUB 101 16:00-18:00HRS DALA DALA 18:00-18:10HRS HABARI 18:10-21:00HRS BOZOUK TIME 21:00-22:00HRS SPORTS 22:00-05:00HRS MUZIKI (MCHAGANGANYIKO)	05:00-09:00HRS MORNING JAM 09:00-13:00HRS LETE RAHA 13:00-14:00HRS DW-RADIO 14:00-16:00HRS CLUB 101 16:00-18:00HRS DALA DALA 18:00-18:10HRS HABARI 18:10-21:00HRS BOZOUK TIME 21:00-22:00HRS SPORTS 22:00-05:00HRS MUZIKI (MCHAGANGANYIKO)	05:00-09:00HRS MORNING JAM 09:00-13:00HRS LETE RAHA 13:00-14:00HRS DW-RADIO 14:00-16:00HRS CLUB 101 16:00-18:00HRS DALA DALA 18:00-18:10HRS HABARI 18:10-20:00HRS BOZOUK TIME 20:00-21:00HRS SPORTS 21:00-23:00HRS MALUMBANO YA HOJA 22:00-05:00HRS MUZIKI (MCHAGANGANYIKO)	05:00-09:00HRS MORNING JAM 09:00-13:00HRS LETE RAHA 13:00-14:00HRS DW-RADIO 14:00-16:00HRS CLUB 101 16:00-18:00HRS DALA DALA 18:00-18:10HRS HABARI 18:10-20:00HRS BOZOUK TIME 20:00-21:00HRS SPORTS 21:00-23:00HRS KIPIMA JOTO 22:00-05:00HRS MUZIKI (MCHAGANGANYIKO)	07:30-10:00HRS DK 90 DUNIANI 10:00-11:00HRS KADOGOO 11:00-13:00HRS BONGO HITS 13:00-14:00HRS DW RADIO 14:00-16:00HRS ZAIDI YA UMJUAVYO 16:00-18:00HRS ALIYEVUMA 18:00-21:00HRS BUZUKI TIME 21:00-22:00HRS SPOTI 22:00-05:00HRS MUZIKI (MCHAGANGANYIKO)	07:00-09:00HRS HABARI NA MATUKIO YA WIKI  09:00-11:00HRS THE SUNDAY 11:00-13:00HRS TOP 20 13:00-14:00HRS DW RADIO 14:00-16:00HRS CAPITAL MICHEZONI 16:00-18:00HRS UKURASA WA MBELE 18:00-21:00HRS JIACHIE 21:00-22:00HRS SPOTI 22:00-01:00HRS LADHA LAINI  01:00-05:00HRS MUZIKI (MCHAGANGANYIKO)

Tembelea mitandao ya kijamii ya CAPITAL RADIO



CAPITAL RADIO

# Algeria signs Hosting Agreement for Intra-African Trade Fair 2025

By Special Correspondent

THE government of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria has signed the hosting agreement for the Intra-African Trade Fair 2025 (IATF2025).

The Host Agreement Signing Ceremony for IATF2025 took place in Algiers on 15 April 2024. The Ceremony, which was hosted by the African Export-Import Bank (Afreximbank), in collaboration with the African Union and the AfCFTA Secretariat, and the Government of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria, paves the way for the fourth edition of the Intra-African Trade Fair to take place from September 4 to 10, 2025 in Algiers, Algeria.

Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, Chairperson of the IATF2025 Advisory Council and Former President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, extolled the Intra-African Trade Fair as the go-to trade and investment event on the African continent.

He added that "the IATF2025 Hosting Agreement represents more than just a contractual agreement; rather it symbolises a collective responsibility of the partners for excellence and innovation in continuing the tradition of the Intra-African Trade Fair, which has become established as the AfCFTA Marketplace and the go-to trade and investment event on the African continent.

The IATF is now a foremost event in the African calendar of economic, social, trade and even policy events. It is in the passionate pursuit of these goals that Afreximbank in collaboration with the African Union Commission and AfCFTA Secretariat are championing the noble cause of changing the

socioeconomic landscape of Africa by devising progressive initiatives aimed at promoting intra-African trade and continental integration."

Kanayo Awani, Executive Vice President, Intra-African Trade Bank, Afreximbank, said: "The Intra-African Trade Fair opens alternate routes for African trade. It has become the platform for actualising the AfCFTA vision. It expands and deepens knowledge of the continent's trading environment and enhances the industrial capacity of African economies. Ultimately, IATF has become the engine accelerating trade and business flows within the continent.

The last three fairs have generated combined trade and investment deals of no less than US\$120 billion. To one who wonders what the US\$120 billion represents, African businesses have found buyers in new markets across Africa, industries have found new sources of raw materials, investment and capital goods, government-to-government deals in critical sectors such as agriculture and agro-processing have been forged, and African contractors have won major government projects."

She also expressed her gratitude to the Government of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria for their unwavering commitment and support for the Intra-African Trade Fair.

A statement delivered on behalf of Wamkele Mene, Secretary-General, AfCFTA Secretariat described the importance of the Intra-African Trade Fair as "our strategic response to the challenge of trade information scarcity, aiming to enhance intra-African trade and investments, all without the need for outside help. And it serves as a



symbol of hope and opportunity, breaking down conventional trade and investment barriers to unite the diverse yet cohesive African identity."

A statement delivered on behalf of Ambassador Albert Muchanga, African Union Commissioner for Economic Development, Trade, Tourism, Industry and Minerals, highlighted that other regions of the world have proved that "trade can be a powerful tool for economic growth. Whilst trade was able to lift millions out of poverty in those regions, the same has not reflected in Africa's experience. Trade amongst African countries is low.

The AfCFTA was designed to change this story. Not only was it meant to boost Intra African trade, but it was meant to deal with Africa's perennial challenges of job creation, high levels of poverty and very low levels of manufacturing and industrial base. It was designed to create a predictable legal framework for trade and investment, hence offering more guarantees to investors thereby bringing certainty and predictability to the African trading environment."

In his Closing Remarks, Jean-Louis Ekra, Former President of Afreximbank and Deputy Chairperson of the IATF2025 Advisory Council, praised "the power of African unity, shared purpose, and collective action towards a path taken to promote intra-African trade

and investment. It is through our combined efforts that we can drive positive change, foster innovation, and create a better future for all the inhabitants of the African continent."

The Ceremony was also attended by public and private sector institutions, African diplomatic corps, financial institutions, and trade and industry associations, and is intended to maximise awareness surrounding the upcoming IATF2025.

Attendees at the Signing Ceremony also had the opportunity to visit the Algerian Company of Fairs and Exports (SAFEX), which will be the venue for IATF2025.

The Intra-African Trade Fair is the African continent's premier trade and investment event and provides a unique opportunity for exhibitors to showcase their goods and services, engage in Business to Business (B2B) and Business to Government (B2G) exchanges, network, establish new business contacts and conclude business deals. The event also gives delegates the opportunity to hear actionable insights from an array of experts on a wide range of trade and investment topics and opportunities at the IATF Trade and Investment Forum. The event also offers opportunities for participants from the Diaspora, creative industries including gastronomy

and the culinary arts, to attend and showcase their goods, services and expertise. In addition, there will be training workshops covering exporting, standards and marketing.

Attendees at the IATF include businesses, buyers, sellers, traders and investors, captains of industry, senior government ministers, trade finance and advisory specialists, trade and economic organisations, senior executives from corporates and multinationals, innovative entrepreneurs and the media in one venue.

The highly successful third edition of the Intra-African Trade Fair (IATF2023) took place in Cairo, Egypt, from 9 - 15 November 2023, and attracted over 28,000 conference delegates, trade visitors and media, had 1,939 exhibitors from 130 countries, and witnessed US\$43.8 billion of trade and investment deals being concluded.

# Namibian city market bolsters local economy

WINDHOEK

THE Village Sunday Market Day in Windhoek, Namibia's capital, is creating a trade space for local vendors to boost their businesses.

The market features diverse local products, including cosmetics, arts, health, food, fashion, home decor and music.

"The market serves as a catalyst for economic development through trade promotion," said Alain Seha of agricultural training firm Urban Eden, who established the market in 2022 during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The focus was to revive struggling local commerce affected by shop closures and disruptions in the supply chain due to the pandemic.

"During COVID, there were many restrictions, and the markets fell apart. I saw an opportunity and started the Sunday local market in my driveway at home with six vendors for free," he said.

What started with just six vendors in Seha's driveway has now grown to accommodate up to 50 vendors at bigger premises.

"What makes it unique is that the market strictly features locally made products to enhance the local trade in Namibia and promote cultural di-



More research is needed into the negative impacts of climate change on women for them to access climate justice

versity," he said, adding that the move aimed to prioritize health-conscious

and organic products to promote overall well-being in the southern Af-

rican nation. According to Seha, vendors register

to occupy space at the market and contribute 10 percent of their proceeds to corporate social responsibility, to be reinvested into the market's logistical needs. Charity organizations are offered free space on market days.

The weekly market has become a thriving hub for trade, with vendors experiencing positive growth and impact on their businesses.

Namupa Nengola, chief executive officer of Pure Marula by Taneta, which manufactures organic health and beauty products, has been a vendor in the market since its inception and has witnessed the benefits of increased networking and sales.

"Beyond financial gains, the market has also helped raise awareness about our brand, popular marula oil, and fostered a sense of community among vendors and customers alike," she said.

Gloria Simon, the owner of a catering and pepper sauce enterprise, credits the market for enhancing her business skills and customer relations.

"Each market day has increased client interaction and improved marketing strategies, resulting in self-confidence and better sales," Simon said.

The market, popular among tour-

ists, also attracts shoppers from afar. This, according to Nengola, helps her efforts to expand and export products to the Asian market, in addition to current shipments to the United States and Europe.

Despite the progress made, some challenges remain.

According to Seha, one key challenge is attracting a diverse range of vendors to cater to the public's needs. "This is seen as a crucial step in the market's growth."

Seha hopes to attract more vendors with high demand and quality products to establish the market as a premier destination in Windhoek to aid the country's economic growth.

In its economic outlook released early April, the Bank of Namibia projects a slowdown in the country's economy for 2024, followed by a modest improvement in 2025.

Minister of Trade and Industrialization Lucia Lipumbu said that markets like Village Sunday Market play a crucial role in supporting the government's Growth at Home Strategy, which aims to drive economic growth by diversifying the economy and strengthening the capacity of micro, small, and medium enterprises to supply goods and services to both domestic and export markets.

# Uncertainty now looms over winter crop planting season

By Special Correspondent

AS South Africa faces the aftermath of El Niño, its agriculture braces for impact in the upcoming winter crop season. Farmers adapt to extreme dry weather, employing innovative irrigation methods and shifting crop varieties to mitigate losses.

As the country approaches the winter planting season, concerns loom over the potential challenges posed by limited rainfall.

The erratic and extreme dry weather conditions brought forth by El Niño challenge farmers to adapt swiftly, often resorting to innovative irrigation methods or shifting crop varieties to mitigate losses.

According to National Agricultural Marketing Council (NAMC) economist Thabile Nkunjana, the consequences of El Niño are being felt in South Africa's agriculture industry, with notably lower summer crop yields expected in 2023-2024.

He added that the country is currently shifting to the winter crop planting season for 2024-2025, which usually begins in late April or May, depending on where you are in South Africa.

"With the El Niño phenomena, there is a lot of uncertainty regarding the weather and, consequently, the winter crop that South Africa is going to plant. Wheat is the second most popular grain in South Africa after maize hence its importance for the country's food security. Other winter crops are barley and canola.

"Farmers' decisions to plant winter crops, such as wheat, are likely to be influenced by the current weather forecast," Nkunjana said.

Nkunjana believes that a neutral weather state is anticipated between April and June of 2024, according to the International Research Institute

for Climate and Society and the South African Weather Service.

"The Western Cape, the primary region that produces winter crops, is thought to be able to obtain the average rainfall required to sustain the winter crop season in a neutral weather state.

"The most significant thing to note as the country approaches winter is that a better weather forecast than what it currently is would probably encourage farmers to plant more, which would be in line with future lower production of summer crops," he said.

Chief economist at Agbiz Wandile Sihlobo said the country is entering into another critical period for South Africa's field crops, with farmers in the Western Cape likely begin to prepare the soil for the 2024/25 winter crop production season by the end

of April.

Nkunjana further explained that the International Research Institute for Climate and Society expects a La Niña phenomenon as the most likely conclusion from July to September 2024 and November to January 2025.

Meanwhile, KwaZulu-Natal crop farmer Zandile Cele told Food For Mzansi that planting on time sets the foundation for successful growth, development, and optimal utilisation of resources throughout the farming cycle.

"Planting on time allows crops to benefit from early rainfall or moisture in the soil ensuring optimal water availability during critical growth stages.

"When planting on time, crops can escape periods of high pest and disease activity such as the stalk borer in maize, reducing the risk of significant

damage," she said.

For Cele, winter brings the biggest challenge, which is limited rainfall in her area. She explained that she and her team have planted dry beans and as farmers who do not have an irrigation system yet, it is a challenge.

"But we can leave some grass to attract dew so that our beans can continue to grow. While doing that grass transports pests and diseases and forces us to spend more money on pesticides," she said.

She believes that regardless of the predicted dry winter, farmers should be able to have a successful winter planting season.

"It can work for them if they practice planting on time because crops have a better chance of escaping drought conditions if rainfall becomes scarce after the onset of the growing season," she said.

By Correspondent Zuwena Shame

## Fighting Poverty: Organisation promotes livelihood opportunities among vulnerable local communities

THE United Nations recognizes young as a major human resource for development and key agents for social change, economic growth and technological innovation. Young people's participation in decision-making is a key priority area of the UN agenda on youths.

In 1995, on the tenth anniversary of International Youth Year, the UN strengthened its commitment to young people by adopting the World Programme of Action for Youth (WPAY), an international strategy geared to address their problems and increase opportunities for participation in society.

