

Samia's economic diplomacy 'rakes in \$5.6bn investments'

Attracting investors to raise projects in manufacturing industries will enable the country to benefit in skills and human capital development as well as in technology transfer

By Carlos Banda

TANZANIA has reaped \$5.6bn in capital investment in the past three years, on account of unprecedented foreign visitations by President Samia Suluhu Hassan pushing intense economic diplomacy, it has been learnt.

January Makamba, the Foreign Affairs and East Africa Cooperation minister, made this affirmation in an exclusive interview in Dar es Salaam yesterday, listing achievements as including rising investment capital.

He said foreign economic diplomacy is the foundation of current foreign policy in which the main objective is to ensure we have a surge in trade and investment agreements.



Guillaume Mallevaey (in yellow helmet), an oil heating systems and factory construction manager with the East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP), briefs members of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Accounts who visited the project's site at Sojo village in Nzega District, Tabora Region, on Tuesday District, Correspondent Marco Madubu





Bulgaria refuses to underestimate Taifa Stars

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Israel eye history as final three Euro 2024 places up for grabs

Capital inflows resulted from effective persuasion of potential investors and foreign chancelleries that the country is anchored in rule of law, having a conducive trade and investment environment, with a high likelihood of profitable operations, he explained.

Other successes include rising influence in the global diplomatic stage tied with President Samia's involvement in deliberating various issues in international forums, he said, pointing at climate change, clean cooking energy solutions, generation equality and food security initiatives.

The president has also made strides in strengthening our bilateral ties with other countries and multinational institutions with high-profile visits in the country by heads of state and hosting international conferences here, he stated.

Eased access to resources from multinational financial institutions to finance strategic development projects was another aspect of success, with bilateral support being sources from various areas, he said.

Attracting investors to raise projects in manufacturing industries will enable the country to benefit in skills and human capital development as well as in technology transfer, he pointed out.

The minister was optimistic that it will take six years for the East African Community (EAC) to have a joint currency as there are criteria to be adhered to by all members for a currency to be set up and remain sustainable.

"For the EAC to have a common currency, microeconomic convergence criteria must be achieved. Currently, the values are different because there is no convergence. At first, the plan was to have a uniform currency by

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TAZARA in rolling stock pact with US-linked logistics giant

"One train wagon has capacity to carry 50 tonnes of cargo, so each route will be carrying 1000 tonnes"

By Getrude Mbago

THE Tanzania-Zambia Railway Authority (TAZARA) and a Tanzanian firm-Bravo Group, a freight forwarding company, have signed an open access agreement to facilitate seamless movement of the firm's freight trains on the TAZARA railway.

Bruno Chingandu, the TAZARA managing director, said after the signing in Dar es Salaam yesterday that the pact is part of the public-private partnership (PPP) policy as the government has

opened doors for the private sector to invest in railway operations.

The ground-breaking pact follows a successful tender awarded to Bravo Group Ltd in the wake of a competitive tender process comprising local, regional and international companies.

Bravo Group Inc., a firm linked with the Morgan Stanley investment finance conglomerate in the US commercial capital of New York, will therefore get the rights to deploy rolling stock on the railway.

He said the process saw Bravo Group

succeed as the qualified partner with a strong commercial proposal and technical expertise to complement TAZARA's effort to unlock Tanzania railways potential.

Open access involves giving access rights to multiple private train operators to utilize the same railway infrastructure, fostering competition, utilization of extra capacity, enhancing efficiency in the rail transport sector, he stated.

With the agreement, TAZARA anticipates to heighten its regional presence in annual freight tonnage deliveries, thus increasing revenues.

Angelina Ngalula, the local Bravo Group board chairperson and a private sector business leader, said the company has invested \$35m in the new busi-

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Bill Gates Institute in TB vaccine third phase trials

CAMBRIDGE

THE Bill & Melinda Gates Medical Research Institute (Gates MRI) has announced that a Phase 3 clinical trial to assess the efficacy of the M72/ASOIE tuberculosis (TB) vaccine candidate is now underway, with first doses given in South Africa, where TB takes a heavy toll.

If shown to be well-tolerated and effective, M72/ASO1E could potentially become the first vaccine to help prevent pulmonary TB in adolescents and adults, the most common form of the disease, and the first new TB vaccine in

over a century.

Globally, according to the World Health Organization, an estimated 10.6 million people fell ill with TB in 2022 and 1.3 million died – over 3,500 people per day. The disease primarily affects people in low- and middle-income countries, and those at highest risk are often living in poverty, with poor living and working conditions and under nutrition. In South Africa alone, around 280,000 people are diagnosed with TB each year.

"The launch of this pivotal Phase 3 trial demonstrates our commitment to harnessing the power of medical innovation to fight diseases like TB that are particularly devastating for low- and middleincome countries," said Dr Emilio Emini, CEO of the Gates MRI. "Clinical study of the vaccine will still require years, but our incredible partners in South Africa and elsewhere who have come together for the Phase 3 study share our hope in the vaccine's potential."

The Gates MRI, a nonprofit organization and subsidiary of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, is sponsoring the trial, which is supported by funding from the Gates Foundation and Wellcome. The M72/ASO1E vaccine candidate has been in development since the early 2000s. It was originally designed and clinically evaluated by the biopharma company GSK up to the proof-of-concept phase (Phase 2b), in partnership with Aeras and the International AIDS Vaccine Initiative (IAVI) and was funded by GSK and in part

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Caroline Mueke set for EAC Secretariat

By Correspondent Marc Nkwame, Arusha

KENYA has nominated Caroline Mwende Mueke to take over as Secretary General of the East African Community (EAC), replacing Dr Peter Mathuki who was recently appointed ambassador to Russia.

Peninah Malonza, the East African Cooperation, Arid and Semi-Arid Lands and Regional Development cabinet secretary, issued this instruction back on March 9, made this clear in a letter to the South Sudan Minister for East African Community Affairs who currently serves as the chairman of the EAC Council of Ministers.

The letter says that the new appointment to head the EAC Secretariat is part of prerogatives of the EAC Summit, in accordance with Article 67 (1) of the EAC Treaty.

The ministry has therefore sent the notice of withdrawal of the nomination of an appointee to the post of secretary general at the EAC headquarters in Arusha as well as similar ministries in member states, relating to revoking appointment of Dr Mathuki.

"Pursuant to Regulation 118 of the EAC Staff Rules and Regulations 2013, the Republic of Kenya hereby gives notice of withdrawal of Dr Peter Mutuku Mathuki as the Secretary General, from the date to be determined by the Summit of Heads of State," the dispatch read in part, explaining the move as arising from his nomination on 8th March, 2024 for appointment as ambassador. He will be serving the republic in a different capacity, the letter intoned.

The cabinet secretary asked the EAC Secretariat to convene an extraordinary meeting of the ministerial council to consider the notice of withdrawal, and submit a request to the chairman of the summit to liaise on the same, it stated. While the statutes have a provision for convening an extra ordinary summit to consider the notice of withdrawal, observers

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2024, however, it was extended to 2031 because no member country reached the criteria. So the target set for 2031 allows EAC states to push towards the required convergence," he said.

Ongoing responsibility is to ensure that economic criteria are achieved including curbing inflation, similar monetary policy stances, and creating a central bank

to regulate currency issuance and circulation regulated by the central lender, he stated.

Challenges facing the country include the shortage of diplomatic cadres at institutional level while feeling the need to expand diplomatic footprint to address various issues on time.

This leads to using formal channels of communication characterised by bureaucratic red tape, he added.

Bill Gates Institute in TB vaccine third phase trials

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by the Gates Foundation. In 2020, GSK announced a partnership with the Gates MRI for further development of M72/AS01E. GSK continues to provide technical assistance to the Gates MRI, supplies the adjuvant component of the vaccine for the Phase 3 trial and will provide the adjuvant post licensure should the trial be successful. An adjuvant is an ingredient used in some vaccines that can help create a stronger immune response.

Making vaccines accessible and affordable for communities in areas of high disease burden in the longterm is a priority for all trial partners. The Gates MRI has worked with a wide range of stakeholders, including communities around clinical trial sites, to guide the TB candidate vaccine to Phase 3. To this end, the Gates MRI, GSK, Wellcome and the Gates Foundation are working together to understand the potential demand for the vaccine and build an end-to-end plan to ensure long-term sustainable access, should the trial be successful; from supporting research and building an evidence-base for the potential impact of the vaccine and community requirements for uptake, to collaborating with multilateral, regional and country partners required to introduce the vaccine. Additionally, the trial funders are planning to establish an international advisory group of representatives from all these groups to provide input on

the overall program. Developing and ensuring access

change the trajectory of challenging diseases, like TB, which place a huge burden on communities around the world," said Deborah Waterhouse, CEO, ViiV Healthcare and President, Global Health, GSK.

While TB is one of the world's deadliest infectious diseases - and the leading cause of death amongst people living with HIV - the only available TB vaccine, BCG, dates back to 1921. It protects babies and young children against severe forms of TB, but it offers inadequate protection for adolescents and adults against the pulmonary form of the disease, which is primarily responsible for transmission of the TB bacterium.