ActionAid Tanzania has been implementing various youth programs in both mainland and Zanzibar. At local level, it has long term commitment in selected district-based local rights programs where it works directly with communities and local partners in Mafia, Unguja, Pemba, Kilwa, Chamwino and Singida. Also works with partners in other districts such as Kasulu, Kibondo, and Tanga.

Recently, ActionAid Tanzania held a Participatory Review and Reflection Process (PRRP) in Dar es Salaam—an ActionAid's in-built system that warrants organizational accountability, transparency and responsiveness to the needs and priorities of people living in poverty and other key stakeholders including partners, supporters and donors.

The PRRP aimed to reflect on challenges and missed opportunities for the year 2023 as well as lessons learnt to inform its future programming. During PRRP, some of the beneficiaries shared their success journey in their respective areas where ActionAid Tanzania engages with the community.

Hamad Mkasha from the Seaweed Farmers Community of Pemba in Kiuyu Mbuyuni village, Kiuyu Maziwangombe ward in Micheweni District, Pemba Island, stated that following lack of a platform to unite seaweed farmers in area Pemba Island, ActionAid Tanzania resolved to assist them in establishing the community in 2007 and officially registered it a year later. Initially, it had 66 founding members, comprising 40 women and 26 men.

He said after registration, the number of members increased from 66 in 2007 to 3120 in 2024, of whom, 1914 are women and 1206 men. He said the lives of members have transformed, as the institution has empowered young people and women on how to advocate for their interests and improve their economic status.

Mkasha told The Guardian that the community has made strides by introducing a blue economy policy, leading to the establishment of a government-owned seaweed company (ZASCO) and construction of a seaweed processing plant.

"The presence of ActionAid Tanzania in our village is of great benefit. We are following the blue economy policy by adding value to seaweed products since our markets have expanded and we have a seaweed processing plant. We have also influenced the government to establish ZASCO," added Mkasha, adding they have been trained on financial management and establishment of savings and credit groups (Saccos), where major financial institutions like banks were attracted to provide loans totalling 256m/- to the community members to enhance their economic activities and personal lives.

He added: "Before the inception of ActionAid Tanzania programs in our area, the lives of community members were poor. Many of them lived in grass and mud houses. Their lives have now changed significantly by improving their businesses as the price of seaweed has increased. Members have constructed better houses."

Previously, the price of seaweed ranged from 150/- per kilogram, but it has increased to 1000/- per kg this year for spinosum seaweed. Members have established other businesses such as livestock farming, and acquire modern tools.

Latifa Mdachi from Chongoleani ward in Tanga Urban District and chairperson of the Youth-Parent Association (TAYPA) said through



One of the agro-ecological farms supported by ActionAid Tanzania in Kilwa Kivinje, Lindi Region. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

ActionAid Tanzania, they have been able to establish platforms for young women empowerment, providing space for them to reflect on various issues around their communities.

Latifa said that various dialogues, workshops, and training related to gender mainstreaming such as sex and reproductive health, gender and power relations, civic rights have been conducted through reflection circles.

"Previously, women in the respective communities were not used to talking in front of men in public. Hence, the circles are meant to create sense of self awareness, and enhancing confidence to young women, they courageous to speak up and demand for their rights in debates," said Latifa.

She added that ActionAid Tanzania started a joint initiative with a Civil Society Organizations working on climate accountability in conducting climate finance analysis ensuring transparency, accountability, and effectiveness in the use of funds aimed at addressing climate change which will inform decision-making, mobilize resources, and drive the transition to a low-carbon and climate-resilient future.

"The analysis came up with a fact sheet and report that shows sources of climate finance and how it has been used," said Latifa.

She said the empowerment programs to young people have helped them to build their confidence and take part in the decision-making bodies where by two young people from the Putini street youths hub managed to secure leadership positions to the school management committee of Putini Primary school and one youth joined the Chongoleani street local government as a member.

Veronica Paulo from Bunyambo ward, Kibondo District, Kigoma Region, said that through ActionAid Tanzania and its youth wing, the Global Platform (GP) Tanzania have strengthened the economic and civic agency of young people and especially refugees through the localized youths hub activities by building and strengthening both their digital and live community platforms.

She said GP Tanzania is also serving as a hub to drive and showcase young people's scalable and replicable green innovations. "Additionally, GP Tanzania has made deliberate efforts to skill young people on transformative feminist leadership in fragile contexts through Tanzania Young Feminists Movement, on the

Humanitarian Development and Peace Nexus, youth-led research, non-violent actions, and creative activism.

She said that through ActionAid Tanzania's programs, they were able to establish 25 reflection circles for capacity building and whereby one of their environmental conservation projects was the introduction of improved cooking stoves. Through their groups, they have been able to encourage over 250 households to use these stoves, and they continue to promote their use even further.

Faudhia Ngulu is the chairperson of the Singida Youth Forum in Ilongero ward, Singida District said the 2023/2024 budget integrated agro-ecological issues for first time in history where by ActionAid Tanzania conducted capacity building for small-holder women farmers and young people on green economic models through promoting of agro-ecological farming system through trainings, demonstration of farmers field schools and learning visits.

"When agro-ecology was introduced in our villages, many of us found it unfamiliar, and most of us didn't know its benefits, but after receiving training, people realized that it is a good farming practice. Not only does it conserve the environment, but the crops also become nutritious and plentiful without the use of fertilizers and pesticides which are costly," said Faudhia.

Faudhia added that out of 337 varieties of seed collected by government for testing, preservation, and purification, 74 varieties of seed have been purified and approved or production and distribution for niche market something which is a good start for recognition and promotion of the indigenous knowledge more especially on Farmer Managed Seed System (FMSS).

She said that in wards such as Mtinko Mrimi, Ilongero and Mudida Agricultural Marketing Cooperative Society (AMCOS) board members were trained on financial management, basis of cooperatives act and policies, cooperative marketing, leadership, and en-

trepreneurship skills.

The intervention has strengthened the management of agricultural cooperatives so that they can offer high quality, efficient and effective services to their members whereby Tumaini, Mtinko, and Mrimi developed business plans.

She added: "We received various training, including how to make organic fertilizers. After getting trained on agro-ecological farming, we have seen a significant increase in this year's harvest compared to last year. We have been able to establish demonstration farms to further raise community awareness about agro-ecology farming."

Mwanahamisi Saidi from Kilwa in Coast Region said that ActionAid Tanzania through Gender Responsive Public Services and Inclusive Education, it supported community initiatives of women facilitation circles in Kisongo Lihimalyao, advocating for WASH and infrastructure improvement and supported the construction of eight latrines.

Mwanahamisi said that through advocacy engagement local, government authority from its own sources provided 40m/- which was used to construct two classrooms while the central government provided million 13.5m/- which were used for construction of eight latrines.

She said that before the improvements of classrooms and toilets, school absenteeism was high as approximately 103 pupils missed classes, among them, 52 girls and 51 boys.

"However, following the improvement of the learning environment in schools, children are happily attending school as a result the attendance rate has raised to 98 percent as 20 percent of students returned to school," she stated.

She said that Jukwaa la Wanawake Kilwa (TUJIWAKI) and its paralegal activities contributed to the increasing number of women and men who are reporting gender based violent acts, especially violence against women, and child abandonment, in the community.

She added that compared to 2022, where

58 child abandonment cases were reported in 2023, a total of 71 child abandonment cases were reported and worked on, 65 cases were resolved, and 6 cases were referred to the social welfare office, where they were finalized.

Mwanahamisi added that through community resilience and systems change for climate justice in Kilwa, several actions under the climate justice campaign helped to increase children's actions on climate change.

She said that children, under the coordination and support of DIRA YETU (one of the youth initiatives in the climate change forum), succeeded in planting a total of 1,500 trees in 2023, and in 2024, they had already planted 1000 trees in nine primary schools and one secondary school of engagement.

"This program instils environmental responsibility in children, teaches them about climate change actions, and encourages their active participation in conservation efforts. Increased number of women taking responsibilities in the natural resources management teams," Mwanaimani told The Guardian.

She gave an example of 14 villages where ActionAid Tanzania Kilwa has engaged women comprise 40 percent to 60 percent in the management committees involving women in four villages of Njinjo, Kipindimbi, and Miguruwe kept on monitoring the management and utilization of resources, especially forests and game reserves.

In 2022/2023, the funds reimbursed back to the villages were used in the construction of classrooms in Miguruwe Primary School.

Mwanaimani Abdallah from Mafia Island said before the arrival of ActionAid Tanzania, many schools were dilapidated, lacking water, and there was also a school for children with special needs. But the improvement of the school's toilets has significantly reduced the girls drop-out and attendance by 98 percent in August 2022 was registered compared to 95 percent by August 2021 which resulted from Mafia Local Right Program interventions for the improvement of School Water Sanitation and Hygiene facilities at the school level.

"Through Mafia LRP in collaboration with women right organization SAUTI YA WANAWAKE MAFIA (SAWAMA) continue to play a vital role towards fighting violence against women and children whereby there is one person got life sentence and another person was sentenced for 30 years as the result of children sexual violence cases," said Mwanaimani adding that cases of violence and abuse were rampant and ignored, for example, if a girl was raped by a close relative, the family would hide the incident under the pretext of shame and understanding, especially if the suspect was from a well-known family.

Mwanaimani noted that through ActionAid Tanzania, women in Mafia region have been able to initiate and sustain seaweed farming, thereby boosting their scale of economy, addressing climate change, and solving the challenges of the seaweed market.



Pemba Island seaweed farmers are among beneficiaries of ActionAid Tanzania's initiatives geared to uplift the livelihood of vulnerable communities. Photo: Guardian Correspondent.

## BUSINESS



Judith Uwizeye, Minister in the Office of the Rwanda President. File Photo

## Rwanda wants 80 pct of NGOs' budget to help the vulnerable

### Kigali

A new draft law presented in parliament on Thursday by Judith Uwizeye, the Minister in the Office of the President, has requested NGOs in Rwanda not to spend more than 20 per cent of their budget on operational costs.

An operating cost is an expense from the daily operations, materials, and other necessary components an organisation uses regularly. Operating costs may include necessary expenses like rent, utilities, payroll, and supplies among others.

Activists, however, argue that the drafters of the law may not fully understand how NGOs operate, as NGOs typically allocate their budgets based on the demands of their funders.

The draft law states: "Organisation has an obligation not to exceed 20 per cent of its operating budget in activity programmes that are not in the interest of their beneficiaries."

The proposal also aims to avoid scams by some NGOs in the country according to drafters.

One of the most common forms of NGO scams is misappropriation of funds.

Fraudulent NGOs often collect donations under the guise of supporting a noble cause but misuse the funds for personal expenses.

According to the draft law, non-governmental organisations have also been obliged to keep, for at least 10 years, the documents regarding the use of property in the country.

Once the draft law is approved, the organisations' action plans and financial reports will be approved by districts and line ministries.

"An organisation has obligations to submit to the board its activity and financial report for the previous year and the plan of action for the coming year, approved where applicable by the district administration, the line ministry, or any other state organ having responsibilities related to the field of activity of the organisation, within the first three months of the following fiscal year," reads part of the draft law.

MP Germaine Mukabalisa said the new draft law should assure Rwandans of eliminating NGO scammers.

"We want to hear measures in the draft law against so-called charity organisations which pretend to give money and jobs to needy people but end up disappearing within a few days," she said.

Mukabalisa also asked if the requirement for NGOs to submit plans and reports to line ministries and districts will not eliminate their independence and make them like government organs.

Minister Uwizeye responded that the obligation is aimed at ensuring NGOs implement their objectives and eliminate NGO scammers.

"What NGOs are doing to benefit the welfare of people should not be done in disorder. That is why what they do must be in line with what we wish on our list as government, as districts.

They must be regulated. That is why the NGOs must submit action plans and sources of finance, and reports which must be monitored and approved. This will help eliminate scammers with empty promises," she explained.

The draft law has put NGOs in categories that include NGOs aimed to benefit community development, general public interest, members' interest based on their particularities, profession-based organisations, sports, games and sport-based entertainment organisations, Umbrellas, and forum of umbrellas. Umbrella organisations carrying out related activities may form a forum of umbrella organisations.

According to the draft law, national non-governmental organisations carrying out related activities may form an umbrella organisation. However, for an umbrella to be accepted, it must be composed of at least 10 organisations.

Joseph Ryarasa Nkurunziza, Chairperson of Rwanda Civil Society Platform (RCSP), emphasised the significance of soliciting more inputs from non-state actors.

"We read that districts and ministries have to approve NGOs' action plans and budget they spent, to monitor if NGOs accomplished what they pledged. We look forward to hearing more explanation as the committee analyses the draft law to have a common understanding," he said.

He said that the budget spending criteria also need further civil society consultations.

"Administration activities need a budget so that activities reach beneficiaries. Saying we must not exceed 20 per cent of the budget on administration activities might not be possible. For instance, research organisations and others need more than that," he said.

According to the law, an organisation intending to spend more than 20 per cent of its operating budget on activity programmes that are not in the interest of its beneficiaries must provide prior justification in writing to the board.

LandNet Rwanda, a network of local Rwandan organisations and international NGOs which deals with land issues, also wrote to parliament on April 17, asking to reflect the views of NGOs.

"We observe that there is no policy that guides this draft law which opens room for challenges during its implementation. We recommend putting on hold parliamentary discussions on this law so that relevant authorities develop the policy first," reads part of the letter.

The organisation also recommended the establishment of an NGO forum or council that brings together all NGOs registered in Rwanda.

MP Frank Habineza also inquired about the consultation of civil society. Minister Uwizeye responded to parliament by stating that it would be wrong if civil society was not consulted. She mentioned there is still a chance to provide feedback as the responsible committee is reviewing the draft law.

Agencies

## Govt wants higher learning institutions to place a premium on financial literacy

By Correspondent James Kandoya

**T**HE government has emphasized the importance of incorporating financial literacy into the curriculum of higher learning institutions in the country in order to improve students' personal financial management skills.

Currently, only a few institutions, such as the Institute of Finance Management (IFM) and the State University of Zanzibar (SUZA), offer courses in financial literacy.

In an effort to enhance students' understanding of personal finance, the government is urging more higher learning institutions to include financial literacy in their curriculum.

Omary Kipanga, Deputy Minister for Education, Science, and Technology, recently spoke in Dar es Salaam during the launch of a three-day workshop organized by the Bank of Tanzania (BoT) for representatives from public and private higher learning institutions.

He strongly advocates for the promotion of financial literacy as a crucial driver for the country's economic growth and sees the current moment as opportune to rally all stakeholders towards this common goal.

He stated that financial literacy is a crucial component of the government's Financial Sector Development Master Plan, which is currently being implemented by the BoT.

Kipanga stressed the importance of ongoing collaboration between the country's central bank and higher learning institutions to ensure the sustainability of financial literacy awareness initiatives.

The deputy minister said that financial literacy will enable higher learning students in budgeting, planning, building financial discipline and risk management.



The BoT academy in Mwanza. File Photo

"Our ministry is ready to collaborate with BOT in an effort to ensure higher learning students in the country get financial literacy knowledge," he said.

"Government's goal is also to ensure off school youth in the country get financial literacy for their personal financial management," he said.

Kipanga said that according to 2022 People and Housing Census (PHC) report, 53.4 percent of the population is working group ageing between 25-64 years.

He said the government continues to implement the financial

indicator guide in order to reach the off-school population.

Deputy Governor at BOT, Sauda Kassim Msemo said that the aim of the workshop to representatives of higher learning institutions was to ensure financial literacy becomes part of the curriculum.

She said further that the government plans to ensure financial literacy is taught in all level starting with primary and secondary schools.

The deputy governor said the government is currently implementing the Higher Education

for Economic Transformation (HEET) project adding that the project will increase the number of higher learning institutions offering financial literacy in the country.

Msemo said that the 2022 PHC showed that 34.05 percent of the population ageing between 15 -35 years, therefore financial literacy will increase experience to the youth on matter relating to finance.

BoT is mandated to license, regulate, supervise and de-license banks, financial institutions and bureaux de change.

## 'Tax liabilities from the sale of Hima Cement cause a 120 pct loss for the parent company'

### Nairobi

TAX liabilities related to the sale of Bamburi Cement's Hima Cement Limited in Uganda weighed down profits made for the year ended December 31, 2023, necessitating a 120 percent loss.

The end-of-year results released by the cement maker in Nairobi show it incurred a net loss of Ksh399m compared to Ksh181m profit earned in the previous financial year.

This weighed down a 160 percent profit after tax earned by the Kenyan unit for the year.

Bamburi sold its entire 70 percent stake in the Ugandan subsidiary, Hima Cement for an estimated Ksh12.3bn, a deal that was closed last month.

The penalties arose from a tax assessment from 2007 to 2011.

The firm has been battling a Ksh1.2bn tax pressure in Kenya and Uganda.

Early this month, the Nairobi Securities-listed cement maker issued a profit warning, an indication that net earnings for the year will drop beyond 25 percent.

The period's turnover rose by 6.3 percent to Sh22bn from Sh20bn over the previous year - attributable to improved commercial strategy execution, increasing export sales volumes, and differential pricing for the company's diverse range of products and solutions.

Despite tough operating conditions, the group reported solid cash generation from operations, which increased to Sh2.89bn as a result of improved operating profit and working capital.

According to Bamburi Cement CEO, Mohit Kapoor, the year under review was impacted by cost pressures from new and higher



A worker gazes at the Hima cement plant. File Photo

taxation measures, rising inflation, and fast depreciating local currency, which disproportionately raised fuel, power and production costs.

He attributed the results to a strong focus on cost-cutting strategies, execution of commercial strategies and strengthening industrial and operational efficiencies.

"We effected stringent cost-cutting strategies on operations, and energy sources by using alternative fuels, and by lowering raw materials importation dependency," Kapoor said.

"Our agility and speed in decision-making in the context

of changing market dynamics helped us to execute strategic actions to deliver solid performance."

The firm attributed industrial performance improvement across all Industrial Performance Benchmarks (IPB) contributed to the delivery of solid financial performance.

Kapoor said the company is targeting better results in this financial year.

"Our divestiture from the Ugandan market allows Bamburi Cement PLC to focus on the Kenyan market where we are positioned for record EBIT margins driven by our shift from volume to value."

Agencies

# Investor confidence rises as central banks hint at easing financial policy

By Tobias Adrian

A sense of optimism has pervaded financial markets in recent months, amid investor confidence that the fight against inflation is entering its "last mile" and that central banks will ease monetary policy in the coming months. Stock markets around the world have risen substantially this year. Corporate and sovereign borrowing spreads have narrowed. And major emerging markets' currencies and capital flows have remained resilient, while several frontier markets have regained access to international funding markets.

And yet, there are likely to be bumps along this last mile, as we show in the latest Global Financial Stability Report. Geopolitical tensions could intensify and weigh on investor sentiments. Strains in commercial real estate have become more acute, which could increase pressure on some lenders. China's financial markets continued to be weighed down by ongoing problems in the property sector. Beyond these more immediate concerns, debt vulnerabilities continue to grow, with both the public

and private sectors in many countries borrowing heavily, even though interest rates are still high and economic growth will likely not accelerate, as projected by the World Economic Outlook.

Taking a step back, there is recent evidence that disinflation may have stalled in some countries, and that underlying inflation may be persistent in some sectors. In some cases, core inflation has come in higher than analyst forecasts for consecutive months. Higher-than-expected readings could challenge the last-mile narrative and the related investor optimism, potentially leading to financial market repricing and higher volatility.

**Sticky inflation**  
After decelerating quickly worldwide, inflation has diverged more recently across countries. Data so far this year show that core inflation accelerated in the most recent three months versus the three months prior in a number of major advanced and emerging economies (Czech Republic, France, Germany, Italy, Philippines, South Africa, Sweden, United Kingdom, United States).

Looking ahead, some investors appear to anticipate price



pressures may not subside rapidly. Expectations for inflation in major economies over the next year or two—implied by the difference between nominal and inflation-linked government bond yields—have been climbing again. Importantly, they remain above central bank target levels of 2 percent, as in France, the United Kingdom and the United States, or 3 percent, as in Brazil and Mexico. Other measures of inflation expectations, like those from household surveys,

appear more stable.

At the same time, an intensification of geopolitical tensions could further disrupt shipping and energy production and push up inflation once again. So far, financial markets have remained broadly sanguine about stalling disinflation and other headwinds and risks, with volatility in major asset classes currently at low levels despite elevated measures of economic policy uncertainty.

Repricing risks  
Traditionally, a divergence

between asset price volatility and uncertainty has preceded volatility spikes, which could occur when investors are jolted by adverse shocks, prompting their re-valuing of assets to account for high uncertainty.

One such adverse shock along the last mile could be upside inflation surprises. Despite the aforementioned uptick in projected future inflation in various countries, investors anticipate substantive policy rate cuts this year—reduction of about 75 basis points by the European Central Bank and the Central Bank of Brazil. Despite a string of upside inflation surprises in the United States, the Federal Reserve is still expected to cut rates by about 50 basis points. Investors appear to trust that data-dependent central banks will ease monetary policy when inflation decelerates further. But if inflation remains high, such lofty expectations could topple, which could lead to a correlated selloff of assets, from bonds to stocks to crypto assets.

Under this scenario, financial conditions would broadly tighten. Most immediately, some investors would face losses on the assets they hold, especially leveraged investors whose negative returns would

be magnified. Globally, borrowers would find it harder to service debt, given higher bond yields.

Emerging market borrowers are often disproportionately affected in these situations. Many such issuers already face refinancing rates higher than interest rates on outstanding US dollar-denominated sovereign bonds. More vulnerable emerging markets—those with credit ratings of B and CCC or below—face the largest increase in rates. An inflation-driven tightening of global financial conditions would make refinancing even more difficult.

**Commitment to disinflation**  
The stalling of disinflation may surprise investors who are increasingly convinced that the battle against inflation has already been won and that low rates will prevail again. In economies still experiencing persistent and above-target inflation, central banks should not prematurely ease to avoid having to backpedal later. They should also push back against overly optimistic investor expectations for monetary policy easing, which has led to some exuberance in financial markets. Of course, where progress on inflation suggests it is mov-

ing sustainably toward target, central banks should gradually move to a less restrictive stance of policy.

Preserving financial stability along the last mile requires a multi-pronged approach. Financial regulatory authorities should take steps to ensure banks and other institutions can withstand defaults and other risks, using stress tests, early corrective actions, and other supervisory tools. Regulators should prioritize full and consistent implementation of internationally agreed prudential standards, notably finalizing the phase-in of Basel III. Further progress on recovery and resolution frameworks is also of first order importance, to limit the fallout from the demise of weaker institutions. Central banks should ensure banks have access to liquidity facilities when needed and be prepared to intervene early to address funding stress in the financial sector.

**Tobias Adrian (pictured), is the Financial Counsellor and Director of the IMF's Monetary and Capital Markets Department. The article is based on Chapter 1 of the April 2024 Global Financial Stability Report.**

## Kenyan bank hunts down hackers for US\$ 2m skimming

Nairobi

THE Directorate of Criminal Investigations has arrested 20 suspects linked to the debit card fraud that occurred in Equity Bank between April 9 to 15, where more than US\$ 2 million was stolen.

"We are in touch with Safaricom and the respective banks to assist in tracing the movement and safeguarding the funds," Gerald Munyiri, Equity's general manager security, stated in the leaked letter.

The money was stolen from the bank accounts of Equity Bank customers possibly after their Debit card details were hacked. The 'Card-not-present' scam takes place when a transactions do not require any physical interaction between a customer and a service provider.

All a customer needs to do is provide the Debit card details. When this information is obtained electronically by malicious individuals, money in their account can be funneled into decoy websites where



the money can be accessed.

A 2023 report from the Financial Crime News indicates that Kenya has a moderate to high threat level of fraud, with the banking sector marked as the most vulnerable avenue.

In a leaked letter sent to the Banking Fraud Unit of

the DCI, Equity Bank stated that the risk department traced unusual transactions within the seven days of theft prompting preliminary investigations.

The bank later realized that US\$ 1.3 million had been transferred from MasterCard

GL to about 551 Equity Bank accounts.

More than US\$ 400,000 was sent to Safaricom's M-pesa and the remaining US\$ 200,000 was channeled into other eleven commercial banks.

**The New Times**

## Rio Tinto and Manara set to acquire stakes in Zambia firm

Lusaka

RIO Tinto and Saudi Arabia-backed Manara Minerals Investment are planning to pick stakes in First Quantum Minerals' Zambia copper mines, Bloomberg reported.

People privy to the development told the news agency that the Sentinel and Kansanshi mines are also attracting attention from Chinese companies such as Zijin Mining Group.

Japanese trading houses Mitsui and Sumitomo are also said to have been assessing the assets, indicating a broad spectrum of potential bidders.

However, the sale process is still in its early stages, and there is no certainty that the interested parties will submit formal bids.

First Quantum Minerals is reportedly considering the sale of up to a 30 per cent stake in its Zambia copper mines.

This move comes as the company looks to restructure its operations following the mandated closure of its flagship copper mine

in Panama last year due to public protests.

For Saudi Arabia, acquiring a stake in the Zambia mines would align with its strategy to diversify its economy and secure metal supplies for its industrial growth.

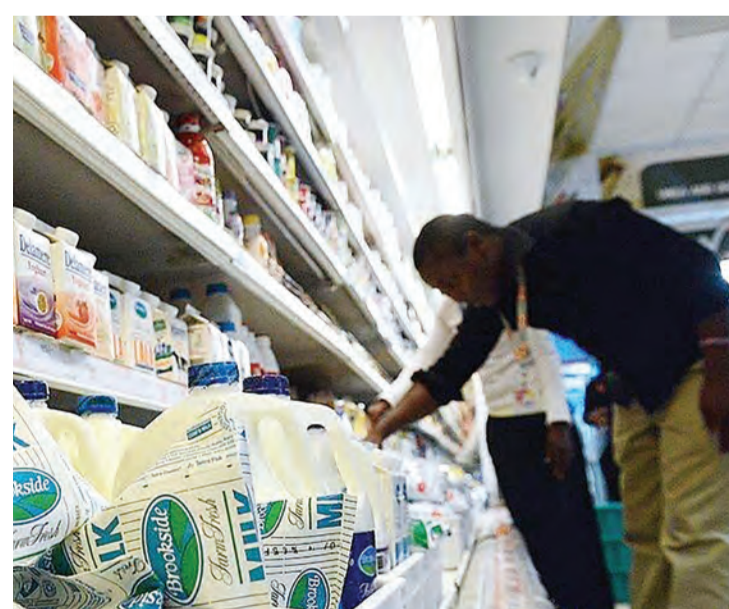
The \$2.6bn (SR9.75bn) investment in Vale's base metals unit underscores the kingdom's commitment to expanding its footprint in the mining sector.

In January this year, First Quantum Minerals was reportedly in talks to divest a stake in its copper mines in Zambia to one of its shareholders, Jiangxi Copper.

In Zambia, First Quantum fully owns the Sentinel mine and holds an 80% stake in the Kansanshi mine, while the remaining 20 per cent stake is held by the Zambian Government.

These two Zambia mines are said to have generated \$943m in revenue and \$210m in operating profit in the third quarter of last year. It is estimated that these assets could be valued at nearly \$6bn, based on their earnings.

**Agencies**



A consumer shops in a supermarket in Kenya's capital Nairobi. Photo: Simoni Maina/AFP/Getty Images

## Retail outlets expect greater sales after a slow-moving Q1

Nairobi

KENYAN retailers are expecting their April-June sales to increase after the sector recorded low business in the first quarter of this year, according to ILAM Consumer Spending Index for the first quarter of 2024.