"If effective, M72/ASO1E could reinvigorate a global fight against TB that has been weakened by the COVID-19 pandemic," said Alemnew Dagnew, M.D., who leads development of M72/ASO1E at the Gates MRI. "I am particularly excited to see this trial get underway because when I was working as a physician in Ethiopia, I saw first-hand what pulmonary TB does to communities - and a vaccine that could help prevent that from happening would be transformative."

Dagnew noted that TB is both a health problem and a socioeconomic problem. He said the disease primarily affects people during their prime working years, leaving families without income and children without parents. Almost half of TB-affected households face costs higher than 20% of their household income.



Foreign Affairs and East African Cooperation minister January Makamba (R) speaks in an exclusive interview in Dar es Salaam yesterday with Nipashe newspaper news editor Salome Kitomari. Photo: Carlos Banda

TAZARA in rolling stock pact with US-linked logistics giant

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ness outlet, expecting to start with two trains pulling 20 wagons each.

"One train wagon has capacity to carry 50 tonnes of cargo, so each route will be carrying 1000 tonnes," she said, noting that this is far more efficient and cost cutting compared to using long haulage trucks.

The trains will be plying the Dar es Salaam to Ndola track in Zambia, linked to the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), carrying minerals and export produce like coffee, tea, cotton or others.

The management has started with a private haul service to Zambia and Congo and later taken up other Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) zone countries, and as we will be adding more trains in the line," she said.

In line with the global initiatives on environmental sustainability, rail operations will also contribute positively to the reduction of carbon emissions, congestion as rail transport offers substantial carbon dioxide mitigation benefits as a more sustainable transportation resonates with the government's

mode compared to road transport. The partnership becomes a step towards fulfilling governments' global environmental sustainability initiative in logistics.

She praised initiatives by President Samia Suluhu Hassan to vastly improve the business environment, making it conducive for investment and business growth that in turn result in increased employment opportunities and a positive contribution to GDP.

This initiative by Bravo Group

strategy of positioning Tanzania as a logistics hub in this region, attracting more traders to use the port of Dar es Salaam.

"From here onwards, we enter the mobilisation stage that involves receiving the rolling stock for inspection and registration by the Land Transport Regulatory Authority (LATRA)," she specified.

Once the registration processes are complete, the firm expects the commissioning of the project to commence, which is slated for next month, group leader added.



to global health products is a complex task. As such, global collaboration and strong partnerships are a core component of planning for future access to the candidate vaccine.

"Reaching Phase 3 with an urgently needed TB vaccine candidate is an important moment for South Africans because it demonstrates that there is a strong local and global commitment to fight a disease that remains distressingly common in our communities," said Dr. Lee Fairlie. Director of Maternal and Child Health at Wits RHI at University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa, and national principal investigator for the trial in South Africa. "South Africa also has considerable experience with TB- and vaccine-related clinical trials and a strong track record for protecting patient safety and generating high quality data essential for regulatory approvals."

At full capacity, the trial will include up to 20,000 participants, including people living with HIV, at up to 60 trial sites in seven countries – South Africa, Zambia, Malawi, Mozambique, Kenya, Indonesia and Vietnam. Participants will receive either the investigational M72/ ASO1E vaccine or a placebo in what is known as a double-blind trial, meaning neither the trial participant nor the clinical investigators will know who receives vaccine or placebo. This approach is considered the gold standard for evaluating the safety and efficacy of an investigational vaccine.

"After dedicating over 20 years to developing this essential candidate vaccine, we at GSK are delighted that the Phase 3 trial is underway. Developing and ensuring access to global health products is complex but our collaboration with the Gates MRI, Wellcome and the Gates Foundation exemplifies the transformative power of leveraging diverse partners' expertise to

"We must continue to move with urgency to develop and equitably deliver innovative tools with the potential to transform the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of TB. The start of the Gates MRI's M72 TB vaccine candidate Phase 3 clinical trial marks a pivotal moment in the fight to end TB, which devastatingly afflicts the world's most vulnerable communities. We think this trial marks the beginning of a series of opportunities that will usher in the most promising pipeline ever of new TB tools. The Gates Foundation remains committed to supporting local and global partners to accelerate the solutions needed to save lives and reduce suffering from this preventable disease," said Trevor Mundel, President, Global Health, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

Alex Pym, Director of Infectious Disease at Wellcome, said: "While it is a long journey to results, the start of this trial in South Africa brings us a critical step closer to having an effective vaccine to protect those most at risk of TB. Global collaboration with regulators, in-country decision makers and communities affected is crucial if those who need it most are to benefit from this vaccine, should the trial be successful."