"Comparing Q3 2023 and Q4 2023, clothing stores, restaurant/bars & leisure outlets, and retail stores all saw improvements. However, in Q1 2024, all business sectors witnessed

a decline in their sales index. Notably, clothing/apparel stores experienced a significant drop of 25 per cent compared to the baseline and a 42 per cent drop compared to Q4 2023," researchers said in the ILAM Consumer Spending Index for the first quarter of 2024.

House fittings & accessories: 60 per cent experienced a decline, with 40 per cent reporting an increase. Restaurants/bars and leisure outlets: 65 per cent observed a decrease, while 35

per cent noted an increase. Retail stores: 57 per cent reported a decrease in sales, with 43 per cent indicating an increase.

The ILAM Consumer Spending Index (ICSI) is designed to monitor consumer spending as a reliable indicator of the current state of the real economy. The index is derived from interviews conducted with 1043 consumers and 191 retail businesses.

**Agencies**

## Liberty Kenya Holdings Plc posts net profit of Ksh671.9m

Nairobi

LIBERTY Kenya Group recorded net earnings of Ksh671.9m for the financial year ended 31st December 2023 compared to Ksh267.7m over the same period in 2022.

Basic earnings per share, a param-

eter that measures profitability, increased by 193 percent from KSh0.42 to KSh1.22 primarily because of improved insurance service results.

In Kenya, the short-term business saw an 11 percent increase in insurance revenue, with an improved claim ratio compared to the previous

year. The introduction of a retail medical product in the last quarter is expected to address market gaps in that segment. The Tanzanian operations have operated at similar levels to 2022. A large single-insured event in Tanzania has resulted in a significant increase in claims, however, as

this exposure is largely re-insured it did not have a significant net impact on the operational result.

Directors of Liberty Kenya are pleased to recommend to the shareholders to approve at the annual general meeting a dividend per ordinary share of Ksh 0.373 compared to

nil in 2022. The Company will hold its Annual General Meeting (AGM) on 24 May 2024.

The firm's directors believe that the depreciation of the Kenya Shilling exchange rate for the better part of 2023 had the effect of raising insurance expenses, especially for

motor and medical covers as mart vehicle parts, medicines, and medical equipment, are imported.

Liberty Kenya insurance revenue increased to Ksh13.8bn in 2023 from Ksh12.3bn in 2022. The group's balance sheet size grew to Ksh43.8bn in 2023 from Ksh40.1bn in 2022.

# IMF forecasts rise in OPEC+ oil output from July, contributing to Saudi economic growth

Washington DC

**T**HE International Monetary Fund expects OPEC and its partners to start increasing oil output gradually from July, a transition that's set to catapult Saudi Arabia back into the ranks of the world's fastest-growing economies next year.

"We are assuming the full reversal of cuts is happening at the beginning of 2025," Amine Mati, the lender's mission chief to the kingdom, said in an interview in Washington, where the IMF and the World Bank are holding their spring meetings.

The view explains why the IMF is turning more upbeat on Saudi Arabia, whose economy contracted last year as it led the OPEC+ alliance alongside Russia in production cuts that squeezed supplies and pushed up crude prices. In 2022, record crude output propelled Saudi Arabia to the fastest expansion in the Group of 20.

Under the latest outlook unveiled this week,

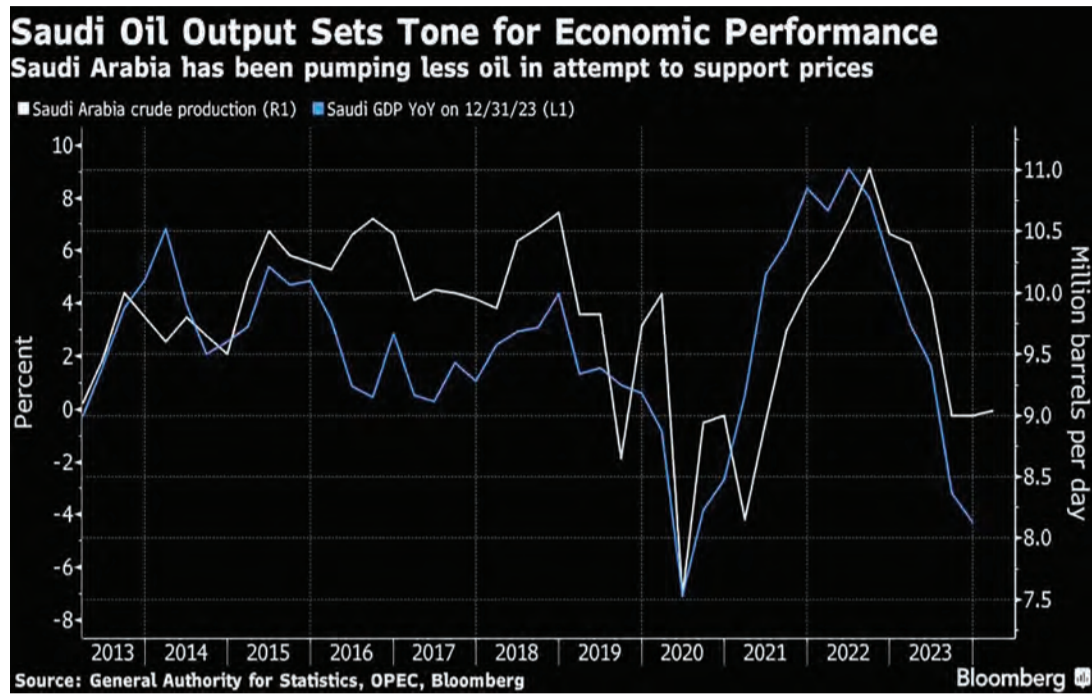


Illustration of bitcoin and price chart. File Photo

the IMF improved next year's growth estimate for the world's biggest crude exporter from 5.5% to 6% – second only to India among major economies in an upswing that would be among the kingdom's fastest spurts over the past decade.

The fund projects Saudi oil output will reach 10 million barrels per day in early 2025, from what's

now a near three-year low of 9 million barrels. Saudi Arabia says its production capacity is around 12 million barrels a day and it's rarely pumped as low as today's levels in the past decade.

Mati said the IMF slightly lowered its forecast for Saudi economic growth this year to 2.6% from 2.7% based on actual figures for 2023 and the extension of production curbs to June. Bloomberg Economics predicts an expansion of 1.1% in 2024 and as-

umes the output cuts will stay until the end of this year.

Worsening hostilities in the Middle East provide the backdrop to a possible policy shift after oil prices topped \$90 a barrel for the first time in months. The Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries and its allies will gather on June 1 and some analysts expect the group may start to unwind the curbs.

After sacrificing sales volumes to support the oil market, Saudi Arabia

may instead opt to pump more as it faces years of fiscal deficits and with crude prices still below what it needs to balance the budget.

Saudi Arabia is spending hundreds of billions of dollars to diversify an economy that still relies on oil and its close derivatives – petrochemicals and plastics – for more than 90% of its exports.

Restrictive US monetary policy won't necessarily be a drag on Saudi Arabia, which usually moves in lockstep with the Federal Reserve to protect its currency peg to the dollar.

Mati sees a "negligible" impact from potentially slower interest-rate cuts by the Fed, given the structure of the Saudi banks' balance sheets and the plentiful liquidity in the kingdom thanks to elevated oil prices.

The IMF also expects the "non-oil sector growth momentum to remain strong" for at least the next couple of years, Mati said, driven by the kingdom's plans to develop industries from manufacturing to logistics.

The kingdom "has undertaken many transformative reforms and is doing a lot of the right actions in terms of the regulatory environment," Mati said. "But I think it takes time for some of those reforms to materialize."

Bloomberg



Illustration of bitcoin and price chart. File Photo

## Gold, bitcoin favoured over bonds amidst worsening debt outlook across the US

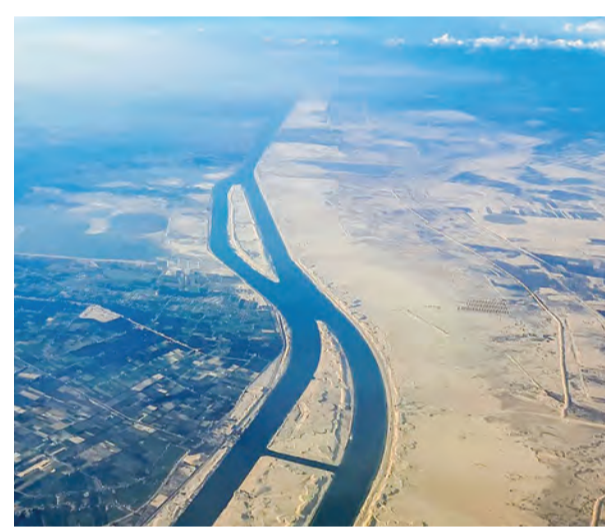
New York

**C**ONCERN about the rapidly rising US government debt is partly behind recent surges in gold prices and bitcoin, even as the Treasury market so far remains relatively sanguine about the country's fiscal path, market observers say.

The US budget deficit widened to \$1.7 trillion in fiscal year 2023 and is on track to reach \$2.6 trillion by 2034, according to the Congressional Budget Office. US government debt held by the public, meanwhile, is on pace to reach a record 106 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) in 2028, up from 97 percent in fiscal year 2023. It has soared to \$27 trillion from \$17 trillion in early 2020 and \$5 trillion in 2007.

The unchecked growth of US government debt is gaining more attention as interest rate payments also take a larger bite of the government's budget - in some months exceeding spending on national defense.

This worsening trajectory has boosted demand for bitcoin and gold, which are often used as a hedge against inflation and the depreciating purchasing power of the US currency.



An aerial view image of the new extension to the Suez Canal inaugurated in 2015 at al-Ferdan, in Egypt. Photo: Khaled Desouki/AFP/Getty Images

## Increase in oil prices, shipping disruptions create a double-edged sword for retail trade

New York

**R**ETAILERS may soon be hit from multiple sides as costs rise while consumer spending lowers.

Rising oil prices due to global tension and supply constraints are a factor in everything from shipping costs to inflation. And with gas prices creeping up again after falling from their 2022 highs, shoppers may soon start to feel the pinch.

"It's pretty clear that higher gas prices will crowd out spending on other things like apparel and accessories, home goods, makeup and jewelry, ... sporting goods, things that are probably less necessities," Morningstar senior analyst David Swartz told Yahoo Finance.

For young people and low-income consumers, the pullback in spending can be more pronounced, as gas costs make up a larger percentage of their income. Other headwinds for this demographic include rent, insurance, and college tuition or loans.

"It's clear that Anthropology and Free People, which tend to have older and higher-income consumers, are doing much better than Urban Outfitters, which tends to have younger consumers typically in the 18 to 25 age range," Swartz said.

Companies on the other end of the spectrum can also benefit, as people need cheaper essentials.

"That Dollar General consumer is being affected by gas prices, but they're still going to Dollar General because they need to buy stuff like toilet paper," Swartz added.

Other retailers that could feel the hit include Kohl's (KSS), Target (TGT), and even Walmart (WMT), per Neil Saunders, GlobalData's managing director of retail.

"Kohl's is somewhat more exposed to the lower income consumer," Saunders explained, while Target has a wide range of shoppers, many of whom could be pulling back.

Walmart has done well with its grocery business, pulling in higher-income consumers who are looking to save on food, but its lower-income shoppers could be cutting discretionary items from their budget.

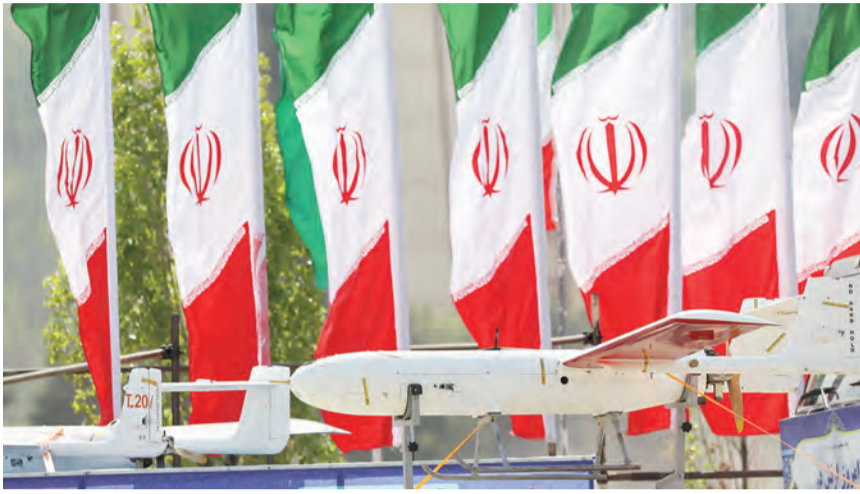
Agencies



# MONDAY - WEDNESDAY FROM 10:30 PM

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19:30	Shika Bamba	19:30	Shika Bamba	19:30	Shika Bamba	19:30	Shika Bamba	19:30	Shika Bamba	19:30	Shika Bamba	19:30	Shika Bamba	19:30	Shika Bamba	19:30	Shika Bamba
20:00	Habari	20:00	Habari	20:00	Habari	20:00	Habari	20:00	Habari	20:00	Habari	20:00	Habari	20:00	Habari	20:00	Habari
21:05	Igizo: Slay Queen	21:05	Igizo: Slay Queen	21:05	Igizo: Slay Queen	21:05	Igizo: Slay Queen										

## WORLD



An Iranian drone is seen during the National Army Day parade ceremony in Tehran, Iran, April 17, 2024. (PHOTO / WANA VIA REUTERS)

## Explosions heard in Iran's Isfahan, IAEA says no damage to nuke sites

TEHRAN

"THERE was no damage to Iran's nuclear sites" in an attack northeast of Iran's central Isfahan province, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) confirmed yesterday.

Three explosions have been heard northeast of Iran's central Isfahan province, the semi-official Fars news agency reported yesterday.

The cause of the explosions has not yet been determined, Fars quoted local sources as saying, adding that the army's radar had been among the possible targets and some buildings' windows in the nearby area had been broken.

According to Fars, the explosions were heard in Qahjavarestan city, near Isfahan's International Airport and an Iranian air force base.

The Iranian capital Tehran is now in good order, a Xinhua correspondent observed.

Meanwhile, the official IRNA news agency reported that Iran activated its air defense system over several cities yesterday.

Restrictions imposed yesterday morning on the operation of a number of airports in several Iranian cities including Tehran, Isfahan and Shiraz have been lifted, IRNA said.

Three micro aerial vehicles (MAVs) were spotted near Zardanj village in Isfahan at around 4 am local time (0030 GMT) and were shot down by Iran's air defense, according to the semi-official Mehr news agency.

Israel earlier indicated the possibility of targeting Iranian nuclear facilities to retaliate against the massive drone and missile attack last week.

Ahmad Haqtabal, commander

of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) unit for protecting the country's nuclear sites, on Thursday said though all countries have been prevented from attacking nuclear facilities based on international protocols, Iran had always been ready to deal with such threats.

He added that Iran had identified Israel's nuclear centers and obtained the necessary information about all the targets, saying that Iran "had its finger on the trigger" to fire powerful missiles to destroy those targets if Israel launches action.

Also on Thursday, the Iranian Foreign Ministry rejected anti-Tehran claims by finance ministers from the Group of Seven (G7).

G7 finance ministers and central bank governors on Wednesday issued a joint statement condemning Iran's retaliatory military operation late last week on Israel, saying they would step up sanctions against Tehran and "ensure close coordination of any future measure to diminish Iran's ability to acquire, produce, or transfer weapons to support destabilizing regional activities".

Nasser Kanaani, spokesman for the ministry, said such positions and claims were based on "double standard and contradictory" criteria, behavior and approaches, adding that Iran rejected and condemned them.

Kanaani blamed Israel's decades-long "occupation of Palestine and its crimes in the Palestinian territories" as the main roots of the crisis and instability in West Asia, urging the United States, the European Union, and the G7 countries to stand against Israel's "aggressions", instead of hurling accusations against others.

Kanaani said while continuing to be responsible towards regional and international peace and security and abiding by international rules and regulations, Iran would not hesitate to give a "decisive, regret-inducing and deterrent" response to aggressors to defend its security and national interests.

Agencies

## 'Kiev continues to openly announce terrorist attacks on Russia'

MOSCOW

THE Kiev regime continues to openly announce planned terrorist attacks on Russia, the country's Foreign Ministry Spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said at a briefing.

"The Kiev regime continues to openly announce planned terrorist attacks on Russian territory, the details of which, you won't believe it, are thoroughly discussed in the Western press," the diplomat said.

In addition, Zakharova (pictured) listed the Ukrainian attacks in which Russian civilians were injured. She

also pointed to the fact that Ukraine's special services do not give up attempts to "massacre their former compatriots."

"The enlightened, as they call themselves, capitals of the collective West still do not qualify this as a terrorist attack. How can they qualify it as such? Otherwise, they themselves will have to pass resolutions and laws condemning the sponsorship of terrorism by them, Western representatives," she pointed out.

Agencoes



## US votes against Palestinian request for full UN membership

UNITED NATIONS

THE United States on Thursday voted against a Palestinian request for full UN membership at the Security Council.

The 15-member council voted on a draft resolution recommending to the 193-member UN General Assembly that "the State of Palestine be admitted to membership of the United Nations."

The draft resolution received 12 votes in favor, two abstentions and one vote against.

Palestine condemned on Thursday "in the strongest terms" the US veto. The Palestinian Presidency said the American "veto" is unfair, immoral, and unjustified and defies the will of the international community, Palestine's official news agency Wafa reported, Xinhua reports from Ramallah.

A council resolution needs at least nine votes in favor and no vetoes by the United States, Britain, France, Russia or China to pass. The United States used its veto power after the draft secured 12 votes in favor.

China, Slovenia, Sierra Leone, Russia, South Korea, Mozambique, Malta, Japan, Guyana, France, Ecuador and Algeria voted in favor, passing the threshold of nine required. Britain and Switzerland abstained on the resolution.

Before the vote, Deputy Spokesperson for the US Department of State Vedant Patel said the United States insists "that premature actions in New York... will not achieve statehood for the Palestinian people."

Palestinian membership "needs to be the outcome of the negotiation between Israel and the Palestinians," said US Deputy Permanent Representative to the UN Robert Wood.

Ziad Abu Amr, the special representative of the Palestinian president, addressed the Security Council before the vote, saying that adopting the resolution would provide the Palestinian people with hope for "a decent life within an independent state."



US Deputy Permanent Representative to the UN Robert Wood (front left) votes against a draft resolution that recommends to the 193-member UN General Assembly that "the State of Palestine be admitted to membership of the United Nations", at the UN headquarters in New York, on Thursday. XINHUA

Ambassador Amar Bendjama from Algeria, who introduced the draft, said that failure to act is a serious and unforgivable mistake and a license for continuing injustice and impunity.

After the United States vetoed the draft, Russian Ambassador Vassily Nebenzia said this marked the fifth time the United States has vetoed a council resolution since the start of the current hostilities in Gaza.

The United States "once again demonstrated what they really think of the Palestinians," he said. "For Washington, they do not deserve to have their own State. They are only a barrier on the path towards realizing the interests of Israel."

He said at present, an absolute majority of the global community supports Palestine's application to become a full member of the UN.

Following their initial setback, the Palestinians approached the UN General Assembly, where, in November 2012, they successfully upgraded their status from "UN observer" to "non-member observer state" by securing more than a two-thirds majority vote.

"Today's use of the veto by the US delegation is a hopeless attempt to stop the inevitable course of history. The results of the vote, where Washington was practically in complete isolation, speak for themselves," he said.

The Palestinian mission to the UN initially requested full member-state status at the UN in 2011. The first attempt failed because the mission did not receive the necessary minimum support of nine out of the 15 members of the Security Council.

Following their initial setback, the Palestinians approached the UN General Assembly, where, in November 2012, they successfully upgraded their status from "UN observer" to "non-member observer

state" by securing more than a two-thirds majority vote. This elevation in status enabled the Palestinian territories to join various UN and international organizations, such as the International Criminal Court.

Earlier this month, the UN Committee on the Admission of New Members evaluated Palestine's renewed request for full member-state status at the UN. The 140 countries that recognize Palestine as an independent state supported this revival of their membership bid in early April.

Recent escalations in the Middle East make it even more critical to support efforts towards lasting peace between Israel and a fully independent, viable and sovereign Palestinian State, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres told the Security Council Thursday morning.

"Failure to make progress towards a two-state solution will only increase volatility and risk for hundreds of millions of people across the region, who will continue to live under the constant threat of violence," the top UN official told the Security Council's quarterly open debate on "the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question."

With the Middle East "on a precipice," he appealed for maximum restraint, warning against the far-reaching consequences.

Israel gained full UN membership in 1949.

Since the early 1990s, when Israel and the Palestinian Authority signed the Oslo Accords, initiating a peace process targeting a two-state solution, little progress has been made toward Palestinian statehood. Xinhua

## Congress and INDI alliance are busy insulting our faith: PM Modi

DAMOH

PRIME Minister Narendra Modi yesterday said that the Congress and INDIA bloc are busy insulting the Hindu faith and beliefs adding that these were the same people who called the worship of Lord Ram a "paakhand" (hypocrisy).

Addressing an election rally in Damoh, Prime Minister Modi (pictured) said, "Congress and INDI alliance are busy insulting our faith. These people say that our Sanatan is dengue and malaria. They were against the Ram Temple that had been built in Ayodhya. These people call

the worship of Lord Shri Ram 'paakhand' (hypocrisy). These were the same people who did not come to Ayodhya to attend Pran Pratishtha. It is just for vote bank politics."

He further said that the current BJP-led centre does not bow before anyone as its principle is "nation first".

"Aaj desh mein vo BJP sarkar hai jo na kisi se dabti hai aur na hi kisi ke saamne jhukti hain' (Today's BJP government does not get pressurised and does not



bow before anyone). Our principle is nation first. India should get cheap oil, hence we took the decision in the interest of the country. Today, the condition of many countries in the world is very bad, many countries are going bankrupt," PM said.

"This is an election to make India a big power in the world. When there is an atmosphere of war in the world, then a government working on a war footing is very important in India. In such a time, there should be a strong government and only the BJP government with full majority can do this," he added.

ANI

## Japan starts 5th ocean discharge of Fukushima nuclear-tainted wastewater despite opposition

TOKYO

JAPAN yesterday started the fifth round of release of nuclear-contaminated wastewater from the crippled Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant into the Pacific Ocean.

Despite opposition among local fishermen, residents as well as backlash from the international community, Tokyo Electric Power Company (TEPCO), the plant's operator, started discharging the radioactive wastewater in the morning, the first round in fiscal 2024.

Similar to the previous four rounds, about 7,800 tons of the wastewater, which still contains tritium, a radioactive substance, will be discharged until May 7.

TEPCO analyzed the water stored in the tank scheduled for release, and found that the concentrations of all radioactive substances other than tritium were below the national release standards, while the concentration of tritium that cannot be removed will be diluted with seawater, Japanese newspaper Asahi Shimbun reported.

TEPCO will measure the concentration of radioactive substances such as tritium in the surrounding waters every day during the period to investigate the effects of the release, it added.

The fishery industry and local residents have long opposed the discharge plan. About 150 fishermen and residents from Fukushima and Miyagi prefectures filed a lawsuit against the Japanese government and TEPCO at the Fukushima District Court on Sept. 8, 2023, demanding them stop releasing nuclear-contaminated water into the ocean.

On March 4, the lawsuit held its first public hearing at the Fukushima District Court, and the number of people signed on as plaintiffs has grown from about 150 to over 360.

Hideki Taki, chairman of the Retired Workers Union of the National Trade Union Council, said in a recent email interview with Xinhua that the Japanese government and TEPCO have written agreements with local fishermen in Fukushima, pledging they would not dispose of the radioactive wastewater without gaining the understanding of relevant stakeholders. However, since last August, they have disregarded the agreements and arbitrarily proceeded with the ocean discharge of nuclear-contaminated water, which is unforgivable.

The so-called "treated water" by the government and TEPCO still contains radioactive materials after being treated by advanced liquid processing system (ALPS), a multi-nuclide removal system, which TEPCO also admits.

After radioactive substances are discharged into the sea, they will inevitably enter human bodies through the food chain, but the government and TEPCO have not provided any evidence-based safety instructions on the food chain, Hideki Taki said.

Meanwhile, the decommissioning of the Fukushima plant has made little progress, and it is completely unpredictable when the nuclear waste and contaminated materials can be removed, Hideki Taki noted, adding that the government and TEPCO should immediately stop the ocean discharge.

The Fukushima nuclear-contaminated water release began in August 2023, and a total of about 31,200 tons of the water was released in four rounds in fiscal 2023, which ended in March.

Xinhua

CREATING an ultra-large cryogenic "refrigerator" that provides an ultra-low temperature environment below 20K (-253°C) or even down to 2K (-271°C), while ensuring continuous and stable operation at hundreds of watts to tens of thousands of watts—this capability has earned large cryogenic refrigeration equipment the title of "ultra-low temperature factory."

Scientifically, 20K is known as the liquid hydrogen temperature range, while 2K is the superfluid helium temperature range. Large refrig-

## China achieves major breakthroughs in cryogenic refrigeration technology

eration equipment operating in the liquid hydrogen to superfluid helium temperature ranges plays a crucial supporting role in aerospace engineering, hydrogen energy storage and transportation, helium resource development, and the operation of many large scientific installations.

For a long time, China had relied almost entirely on imported large cryogenic refrigeration equipment.

After over 10 years of sustained efforts, a research team from the Technical Institute of Physics and Chemistry under the Chinese Academy of Sciences (TIPC-CAS) has succeeded in developing a series of key and core technologies and launched large-scale cryogenic refrigeration equipment operating from 20K to 2K and from hundreds of watts to kilowatts, enabling the domestic manufacturing

of these "ultra-low temperature factories."

"Helium gas becomes a liquid at -269°C and turns into superfluid helium at -271°C. What cools the high-field superconducting magnets in particle accelerators like the Beijing Electron Positron Collider (BEPC) is exactly the liquid helium or superfluid helium produced by large cryogenic refrigeration equipment," said Hu Zhongjun, a researcher with

the TIPC-CAS, in front of a display board for the BEPC at the National Science Library, Chinese Academy of Sciences.

Apart from the BEPC, the operation of other large scientific facilities such as the Shanghai Synchrotron Radiation Facility and the High Energy Photon Source also relies heavily on large cryogenic refrigeration equipment.

Experts believe that

China sees an increasingly urgent demand for large cryogenic technology and equipment as it experiences rapid economic and social development. However, to independently develop such equipment is exceptionally difficult.

"Large cryogenic refrigeration equipment is different from common air conditioners or refrigerators," said Liu Liqiang, a researcher with the TIPC-CAS, adding that

the systems needed are extremely complex.

In 2009, the TIPC-CAS took the lead in conducting research on key core components and system integration for large cryogenic refrigeration systems.

From October 2010 to December 2014, the TIPC-CAS domestically produced large cryogenic refrigeration system operating in the liquid hydrogen temperature range with a capacity of 10,000 watts.

People's Daily



# Teen charged with terrorism over Sydney bishop stabbing

# US 'not forgetting' to help itself with aid to Ukraine – Kremlin

SYDNEY

THOUSANDS of Muslims gathered in mosques across Sydney for regular prayers yesterday despite concerns about retaliatory attacks after police charged a 16-year-old boy with a terrorism offense over the stabbing of a Sydney bishop earlier this week.