It is anticipated that it will take up to five years to complete the trial, followed by data analysis and then preparation for submission of data to regulatory authorities.

In GSK's Phase 2b trial, M72/ ASO1E provided approximately 50% protection (13/1626 versus 26/1663) against progression to active pulmonary tuberculosis for three years in Mycobacterium tuberculosisinfected HIV-negative adults, which was unprecedented in decades of TB vaccine research. The World Health Organization estimates that over a 25-year time span, that level of protection could save 8.5 million lives, prevent 76 million new TB cases and save \$41.5 billion for TB affected households.

Michael Muhoja (R), Tanzania Revenue Authority's commissioner for large taxpayers, pictured at a ceremony held in Dar es Salaam yesterday presenting a national winner's award for last year in the Tourism Promotion Services category to Serena Hotel CEO Ashish Sharma. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

Caroline Mueke set for EAC Secretariat

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didn't expect the summit to convene for that reason as there are no contentious issues to be raised by the member states on the matter.

Theo outcome of disputes in the East African Legislative Assembly (EALA) as regards the use of funds in the secretariat without EALA notification, debate and approval was sighted in the presence of President William Ruto, opening the latest EALA session in Nairobi.

Thereafter, an influential weekly magazine in the Nation newspaper group, The East African, wrote a front page banner headline, 'Why Mathuki has to go,' an editorial position that seemed to reflect the thinking of the highest levels in the corridors of power in Nairobi.

Dr Mathuki, now replaced by Caroline Mwende, served in the post

for three years, thereby demanding that another appointee from Nairobi completes the rotating five vear term.

An online biography says that growing up in Kenya, Mwende Caroline Mueke (MPA 'O1) felt a strong pull toward public service. Early in her professional career, she worked for the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in Eastern Africa.

In that job it became clear to her that the challenges in her field were more complicated than she had imagined, with refugee camps staying open for decades. To strengthen her education in international public affairs, she enrolled in Wagner's international program, which focuses on developing countries.

There were several factors that

Wagner. Her advisor challenged her to compare the theories she learned in her classes with the practices she saw on the ground with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Mwende's Capstone project focused on decentralization and local governance in Sub-Saharan Africa - an area that had particular relevance to Mwende's personal career interests.

Also while at Wagner, Mwende helped organize the Oprah Winfrey Scholars programme, which brings two African women each year to NYU Wagner to study public policy and management. "For me," Mwende says, "as an African woman, doing something to support other African women further their education in public administration (a much needed skill in Africa) was shaped Mwende's experience at an important effort worth contrib-

uting to."

The experience that Mwende gained at Wagner led to a full-time job after graduating as a program specialist at UNDP. Until the new appointment, she was regional coordination advisor in the management and coordination unit of the UN regional directors' team for Eastern and Southern Africa, based in Johannesburg.

In her free time, Mwende developed an interest in community service and became a founding member of a community-based organization supporting AIDS orphans in Kenya. She was looking forward to eventually returning to Kenya to use her academic credentials and development experience to work for the Kenya public service commission, the biographical note had concluded.

NATIONAL.NEWS



Muhimbili National Hospital dental surgeon Dr Germana Lyimo (in black) pictured yesterday attending to one of the Coast Region residents who turned up at Maili Moja in Kibaha District at the climax of World Oral and Dental Health Day free dental hygiene camp organised by the Tanzania Dental Association.

By Guardian Reporter

THE government wants all environmental conservation and other projects implemented in rural areas not to impoverish but uplift livelihoods of surrounding communities.

A statement released yesterday by the Vice President's Office said that economic empowerment and provision of essential services such as water, health, education and electricity should be considered in rural projects to uplift living standards.

The advisory quoted Minister of State in the Vice President's Office (Union and Environment) Dr Selemani as saying this while visiting Ecosystem-Based Adaptation for Rural Resilience (EBARR) in Mpwapwa District, Dodoma Region.

He said that the goal of the government is to ensure that the projects are sustainable but also benefit residents of the areas where they are implemented.

Ngh'ambi Ward Councillor Richard Matonya said that the project of a well dug in the area has enabled residents access clean water compare to previously when people used to walk 10 kilometres away.

He said that the well project has enabled the people to engage in vegetable farming and abandoned activities that damage the environment, especially cutting down trees for charcoal and firewood.

EBARR National Coordinator Dr Makuru Nyarobi said that the aim of the project is to help communities in their activities, especially in raising the economy, which is why it is focused more on rural areas.

The EBARR project is expected to benefit more than 29,000 house-

holds and is estimated to reach more than one million beneficiaries through implementation of various activities such as access to water for domestic use, agriculture and animal husbandry, alternative activities to increase income and restoration of water sources.

It is also implemented in other district councils of Mvomero (Morogoro), Simanjiro (Manyara), Kishapu (Shinyanga) and North A in Zanzibar.

Meanwhile, minister Jafo received a vehicle for supervising environmental conservation projects donated by United Nations World Food Programme (WFP).

He thanked WFP Resident Representative Sarah Gordon-Gibson for the donation and said that the gov-

'Projects ought to uplift livelihoods of surrounding rural communities' ernment is committed to continue working with various development stakeholders.

> Minister Jafo called on other development stakeholders to help other government institutions by providing them with tools so that they can carry out their duties eas-

Gordon-Gibson said that the handover of the vehicle is to celebrate the cooperation between the organization and the government of Tanzania through the VPO.

She added that WFP was delighted to hand over the vehicle and thanked minister Jafo and his team for maintaining cooperation with WFP in various development activities including environmental protection.

SAGCOT clusters impress Norwegian ambassador

By Guardian Reporter

NORWEGIAN Ambassador to Tanzania Tone Tinnes recently made a three-day visit to Ihemi and Kilombero clusters under Southern Agricultural Growth Corridor of Tanzania (SAGCOT) and called for enhanced sustainable agriculture, food security and economic development.

While in Njombe Region, the envoy observed the progress in productive agriculture, coinciding with the evolution of SAGCOT into Agricultural Growth Corridors of Tanzania (AGCOT). This new initiative seeks to extend coverage to every agricultural corridor within the country.

She underscored Norway's commitment to fostering agricultural development through responsible, private-sector-led and environmentally conscious initiatives, aligning with SAGCOT's core objectives.

In a joint press statement issued in Dar es Salaam yesterday, the Ambassador also reflected on the 60 years of diplomatic ties between Tanzania and Norway, saying the ties were still strong.

"President Samia Suluhu Hassan's historic visit to Norway recently witnessed the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding on food security and agriculture," she said, affirming Norway's sustained support for SAGCOT.

She said Tanzania has undergone a significant transformation in the agriculture sector since 2011.

"Partners like SAGCOT catalyse innovation for enhanced food security, economic prosperity, and sustainability. The insights gained from the fields clearly indicate that the newest challenge is scaling up valuable initiatives," she said.

Morogoro Regional Commissioner Adam Malima expressed gratitude to Norway for its longstanding support to Tanzania. He also thanked Norway for its unwavering backing of SAGCOT throughout its

development.

Acting Iringa Regional Administrative Secretary Elias Luvanda provided a comprehensive update on the progress and obstacles in the implementation of SAGCOT initiative in the region.

Guardian

In a briefing to the envoy, Luvanda emphasized the collective achievements and persistent challenges in agriculture development within the Ihemi cluster, which includes Iringa and Njombe regions.

He said SAGCOT initiative has catalyzed a productive partnership between various stakeholders, including farmers, investors, businesspersons and government authorities, leading to remarkable strides in agricultural productivity and sustainability across several districts.

Earlier, SAGCOT Centre chief executive officer Geoffrey Kirenga said since its inception in 2010, Norway has been a steadfast supporter of SAGCOT.

"We deeply appreciate the ongoing support and partnership with the Norwegian government, which has been fundamental in our endeavours to propel agricultural innovation and empowerment of smallholder farmers," he said.

According to Kirenga, the collaboration has been pivotal through clusters, compacts and other innovative models, enabling SAGCOT to enhance productivity and sustainability in agriculture sector.

President Samia Suluhu Hassan's historic visit to Norway recently witnessed the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding on food security and agriculture



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- Assist Danish citizens and residents with consular services, including visa applications, passport renewals, and other documentation.
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MAENDELEO BANK PLC APPOINTS NEW BOARD OF DIRECTORS CHAIRMAN



Prof Ulingeta O.L. Mbamba **Chairman of Maendeleo Bank Plc**

The Board of Directors of MAENDELEO BANK PLC is pleased to announce the appointment of Prof Ulingeta O.L. Mbamba as the new Chairman of the Bank. He replaces Mr Amulike Ngeliama who has retired in December 2023.

Prof. Mbamba is an Associate Professor at the University of Dar es Salaam and has served as Dean of the University of Dar es Salaam Business School (UDBS), Managing Director of the University of Dar es Salaam Computing Centre (UCC), Associate Dean Academic (UDBS), Deputy Director of Undergraduate Studies (UDSM) and Head of Department (Department of General Management, UDBS).