Police charged a 16-year-old boy with a terrorism offense on Thursday for the alleged stabbing of Bishop Mar Mari Emmanuel at a church on Monday. Footage from the scene showed the boy restrained by the congregation and shouting at Emmanuel for insulting Islam.

Police said they will allege he stabbed the bishop, who is in stable condition in hospital, as many as six times. The offense carries a maximum penalty of life imprisonment. The boy was refused bail.

A mob of thousands descended on the church after the attack, where they clashed with police and demanded the boy be brought out to face justice.

Hours afterwards the Lakemba mosque, one of Australia's largest, received fire bomb threats.

Standing outside the mosque on Friday as worshippers streamed past, community leader Gamel Kheir said Muslim women were worried they would be singled out and those who worked for the mosque overseer had



Police patrol outside the Christ the Good Shepherd church in suburban Wakely in western Sydney, Australia, on Tuesday. AP

been asked to work from home for now.

"Our real fear is one of targeting women who are identifiable through their head scarves walking through the streets or shopping centers. At the moment they're scared to do that," said Kheir, secretary of the Lebanese Muslim Association, which oversees three mosques including Lakemba.

Coming only days after a mass stabbing

in Bondi, the attack on Emmanuel and the possibility of reprisals have put the normally peaceful Sydney on edge. Gun and knife crime is rare in the city, one of the world's safest.

On his way to pray at the mosque on Friday, Abdul Masri, 32, told Reuters he was concerned about the possibility of further incidents.

"I don't fear, but I still worry, you know,"

he said.

Bishop Emmanuel on Thursday pleaded for peace and said he had forgiven his attacker in an audio message recorded in hospital.

Kheir thanked the priest for his message of forgiveness and calm.

"At the end of the day we all share the same message, we share the same land, we all share the same community." **Agencies**

MOSCOW

IN providing aid to Ukraine, the US allows Kiev to continue hostilities that Washington directly profits from, Kremlin Spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters.



Commenting on the latest US bill on allocating financial aid to Ukraine, he said: "Due to political strife inside Washington, they are looking for different modalities to continue providing aid to Ukraine." "In any case, whatever the modality of providing this aid, de facto it is about provoking Ukraine into further hostilities down to the last Ukrainian, putting guaranteed money in the pockets of the US," the Kremlin spokesman said.

According to him, "no matter what anyone says, the Americans are not forgetting about themselves." "And any regime [aiding Ukraine] first of all allocates funds that remain in the US military-industrial complex, then is paid in the form of taxes to the US government and so on," Peskov pointed out.

According to him, "Ukraine now has to fight not only for it (the provided aid - TASS), benefiting the Americans, it has to fight to the last Ukrainian."

"It is also burdened with debt. A favorite colonial policy of the United States," the spokesman emphasized.

US House of Representatives Speaker Mike Johnson said earlier that the bulk of the \$61 billion in financial aid that could be allocated to Ukraine if a new standalone bill is passed would be spent to replenish the United States' own military reserves.

In addition, the bill presented in the US House of Representatives on the allocation of financial aid to Ukraine instructs US President Joe Biden to agree with Ukraine on the repayment of economic aid provided by Washington. **Agencies**

# Antiquities repatriation fosters deeper China-US cultural exchanges

NEW YORK

A TREASURE trove of 38 pieces of Chinese cultural relics, once lost but now on the cusp of returning to their ancestral homeland from New York, serves as a poignant symbol of the profound bond and goodwill shared between the American and Chinese people.

The sentiment was conveyed at a ceremony of the handover of the relics, held on Wednesday at the Chinese Consulate General in New York, attended by Li Qun, China's deputy minister of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, along with Chinese Consul General in New York Huang Ping, and Matthew Bogdanos, chief of the Antiquities Trafficking Unit at the Manhattan District Attorney's Office.

This return marks a significant step in the ongoing cooperation between China and the United States in protecting and repatriating cultural heritage.



China's Deputy Minister of Culture and Tourism and head of the National Cultural Heritage Administration Li Qun (2nd R) and Matthew Bogdanos (2nd L), chief of the Antiquities Trafficking Unit of the Manhattan District Attorney's Office, sign documents at a handover ceremony of returned Chinese cultural objects at the Chinese Consulate General in New York, the United States, on Wednesday. Xinhua

heritage and promoting mutual understanding through cultural exchanges, Li said.

Huang noted that the event is a positive implementation of the San Francisco Vision reached by the leaders of both countries in November last year and will greatly enhance cultural exchanges and friendship between China and the United States.

This year marks the 45th anniversary of China-U.S. diplomatic relations, and it is hoped that people from all walks of life in China and the United States will continue to work together to promote stable, healthy and sustainable development of China-U.S. relations, said Huang.

Bogdanos emphasized the significance of the return of these cultural relics in fostering cultural exchanges.

"I haven't met half of the people in this room, and that doesn't matter because for cultural heritage, what it does is it brings us all together, and all the differences melt away when we consider the shared cultural

heritage of all humanity," Bogdanos said.

"We recognize two of the most important aspects to cultural heritage -- one is a reminder that we have far more in common than you might otherwise believe from all the headlines you read. And the second is that we have far more in common when we roll up our sleeves and get to work returning these antiquities where they belong because that's our only goal," said Bogdanos.

### HUMANITY'S COMMON CULTURAL HERITAGE

Most of the 38 pieces of cultural relics returned Wednesday are Tibetan Buddhist artifacts from China, dating from the Yuan to Ming and Qing dynasties, with a rich variety and exquisite craftsmanship. Among them, ivory carvings, wooden sculptures, and fragments of murals are particularly rare and hold significant historical, artistic, and scientific value.

"China sincerely thanks the United States

for its extensive efforts in promoting cultural relic returns, and we highly appreciate the professionalism demonstrated by our American counterparts in this endeavor," Wen Dayan, director general of NCHA's international cooperation department, told Xinhua after the handover ceremony.

Wen said this marks the third successful cooperation in cultural relic returns between the NCHA and the Manhattan District Attorney's Office (the other two were in May 2023, and September 2021), and it is also the first successful collaboration between Chinese and U.S. government departments since the renewal of the memorandum of understanding (MoU) on preventing the illegal entry of Chinese cultural relics into the United States in January this year.

The MoU between the two countries, initially signed on Jan. 14, 2009, has been extended for the third time, starting from Jan. 14 this year.

So far 504 pieces or sets of Chinese cultural relics have been delivered in 15 batches from the United States to China.

"China has always been committed to preventing and combating the illegal trafficking of cultural property through expanding government cooperation. It fully demonstrates the unremitting efforts and close cooperation of both countries in protecting humanity's common cultural heritage, setting a positive example globally," said Wen.

Bogdanos agreed. "Every one of these ceremonies that we have, where we are able to return looted antiquities to their homeland, whether it's China or any other country, for us, it's always a celebration," Bogdanos told Xinhua following the event.

"It's a celebration of what we have done, but it's also a reminder of how much we still have to do, because for every antiquity you see here that's being returned, there's another dozen that are still out there waiting for us to find, to seize, and to return to the country of origin," said Bogdanos.

Xinhua

# Dubai Airports urges passengers not to arrive at the airport unless flights are confirmed

ABU DHABI

DUBAI Airports urged passengers not to come to the airport unless their flight has been confirmed and recommended arriving only two hours before their scheduled departure.

Emirates has also decided to suspend check-in for all customers across its network traveling with onward connections through Dubai, until 23:59 GMT yesterday. This is to support operations recovery from the recent bad weather at its Dubai hub.

In a statement, Emirates said that passengers already in Dubai and in transit will continue to be processed for their flights. Customers travelling to Dubai as their final destination may check-in and travel as usual.

Emirates advised all customers to check the latest flight schedules on its website, as delays to departures and arrivals are expected.

The carrier advised impacted customers to contact their booking agent or Emirates Office for rebooking options, acknowledging the current high call volume and apologising for any delays in response.

ANI

# Emirates said that passengers already in Dubai and in transit will continue to be processed for their flights

By Yi Xin

# America is losing credibility on its one-China policy

FOLLOWING a highly politicized weekend in Taiwan, over 80 countries have come out to reaffirm their commitment to the one-China principle. Standing in stark contrast is the US, which issued a statement congratulating the DPP leader, a self-professed "pragmatic worker for Taiwan independence," in a move that threatens to exacerbate tensions in the Taiwan Straits and jeopardize the positive momentum of China-US relations.

However, this should come as no surprise given the US' track record of saying one thing and doing the opposite. It claims it has a one-China policy, but keeps watering it down by adding qualifiers and caveats such as "guided by the Taiwan Relations Act, and the Six Assurances." It says it does not support "Taiwan independence," but continues to

refer to the island's leader as "president" and attempts to include Taiwan in international organizations meant for sovereign states only. It claims to be committed to cross-Straits peace and stability, but keeps selling weapons to the island to arm it into a "porcupine." The list goes on. It's hard for anyone to take its words seriously any more.

Such duplicity is once again on display this week. While sending congratulations on what it calls a "presidential election" and jetting in former senior officials to Taiwan, it was also quick to repeat that it does not support "Taiwan independence," citing precedents for the statement and high-level delegation, and downplaying the group as being "unofficial." But wrongful actions are not to be

explained away by saying "we have always been doing this."

If the US is serious about following precedents, why doesn't the administration recommit to opposing "Taiwan independence," as stated by quite a few US presidents when they were in office?

Worse still, the US has been pushing those nefarious precedents even further in a sala-

mi-slicing strategy. Take the statement on Taiwan's regional leadership change, for example. It has been moved up from the level of State Department spokesperson in 2016 to Secretary of State in 2020 and 2024. In sending post-election "unofficial" delegations, instead of waiting until the inauguration like in the past, the US is doing it right after the results are out,

and the level of representation is raised as well, with such high-profile figures this time as former national security advisor Stephen Hadley and former deputy secretary of state James Steinberg.

In parallel with these incremental political maneuvers, the US is also quite active militarily.

It keeps sending more arms to Taiwan and is using the Foreign Military Financing program for the first time as a funding source, which has only ever been used for sovereign states.

The US is expanding its troop presence in Taiwan and is reported to be receiving two battalions of ground troops from Taiwan for training for the first time since the 1970s.

All of this is easier to understand in the context of US As-

sistant Secretary of Defense Ely Ratner's words when he practically described Taiwan as a strategic asset that is "critical to the defense of vital US interests in the Indo-Pacific."

Inconsistency across different branches of the US government also characterizes its one-China policy. The Congress seems dominated by warmongers interested in nothing but hyping the "China threat" and fanning the flames across the Taiwan Straits. And the executive branch looks both unwilling and unable to do anything about it, let alone enforce the one-China policy across the entire US government.

All these regressive steps in diplomatic, military and political realms are chipping away at the credibility of the US' China policy. The few reassurances it

offers look dubious. In a Foreign Affairs article "Taiwan and the True Sources of Deterrence," America's own experts argue that reassurances are a means for more effective deterrence. In other words, deterrence and containment remain at the heart of America's China strategy.

If the US cares anything about the credibility of its one-China policy, now is the time to show sincerity. There are so many steps it could take: stating unequivocally its opposition to "Taiwan independence," freezing its arms sales to Taiwan, and expressing support for China's peaceful reunification. These are nothing more than the basics of following a genuine one-China policy.

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## Dar artist Hamis to release Extended Play next month

By Correspondent Joseph Mchekadona

TANZANIAN musician Athuman Hamis has finally ended his hiatus in the industry, having announced the release of his highly anticipated Extended Play (EP) titled 'Ochu the Beast'.

Hamis, who is better known as 'Ochu', stated in an interview in Dar es Salaam recently that three producers have produced the EP- made up of four songs.

He mentioned the songs and their producers in brackets as 'Sina' and 'Siwezi' (Zest), 'Ulinitesa' (Timo), and 'Essential'- which has been produced by Anhda.

The singer, who is also an accomplished visual artist, said the EP will officially be released early next month.

He said the EP showcases his exceptional vocal prowess and songwriting skills as it offers a captivating blend of Afro-Pop, R&B, and traditional Tanzanian influences.

The singer explained that 'Ochu the Beast' EP takes the listener on a rollercoaster of emotions, exploring the highs and lows of love.

According to the singer, it revolves around the theme of resisting temptations and the ongoing battle for love in the face of life's challenges.

"EP is a new trend which is promoting music, 'Ochu the Beast' EP encapsulates the highs and lows of

love, exploring themes of apology, anticipation, resilience, and the art of moving forward, as well as challenges we face in our everyday lives, each track is a chapter in the book of life," he said.

He said through the universal language of music, 'Ochu the Beast' delivers a heartfelt message of life challenges and, once released, it will be available on all major streaming platforms.

The artist also disclosed he did not collaborate with any other musician when producing the EP, given he targeted to give his music fanatics a real taste of the music.

Ochu pointed out that he has, however, lined up several musicians he will collaborate with in his future projects.

He operates his visual artistic works at Mbezi Tanki Bovu in the city and has, in the past, released singles that include 'I can't breathe', 'Sioni', 'Mboni Yangu', 'Hello', and 'Mbezi Yako'- which was a tribute to the late Reginald Mengi.

He is the holder of the 'Jiachie na Kili' art competition trophy and has also drawn portraits of many prominent local and international personalities.

They are, among others, Mwalimu Julius Kambarage Nyerere, Ali Hassan Mwinyi, Benjamin Mkapa, Jakaya Kikwete, John Pombe Magufuli, businessman Reginald Mengi, and others.

## Simba SC, Yanga ready for second Dar derby

By Correspondent Cheji Bakari, Tanga

YOUNG Africans SC plays host to long-time rival Simba SC in the second phase fixture of the 2023/24 NBC Premier League at Benjamin Mkapa Stadium in Dar es Salaam later in the evening.

Both Yanga and Simba SC have been kicked out of the CAF Champions League quarterfinals, conceding losses to Mamelodi Sundowns and Al Ahly respectively.

Simba SC was eliminated from the premier Africa inter-club showpiece's stage having suffered a 3-0 aggregate defeat to Al Ahly.

Yanga also failed to scale the knockout hurdle in Pretoria, South Africa- losing 3-2 to Mamelodi Sundowns via penalties.

According to soccer stakeholders who spoke to The Guardian, today's tie will be tough even though Yanga comprehensively beat Simba SC 5-1 in the first phase match which was played last year.

Immediately after Simba SC returned home after taking on Al Ahly, the former bowed out of the CRDB Bank Federation Cup Round of 16 following the loss to Kigoma's Mashujaa FC via penalties.

The penalties had to settle matters, given the clubs had settled for a 1-1 draw in the regular 90 minutes.

Simba SC prolonged the less con-

vincing outcomes after salvaging a 1-1 draw with Ihefu SC in the 2023/24 NBC Premier League duel in Singida.

Yanga cruised to the last-eight phase of the CRDB Bank Federation Cup with a 2-0 victory over Dodoma Jiji FC.

The showdown's defending champion went on to enjoy success in the NBC Premier League, having walloped Singida Fountain Gate FC 3-0 at CCM Kirumba, Mwanza.

"We began this week's matches poorly, surely we are moving unsatisfactorily and we do not have much hope because our squad is not as good as Yanga's," a Simba SC fanatic, Otto Julius, revealed.

The other Simba SC supporter Hassan Mohamed noted: "We are going to play against a good team, the league's defending champion, but I think it will be a difficult match... although we lost the first match anything can happen."

Rose Mallahiyo, a member of Yanga's Zeneth Branch located in Muheza, Tanga stated that the branch's members will see to it that they support the squad so it can grab victory in today's tie and maintain its winning ways.

In the league table, Yanga leads the rest of the pack while Simba SC is sitting third.

## Simba SC would not listen to Yanga coach Gamondi to avoid seeking revenge



Simba SC striker Kibu Denis negotiates his way past Yanga defenders during the NBC Premier League match at Benjamin Mkapa Stadium in Dar es Salaam on November 5, 2023. Yanga won 5-1. PHOTO: CORRESPONDENT JUMANNE JUMA

By Correspondent John Kimbute

MIND games are vibrant among the city rivals ahead of a nervous and tense derby, also risking to be drenched in rain without necessarily daunting the fans at Dar es Salaam's Benjamin Mkapa Stadium, alias Lupaso Arena.

A notable intervention ahead of the derby was a remark by Young Africans SC head coach Miguel Gamondi that the opponents have to come to the pitch to win, not to take revenge for the 5-1 beating they suffered not so long ago.

Was he either airing positive advice for Simba SC or dissuading them from the task?

For one thing, if this affirmation had been given by the Msimbazi Street side assistant coach Suleiman Matola, it would have been easier to say he meant what he said, not to speak of head coach Abdelhak Benchikha himself.

When it comes from an opponent it is either of two things, whether he genuinely believes in a positive spirit to any game to win, or he is worried about how to play to the positive result of an archrival firing from all cylinders. It is a fly-whisk idea.

Soccer pundits in at least one radio station program- who discussed this remark- were on the whole under the impression

that the coach was talking football, such that the idea of emotion in a match ruins the head, that is, technique.

Yet, some veteran fans were lamenting that, in the past, players used to cry when their side was defeated in a derby, whereas, at present, the well-paid players hug and laugh after a drubbing as they have no passion for the team, just doing a job.

Gamondi implicitly wishes to see the opponents' side full of players who will be on the job, not passionate ones.

In that case, he was right, dissuading the opponent from putting everything into the game and not merely playing the game in a 'business as usual' fashion, in which the Jangwani Street side has an advantage.

If Msimbazi Street outfit's players are passionate about the game, Yanga players are the ones who will be 'playing to win' and not vehemently seeking to extend dominance over their next-street rivals.

Thus, if the Argentinian tactician was making a prediction, it would be of his own game and not that of opponents, for the side needs nothing less than revenge.

To lay the ground for an emotional encounter, reports talk of a face-to-face meeting between Benchikha and Mo Dewji, honorary president and the soul of the team, a meeting that casts a shadow over current plans and

tone of leadership.

It was more than needed as the leadership has taken a back seat to the club's woes, just throwing either a barb or two that Mo is holding back cash. He wants to change the club.

One indication is reliable reports that Mo is asking Barbara Gonzales to take the reins again at the club, and she has indicated that she wants not one or two people to go but, seemingly, work under the club investor directly.

Another impression is that she takes over as board chairperson and picks a CEO from South Africa to work with Mo; days of the cooperative union at Msimbazi are numbered.

That also means the derby will be watched by at least two of this team along with the head coach, to get a shape of the club as the new season is being prepared.

In other words, there is not just revenge being placed on the pitch as the encounter begins at five but the future of several players is also at stake, just as the job of the coach may also be at issue, though this is far-flung and not visibly on the table. When a player knows that confirmation as a club player is tied up with the derby, as the sponsor-cum-investor is unlikely to bring another humiliation, it is evident that the players will be out to show they have something, and are perhaps even the best. It will be a hard climb but

not just coming to win, business as usual.

Meanwhile, there is a laughable video being aired each passing day as to whether anyone shall ever score three goals in a derby to equal the record of former Simba SC attacker, Abdallah Kibadeni 'King Kibadeni Mputa', set back in 1977.

Surprisingly, the Msimbazi Street outfit's maestro has believed that lie all his life, that a full-blown Yanga, not just a side that wore its jerseys, was struck 6-0 in 1977.

The current youths and even a range of adults do not recall the situation at the time where disputes at Jangwani Street outfit led to the team splitting, and more than a dozen players left to form Pan African FC.

The derby was held before the side had reconstituted, in which case the recent drubbing at 5-1 was more convincing.

Something was surprising about Mputa's remark - that if a player wants to equal his record, he should go and see him. Well, here is the advice - wait until there is club disarray and squad split, and before the side is reorganized, hold a derby and the usual best player might admittedly score a hat-trick.

It is as laughable as the other spurious hat trick by Feisal Salum when the other side, from Tabora, had eight players on the pitch - and astonishingly the soccer rule book says 'Play on.'

## Yanga retains midfielder Aziz Ki

By Correspondent Cheji Bakari, Tanga

YOUNG Africans SC's Burkinabe midfielder Stephane Aziz Ki has reportedly signed a two-year contract extension with the club to ultimately calm the side's followers down.

Previously, it was reported that some South African Premier League outfits had shown interest in securing Aziz Ki's signature to reinforce their respective midfield. They include Mamelodi Sundowns, Kaizer Chiefs, and Orlando Pirates.

Some Yanga fans were keen on finding out whether the news was true and, for that matter, news concerning the contract extension is set to allay their fears.

The fanatics, therefore, have high hopes

the club will keep on winning more trophies, given it has a good playmaker in Aziz Ki, whose presence on the pitch has what it takes to change the tie's outcome.

One of the fanatics said: "If the news of Aziz Ki's contract extension for the other two years is confirmed, we will have hopes of enjoying more success both in the country and on the continent."

"He is a great player who is serving one of Tanzania's elite clubs made up of, among others, players from six nations in Africa. He has a talent which is spicing domestic soccer," he revealed.

The supporters noted Aziz Ki has, since joining Yanga when the outfit was under Belgo-Tunisian head coach Nassredine Nabi,

helped the Jangwani Street outfit make it to the CAF Confederation Cup final, which ended the team losing to Algeria's USM Algiers via an away-goal rule.

Yanga, moreover, won the Community Shield in 2023 and also lifted the then Azam Sports Federation Cup (ASFC) title in 2022.

The Jangwani Street squad also lifted the 2022/23 NBC Premier League trophy, which was in the process the 29th top honour to have been lifted by the team.

According to records, Aziz Ki has of late netted 14 goals in the domestic top flight, and he is in a pulsating chase for the league's top goalscorer award with Azam FC midfielder Feisal Salum who has notched 13 goals.

## Chelsea's 'Cold Palmer' heating up ahead of Manchester City reunion

LONDON

CHELSEA forward Cole Palmer has emerged as a Player of the Year contender thanks to a dazzling campaign that left Manchester City boss Pep Guardiola to rue what might have been ahead of their reunion in today's FA Cup semi-final.

Palmer is enjoying a breakthrough season following his surprise move from City on transfer deadline day in September.

The 21-year-old scored four times in Chelsea's 6-0 rout of Everton on Monday, showing why he is nicknamed 'Cold Palmer' with an ice-cool penalty after refusing to let team-mate Nicolas Jackson take the kick.

Palmer's ruthless penalty prowess would have come in handy for City, who were beaten by Real Madrid in the Champions League quarter-finals on Wednesday after a shootout that featured misses from Bernardo Silva and Mateo Kovacic.

While Palmer's old club were stunned by that painful loss, Chelsea will face City at Wembley in buoyant mood after his latest highlight reel performance against Everton.

Given licence to roam from his nominal starting position on the right of Chelsea's front three, Palmer has starred with lethal finishing and a creative touch that has produced nine Premier League assists this season.

Palmer has netted 23 times in all competitions this term, including 20 in 28 league appearances to make him the joint top-scorer alongside City's Erling Haaland.

It is unlikely he would have matched those impressive statistics if he had stayed at City, where Phil Foden, Jack Grealish and Jeremy Doku blocked his path to progress from promising academy graduate to first-team regular.

Instead of a bit-part role with City, Palmer's emergence as Chelsea's most influential player has been the brightest spot in a difficult campaign for the west Londoners.

Palmer has remained polite about the end of his 13-year association with City, but there can be little doubt knocking out the FA Cup holders would carry extra significance for the forward.

"To make the decision to come to Chelsea was a big one for me and my family, but I just wanted to play football. I'm thankful to Chelsea for the opportunity. I'm buzzing," Palmer said.

Beaten by Liverpool in the League Cup final in February, Chelsea are chasing their first domestic silverware since the 2018 FA Cup.

Another virtuoso Palmer display will be vital to under-fire Chelsea manager Mauricio Pochettino's hopes of remaining in contention to win his first trophy in England.

"He is showing that the club made the right decision signing him. He's a player who had the capacity to score goals when he was at City. It doesn't surprise us," Pochettino said.

"The way he's adapted, playing and performing is fantastic. He behaves like a top scorer. It's amazing for the team and him."

Palmer can also remind Guardiola of the contentious decision that has come back to haunt the Spaniard.

Eye-catching goals for City in the Community Shield against Arsenal and the UEFA Super Cup against Sevilla seemed to cement Palmer as a certainty to follow in Foden's footsteps as a homegrown prodigy.

But, unwilling to accept Palmer's desire for more regular playing time, Guardiola took Chelsea's £42 million (\$52 million) offer.

With City hampered by injuries to Haaland and Kevin De Bruyne for significant periods this season, Palmer, who has 11 goals in his last six games, would have been a more than adequate replacement as a scorer and creator.

City have battled back to the top of the Premier League, but Palmer robbed them of two important points with his last-gasp penalty in the 4-4 draw between the teams in November.

Palmer, who has won two England caps, was not involved in the recent Euro 2024 warm-up friendlies against Brazil and Belgium due to injury.

But his brilliant form has put him firmly in contention for a place in Gareth Southgate's squad.

If Palmer's FA Cup and European Championship dreams come true, Pochettino is likely to be sitting more comfortably, while Guardiola is left with only regrets.

AFP

# Arsenal, Liverpool now fight to keep Premier League race alive

LONDON

ARSENAL have no time to dwell on their Champions League exit as they return to Premier League action this weekend with the chance to reclaim top spot.

Manchester City were the big winners last week, hammering Luton 5-1 before Arsenal and Liverpool both lost, and are now firm favourites to claim an unprecedented fourth straight English top-flight title.

But City are in FA Cup semi-final action against Chelsea today and could find themselves shunted down to third spot.

At the bottom of the table, relegation-threatened Everton and Nottingham Forest, both hit with points deductions, go head to head.

AFP Sport looks at three talking points ahead of the weekend's action.

"Can Arsenal reset? Mikel Arteta says Arsenal still have a "beautiful" opportunity in the title race, but their campaign is in danger of ending in a whimper for the second straight year.

The second-placed Gunners, who face mid-table Wolves today, led the way in the Premier League for the bulk of last season but faded badly in the run-in, allowing City to cruise past them.

They appeared to have toughened up this campaign,



Jurgen Klopp

Mikel Arteta

taking four points off both Liverpool and City and going on a run of 10 wins in 11 games.

But last week's 2-0 home defeat by Aston Villa was a huge blow, compounded by their midweek Champions League quarter-final exit at the hands of Bayern Munich.

Arteta knows his men need an arm around their shoulders after their "painful" defeat in Germany.

"What we still have to play (for) is beautiful and I said before, it's time to be next to our players and in this moment, not when you win 10... and a draw," he said.

Arsenal must beat Wolves

-- both to stay in the title hunt and to prove they have what it takes.

"Klopp seeks cutting edge Jurgen Klopp's Premier League title push in his final season at Anfield is running out of momentum after a damaging draw against Manchester United and a shock defeat by Crystal Palace.

Liverpool had 49 shots over the two games but managed just two goals, in the chaotic 2-2 draw with United, telling a tale of wastefulness.

Liverpool had been the masters at winning points from losing positions but they have lost that useful knack, win-

ning just two of their past five league games.

At the other end of the pitch, Klopp's men, who have struggled with defensive injuries, are struggling to keep clean sheets.

Liverpool, City's closest challengers during Pep Guardiola's reign at the Etihad, are not out of the race -- like Arsenal they are just two points off the top ahead of tomorrow's match against Fulham.

But unless they rediscover their sharpness at both ends of the pitch, their challenge could quickly be over.

Their mood would not have been improved by crashing

out of the Europa League on Thursday.