Prof Mbamba holds a Bachelor of Science in Engineering, a Master of Business Administration, a Licentiate Degree and a PhD in Business Administration. Prof Mbamba has also served and continues to serve on other committees and boards. He, therefore, brings invaluable experience, knowledge and unique skills to the Bank. His core competences lie in the areas of management information systems, leadership and general management, development, education, banking services, finance and planning.

The Board of Directors looks forward to Prof Ulingeta Mbamba leading the Bank to the next level in line with its strategic intentions to maintain its competitiveness and further enhance its service and product offerings in line with the Government's policy of economic development and financial inclusion of the country.

NATIONAL.NEWS

NHC counts profit with Dar housing scheme sold out

By Correspondent James Kandoya

THE National Housing Corporation (NHC) has posted a profit of 21.8bn/- between July 2023 and February this year which is equivalent to 76 percent of the targeted amount of 28.6bn/- for the financial 2023/2024.

Hamad Abdalah, NHC director general said this in Dar es Salaam yesterday when briefing members Parliamentary Public of the Investment Committee (PIC) who visited three projects in the city, namely the Morocco Square, 711 and Samia Housing Scheme.

He said NHC has so far paid different taxes to the government amounting to 22.01bn/- in the period between July 2023 and February this year.

He said by June 31 last year, NHC's total assets had reached 5.14trn/- as per the Controller and Auditor General's report, growing at 12 percent annually for a period of three years consecutively since 2019.

Hamad named the projects currently implemented by the corporation as redevelopment (pulling down old houses and building new ones), construction of satellite cities and affordable housing.

"Our desire is to see more people invest in real estate to overcome an increase in demand for housing," he said.

The NHC boss said in the financial year 2023/2024 the company planned to spend 109bn/- but up to February this year, it spent 62.5 bn/equivalent to 57 percent.

He said that all houses in the Samia Housing Scheme were sold, adding that for Morocco square soft opening of businesses had started.

"PIC has made a big contribution to our success. At this juncture, I would like to thank the committee for its contribution to ensure the real estate sector moves forward," he said.

PIC Chairman Deus Sanga commended NHC for the progress achieved so far in implementing its strategic projects.

He said that upon completion, the projects will increase employment opportunities and generate revenues to the government.

"I'm informed that all houses at Samia Housing Scheme are sold out. Business of this type will help to recoup the funds used in the construction on time," he said.

Sanga said the committee will be on the forefront to push the government to amend some laws to enable Tanzanian Diaspora to invest in real estate.

"Our role as committee is to advise the government and indeed, this is going to be our first priority to ensure our people in the diaspora invests in real estate," he added.

He said Tanzanian diaspora have financial capacity to invest and therefore, their contribution should not be understated.

I'm informed that all houses at Samia Housing Scheme are sold out. Business of this type will help to recoup the funds used in the construction on time



A resident of Mikenge Street in Kimbiji ward in Kigamboni municipality, Dar es Salaam, casts her vote to elect a councillor in by-election held yesterday. A total of 14 candidates are vying for the position. Photo courtesy of National Electoral Commission

By Correspondent Sabato Kasika

MUSOMA District Commissioner Dr Khalfan Haule and his driver Robert Andrea have escaped death after the front tire of a vehicle they were travelling in burst and the vehicle overturned at Kwikuba Village in Musoma District.

Speaking with this paper yesterday via telephone, Dr Haule said the accident occurred on Monday around 2pm when he was returning from a nearby Busekera village where he had just inspected development projects.

"We were going back to Musoma town but unfortunately the left front tire burst, resulting in the vehicle overturning but we came out alive and safe although the accident was

Musoma DC escapes death after his vehicle overturns

very bad," he said.

The DC explained that he and his driver sustained minor injuries which resulted from being cut by shuttled glasses of the vehicle with registration number STM 2744.

"I thank residents of Kwikuba Village for the way they reacted to the accident; they arrived quickly at the scene and broke the vehicle's window, one person got inside and cut our seatbelts and got us out," he said.

Dr Haule said that often, when

people arrive at the scene of the accident, they start looting things from the victims but the Kwikuba residents did not do that. Instead, they helped to save them.

He added that although many residents of the district know him, when an accident occurs, a few hooligans normally tend to do inhuman acts.

DC Haule said that Kwikuba residents showed him acts of humanity that he will never forget. "Later, another arrived and took

us to Mara Regional Hospital for treatment as we had sustained minor bruises on various parts of the body," he said.

Elias Magoma, one of the residents who witnessed the accident, said that he was in his shop and heard a big bang and when he came out he saw the vehicle upside-down.

"Everyone got out and ran towards the scene and we saw the DC and his driver inside; the driver told us to break the window, we did so and pulled them out," he said.



Netherlands Development

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Kenyan doctors' nationwide strike enters its seventh day The impact of the NAIROBI

medical cover for the doctors and because the government has yet to post

strike is being felt across the country with many patients left unattended or being turned away from hospitals across the

PUBLIC NOTICE

SNV is a not-for-profit international development organisation. Founded in the Netherlands 50 years ago, we work in more than 20 countries in Asia, West Africa, and East and Southern Africa. Our global team of local and international advisors work with local partners to equip communities, businesses, and organisations with the tools, knowledge and connections they need to increase their incomes and gain access to basic services - empowering them to break the cycle of poverty and guide their own development. Our new Strategic plan (2022-2030) commits us to work in three intersecting sectors (Agrifood, Water and Energy), with a focus on the three cross-cutting issues of climate change, institutional strengthening and governance and gender and social inclusion, to support the achievement of nine of the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

SNV has been operating in Tanzania since 1972. Currently, SNV is implementing seven projects in the Agrifood, Water and Energy sectors, with staff based in offices in Dar es Salaam, Arusha, Mwanza, Dodoma, Bariadi and Sumbawanga, and with partners throughout the country. SNV is a learning Organisation that focuses on improving the lives of Tanzanians through a market-based approach inclusive of women and youth.

On 23rd February 2024, SNV Tanzania signed a grant agreement for the project WASH Systems for Health Programme - Lot 3 Tanzania and Malawi, with the donor known as Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) - British government funding. The project is worth £5,000,000 (five million pounds sterling), although this is split 50% for Tanzania and 50% for Malawi, so for Tanzania the portion is £2.5 million. The project will focus mostly at the national level plus 3 districts - (to be selected in collaboration with TAMISEMI, Ministry of Water and Ministry of Health). The project duration runs from 23 February 2024 and ends on 31 December 2027.

WASH Systems Strengthening for Health programme is structured around three priority areas or pathways:

- 1) Professionalised rural water supply service delivery systems
- 2) Effective service models for safely managed sanitation and responsive hygiene promotion
- 3) Effective public financing arrangements for sustaining WASH in HCFs

This notice is for compliance with Non-Governmental Organisations (Amendments) Regulations, 2018 GN609 of 19th October 2018.

For more information on SNV's programme in Tanzania, visit our website: www.snv.org/Tanzania

DOCTORS in Kenya's public hospitals yesterday entered the seventh day of a nationwide strike, accusing the government of failing to implement a raft of promises from a collective bargaining agreement signed in 2017 after a 100-day strike that saw people dying from lack of care.

The Kenya Medical Practitioners, Pharmacists and Dentists Union said they went on strike to demand comprehensive

1,200 medical interns.

Leaders of the union said 4,000 doctors take part in the strike despite a labour court order asking the union to put the strike on hold to allow talks with the government.

Doctors' union leaders said they would disregard the court order the same way the government had disregarded three court orders to increase basic pay for doctors and reinstate suspended doctors.



VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

PaulSam Geo-Engineering Company Limited is one of the Tanzanian's leading consulting firm in Exploration, Mining, Energy and Engineering construction industry.

company is seeking for an experienced, competent and self-motivated ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER to join a team of its employees with an office in Dar es Salaam and upcountry field offices.

The following key qualifications are mandatory for the selected candidate

- Bachelor's degree or diploma in business administration, or any related field, with five or more years' of being an Office Administrator;
- Proven work experience as an Administrative Officer, Office Assistant or similar duties;
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills;
- Strong time-management and multitasking abilities;
- Knowledgeable in Microsoft office applications and aptitude for learning new software and systems:
- Ability to maintain confidentiality of company information;
- Team player with superb interpersonal skills;
- Good customer service;
- Strong organizational skills with a problem-solving attitude;

APPLICATION MODE:

All applying candidates kindly send your certified copies of academic achievements, CV, Cover letter as well as other relevant documents electronically to the following email address

hr@paulsamgroup.co.tz cc: chairman@paulsamgroup.co.tz ceo@paulsamgroup.co.tz

APPLICATION DEADLINE:

- Applications should reach the above email on or before Tuesday 26nd March 2024 at 5:00 PM
- Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted for interviews.

NOTE: PSG is an equal opportunity employer, female candidates are highly encouraged to apply.

nation.

Josephine Njeri, a patient at Kenyatta National Hospital (KNH), spent half a day in the hospital without being attended to.

"I have been here since 8 o'clock this morning. We have been told to wait for doctors because they are not in. We have just been in the queue since morning," she said.

Health Cabinet Secretary Susan Nakhumicha visited KNH to assess the operations.