\*Everton desperate to stop rot

Everton or Nottingham Forest could find themselves in the relegation zone at the end of the weekend if Luton beat Brentford. Both clubs have been hit with penalties for breaches of the Premier League's profitability and sustainability rules.

Everton have been docked eight points in total for two breaches -- a two-point punishment earlier this month followed a six-point penalty, reduced from 10 on appeal.

The club have also appealed against the second penalty.

Forest were docked four points and have also appealed.

Everton, who have been ever-present in the English top-flight since 1954/55, have won just one of their past 15 league matches.

Both clubs will hope their appeals are successful but they cannot afford to rely on a successful outcome as the games run out.

**Fixtures:**  
**Today (1400 GMT unless stated)**

Luton v Brentford, Sheffield United v Burnley, Wolves v Arsenal (1830)

**Tomorrow**  
**Everton v Nottingham Forest (1230)**, Aston Villa v Bournemouth (1400), Crystal Palace v West Ham (1400), Fulham v Liverpool (1530)  
AFP

## Hurting Barca bid to slow Madrid's title charge in Clasico

MADRID

BARCELONA must dust themselves down after Champions League defeat to try and slow Real Madrid's steady march towards the La Liga title in tomorrow's Clasico.

The Spanish champions can make a last stand by reeling Madrid's lead into five points at the Santiago Bernabeu, even if overhauling their arch-rivals with seven matches remaining to defend the trophy is a tough task.

Paris Saint-Germain brought Barcelona's European adventure to an end in painful fashion on Tuesday, overhauling the Catalans' two-goal lead in the tie.

Picking up his squad emotionally after that defeat will not be an easy task for Xavi Hernandez, with some Spanish reports saying the coach may leave his post after the game with reserve team coach Rafael Marquez a possible replacement.

Xavi said in January he would depart at the end of the season and despite a strong run of form since leading to a clamour for him to stay, has not changed his mind.

Defeat by PSG in the Champions League quarter-finals may have ended any chance of that happening, beyond a miracle comeback in La Liga.

If that is to happen it must begin in the capital against a Madrid side exhausted but jubilant after they beat treble-winners Manchester City on penalties on Wednesday to reach the



Carlo Ancelotti

Xavi Hernandez

semi-finals.

Xavi's first job is to calm any potential tension within his squad after midfielder Ilkay Gundogan criticised defender Ronald Araujo for his early red card which cost Barcelona against PSG.

"I'll keep what I think to myself, I have codes and values that I think have to be respected," Araujo told reporters.

The Uruguayan centre-back, who was also sent off against Real Madrid in January in Barcelona's painful 4-1 hammering in the Spanish Super Cup final, said his team would not throw in the towel in La Liga.

"Madrid are our biggest rival and we have to change our mindset -- we'll go all out on Sunday," continued Araujo.

"We mathematically have a chance still and we have to fight for La Liga until the end."

Barcelona have not lost away from home in La Liga this season,

while goalkeeper Marc-Andre ter Stegen has gone 583 minutes without conceding in the top flight -- 53 short of his best record in the competition.

With Madrid having defended for their lives against City over 120 minutes of high-intensity football, Barcelona may be able to capitalise.

"On Sunday we'll compete again, we're not

throwing in the towel in La Liga," said Xavi.

"Let's see if we can put ourselves within five points (of Madrid)."

Madrid coach Carlo Ancelotti said his team were "very tired" but would find the strength to continue their title tilt.

"The Clasico is crucial for the league," said the Italian, who has won La Liga on one occasion,

with Madrid in 2022.

As well as their Spanish Super Cup triumph over Barca, Madrid also won the first Clasico of the season at the Olympic Stadium in October and are looking to make it a hat-trick.

\*Player to watch: Jude Bellingham

The Real Madrid midfielder will make his Santiago Bernabeu Clasico debut, having netted

twice at Barcelona in his first clash with the Catalans earlier in the season.

Key stats  
0.58 - Madrid goalkeeper Andriy Lunin has conceded the fewest goals per 90 minutes of any stopper in the top flight.

10 - consecutive La Liga matches in which Barcelona are unbeaten.

47 - Real Madrid have the best goal difference in Spain, having both scored more and let in fewer than any other side.

Fixtures (all times GMT)

**Today**  
Celta Vigo v Las Palmas (1200), Rayo Vallecano v Osasuna (1415), Valencia v Real Betis (1630), Girona v Cadiz (1900)

**Tomorrow**  
Getafe v Real Sociedad (1200), Almeria v Villarreal (1415), Alaves v Atletico Madrid (1630), Real Madrid v Barcelona (1900)

**Monday**  
Sevilla v Real Mallorca (1900)

AFP

Gwiji by David Chikoko



# SPORT

Arsenal, Liverpool now fight to keep Premier League race alive

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**TONIGHT @ 9:00**

**EATV MONDAY**

**5Sports**

11:00 DADAZ  
12:00 KIPENGA XTRA  
13:00 Zote Kuntu  
13:30 Kall Za Wana  
13:55 Dondoo Za Michzo  
14:00 SKONGA (r)  
14:30 Planef Bongo (r)  
15:00 Funguka  
15:30 Akili & Me  
15:55 Dondoo Za Michzo  
16:00 Zote Kuntu  
16:55 Dondoo Za Michzo  
17:00 SSELECT  
17:55 Kurasa  
18:00 Kall Za Wana  
18:30 #HASHTAG  
19:00 EATV SAA I  
20:00 DADAZ (r)  
21:00 5SPORTS  
22:00 Zote Kuntu  
23:00 Kurasa  
23:05 EATV SAA I (r)

**5Sports**  
The week's local and international sporting events as well as in-depth analysis of the biggest sporting highlights of the week are covered on 5Sports.

**eastafrica RADIO**

05:00 Supa Breakfast  
09:00 MAMAMIA  
12:00 Kipenga Xtra  
13:00 Planef Bongo  
16:00 EA Drive  
19:00 Kipenga  
21:00 The Cruise

**88.1FM DAR ES SALAAM**

## Simba SC's NBC PL title hopes much alive

By Correspondent Nassir Nchimbi

WITH the Dar es Salaam derby having been slated for today at Benjamin Mkapa Stadium, Simba SC assistant coach Suleiman Matola has asserted that the title race is still open for his side and a win over Yanga will bring more chances.

Yanga hosts Simba SC in today's encounter with the confidence of both sides being extremely varying.

Matola assured that his outfit's players' confidence is high and they have worked on finishing in front of goal.

The former Simba SC midfielder disclosed: "We had a very good preparation for our team in Zanzibar, we had a great time reviewing our mistakes and working on how to improve our team, especially in converting chances that we create, the head coach has addressed this and every player is aware."

"Derby games are different, it does matter what team is on the top and which one is struggling in determining results, we know that the title race is still on and we are eager to restore the gap and win the title," Matola noted.

"Albeit the struggles, the fact that we have not won almost four games in a row, we did not have a difficult time in restoring the sense of belief to our players," he stated.

"We have a squad of players that are experienced and familiar with the magnitude of this game, and we are positive about tomorrow's (today's) game," Matola remarked.

Simba SC's assistant captain Shomari Kapombe called this match a new chapter for the club, they believe winning this match will create a beginning for the outfit after failing to accomplish the majority of their goals.

The right-back disclosed: "I don't think we will lose by a margin of five goals again, we have worked so hard on our defensive abilities, we want to win this game for our fans, players are aware of this, we want to bring that unit back to the fans."

"Our morale towards the title race is top-notch. We understand we just need to win all games without looking at either how other teams play or the results. We just need to focus on ourselves and we will retain our lost glory," Kapombe remarked.

In the previous match, Yanga hammered Simba SC 5-1 in a clash that took place at the same venue last year.

Today's match is crucial for both teams, given a victory for Yanga will extend the squad's lead on top of the table to 58 points from 22 matches, while a win for Simba SC will help it accumulate 49 points from 21 matches.

That means that if Yanga emerges victorious, the side will increase the lead to seven points ahead of second-placed Azam FC.

Yanga will, further, command a whopping 12-point gap with the now third-placed Simba SC.

If Simba SC wins, the side will move ahead of Azam FC by three points and narrow the gap with Yanga to four points.

# Yanga's expectation clashes with Simba SC's hope



Yanga's players listen to their head coach, Miguel Ángel Gamondi, and his assistants when they were shaping up for this season's CRDB Federation Cup Round of 16 match against Dodoma Jiji FC that took place in Dodoma recently. Yanga clobbered Dodoma Jiji FC 2-0. PHOTO: COURTESY OF YANGA

By Correspondent Michael Mwebwe

FANS will flock to the Benjamin Mkapa Stadium for a mouthwatering 'Dar es Salaam derby' today afternoon, as defending champions Young Africans SC tackle long-time adversaries and title challengers Simba SC in the NBC Premier League.

With the first hosting the third-placed, the encounter is more than a game-it is a statement of intent, a battle for supremacy between two of Tanzania's footballing giants.

Young Africans SC's relentless pursuit of dominance intertwines with Simba SC's quest for redemption.

Under the astute leadership of Argentinian Miguel Gamondi, Young Africans SC- alias Yanga- is soaring with confidence, heading into the clash as the top contender.

They are enjoying a four-point lead over second-placed Azam FC with two games in

hand. They are also nine points ahead of Simba SC, now in third place albeit having played one more game.

With so far eight games to play, a third successive league title is Yanga's to lose and victory would reaffirm their dominance, and unwavering resolve to retain the crown.

The Jangwani Street outfit's fans will undoubtedly approach the game with the expectation of a triumph.

Gamondi could also see the return of key players Pacome Zouzoua, Kennedy Musonda, and Attohoulou Yao, enhancing their lineup significantly.

Speaking to the press ahead of the game, Gamondi said his players are motivat-

ed to do a double on Simba SC.

The tactician noted: "We are ready to try to win this derby for the second time this season. The players are motivated. We respect our opponents. We can't complain about anything."

Their counterparts, Simba SC, managed by the 2022/23 CAF Confederation Cup-winning coach Abdelhak Benchikha, are facing an uphill battle in the league title race.

Benchikha's troops may arrive at Benjamin Mkapa Stadium sporting the underdog badge- especially after November's humbling 5-1 loss to Yanga.

After the recent crashing out of the CAF Champions League last-eight, a penalty

shootout loss that saw them bow out of the CRDB Federation Cup Round of 16, and a league draw against Ihefu SC, Benchikha's team is under pressure to perform.

Today's match is not just a contest of strategy and skill but an urgent bid by Simba SC to reclaim the club's footing in the title race.

Now trailing Azam FC by five points, Simba SC finds itself with no room for error as the season enters the home stretch.

While derbies tend to have no respect for form, on and off-the-field issues mean Simba SC fans are anticipating this encounter with hope. Fans have acknowledged the limitations within their team.

Another nine league

games remain for Simba SC to respond, but wins in all of those might no longer be enough.

In a league where draws are the new losses, hoping for favours rarely works if one dominant side is ahead by four or more points.

Benchikha is also facing challenges in selecting his first-choice striker, as Pa Omar Jobe and Fredy Koublan have hardly been convincing so far.

Speaking to the press, Simba SC assistant coach Selemani Matola said he wants to see an improvement from his charges after just one win from their last five matches.

## Matola outlines Simba SC's fresh strategy for PL tie vs Yanga

By Correspondent Seth Mapoli

SIMBA SC assistant coach Selemani Matola has declared his team's readiness for the highly anticipated Dar es Salaam derby against the long-time rival Young Africans SC (Yanga) today.

The high-voltage clash, to be played at Benjamin Mkapa Stadium in Dar es Salaam, has been scheduled to kick off at 5 pm East African Time.

Matola, speaking at a pre-match press conference yesterday, emphasized the importance of the preparation time for Simba SC.

"We've had a good period to prepare for this crucial game, we understand the quality of the opposition. Yanga has been in exceptional form, stringing together a series of positive results," he disclosed.

Despite acknowledging Yanga's recent dominance, Matola exuded confidence in Simba SC's capabilities.

"We are well-prepared and ready to face them. Our objective is clear: victory," he declared.

Furthermore, Matola implored Simba SC fans to turn Benjamin Mkapa Stadium into a sea of red and gold.

"I urge our fans to come out in large numbers and fill the stadium," he pleaded.

The tactician appealed: "Their



Simba SC's assistant coach, Selemani Matola.

presence is a significant motivator for our players. A large and vibrant fanbase acts as our 12th player on the pitch. With their support, we are confident of securing a win."

However, Matola highlighted a crucial difference in Simba SC's approach to this encounter.

"We're entering this game with a fresh and distinct strategy compared to the last one, records hold little

bearing on this match. We are solely focused on the task at hand," he emphasized.

Shomari Kapombe, Simba SC's defender and assistant captain, echoed Matola's sentiments.

"We've had thorough preparations together with the coaching staff, specifically identifying and correcting the shortcomings we displayed in previous matches... the players are brimming with morale," he

said.

These two teams have a history of close matches. In their last five meetings, each team has only won once, with the other three games ending in draws.

However, Yanga's recent 5-1 thrashing of Simba SC is sure to be on everyone's mind, and Simba will be eager for revenge.

Simba SC, despite a somewhat underwhelming season so far, clings to the

possibility of a dramatic turnaround.

Currently occupying third place on the log with 46 points from 20 games, they find themselves nine points adrift of league leader Yanga.

The red and whites have managed 14 wins, four draws, and two losses, showcasing their resilience despite inconsistencies.

Yanga is the league leader by a wide margin. The club has been nearly unstoppable, racking up 18 wins and so far losing twice in 21 games.

Their offense is on fire, leading the league with a whopping 52 goals. Midfielder Stephane Aziz Ki is the league's top scorer with 14 goals.

This game is much bigger than just three points. It is a battle for city bragging rights and, more importantly, the championship title.

Tanzania's football lovers should expect a tense match, with both teams being desperate to win.

The stadium will be rocking as fans witness a clash that could decide the fate of the league.

## Flexibles by David Chikoko