"As far ľm as concerned the referral hospitals are working pretty well and we are committed to ensuring that all facilities under the national hospitals are working," she told reporters.

In 2017, doctors at Kenya's public hospitals held a 100-day strike the longest ever held in the country – to demand better wages and for the government to restore the country's dilapidated publichealth facilities.

They also demanded continuous training of and hiring of doctors to address a severe shortage of health professionals.

At the time, public doctors, who train for six years in university, earned a basic salary of between \$400 and \$850 a month, similar to some police officers who train for just six months.

NATIONAL.NEWS

Guardian



Weights and Measures Agency CEO Stella Kahwa (R) pictured yesterday making a verification tour of 500 electric meters installed at the agency's Misugusugu calibration centre in Coast Region. Photo by Correspondent Joseph Mwendapole

Authorities ordered to confiscate livestock destroying planted trees

By Guardian Correspondent, Same

ordered to confiscate livestock found destroying trees that have been planted by various stakeholders to restore vegetation in priority areas.

Kilimanjaro Regional Commissioner Nurdin Babu gave the order yesterday when launching the International Day of Forests 2024 themed 'Forests and Innovation' which was held in Same District at national level.

"I want the district commissioners to listen very carefully: all livestock found to have caused damage to the trees planted by the government in the tree planting campaign from today should be confiscated and become public property. The government cannot afford to have the trees it planted turned into pasture by pastoralists," he said.

Babu directed land officers in all districts not to issue permits to land owners until they plant trees, including fruit producing trees in their lands.

He said he was compelled to issue the directive following the recent destruction of some of the 7000 trees at Chekereni area by flocks of animals, a few days after they were

planted.

"The national event is being held GOVERNMENT authorities in in Same District because everyone Kilimanjaro Region have been here is a witness of the bad situation here as you travel from Moshi to Dar es Salaam or vice versa. We have decided to plant trees to restore its former greenish state," he said.

Kasilda Mgeni, Same District Commissioner, said the district planted more than 500,000 trees along the main road, in open areas, government offices and in all schools to restore the district's vegetation.

She said that environmental conservation areas are also protected in all areas and various by-laws to curb destruction are implemented as part of efforts to address the effects of climate change and implement the directives given by Kilimanjaro RC yesterday.

> The government cannot afford to have the trees it planted turned into pasture by pastoralists

Correspondent Joseph By

Mwendapole, Kibaha

THE Weight and Measures Agency (WMA) has started to test electric meters to ensure that electricity consumers get and consume the exact units they pay for.

This follows recent complaints from consumers that electricity units they purchase run out faster than expected.

Stella Kahwa, WMA chief executive officer said this on Tuesday at Misugusugu area in



Region.

where verification was being done.

She said that henceforth, all new electric meters will not be installed to clients before being verified by WMA and in the first phase, the agency has received

Kibaha District, Coast Region 500 meters at its calibration centre in Misugusugu.

Kahwa said that the 500 meters were received from CRJE (East Africa) Ltd which won a tender to supply meters which are expected to be installed in the Rural Energy Agency (REA)'s projects in Geita

the 500 meters was done within one day and the company was to be handed over the meters for installation, adding that the agency has the capacity to verify many electric meters in a short

time because it has modern She said that the verification of machines, two of which are at Misugusugu calibration centre and one is in WMA building in Kilimanjaro Region.

She said that in the 500 meters submitted, 95 percent passed the inspection and sealed to protect

them from being tampered with and five percent must first be modified and taken back for inspection and if they meet the criteria they will be allowed to be used.

"WMA continues to call on stakeholders who get tenders to supply electric meters to ensure that their meters are brought to WMA for verification to test if they measure correctly as per the measurement law," she said.

TWMA Misugusugu station conducts calibration volume for fuel tankers, water meters and now electric meters.





OFFER FOR SALE

A PRIME COMMERCIAL PROPERTY ALONG NEW BAGAMOYO ROAD, VICTORIA AREA, REGENT ESTATE, KINONDONI – DAR ES SALAAM



On behalf of our Client, Knight Frank hereby informs the interested buyer that it is offering for sale a prime property located in Regent Estate along New Bagamoyo Road within a vibrant and promising commercial neirbouhood. The land size is 2,440 sqm with a clean Title deed having potential for commercial redevelopment /residential development.

The property nestled in a fast-growing prime commercial/residential area with a good network of roads and complementing amenities around the property. This fast-developing commercial residential locality is approximately 7 Kilometers from Dar es Salaam City Centre. Notable neighboring properties include Tan House, Victoria Place, Paloma Park, NHC Morocco square among others.

Interested buyers are requested to send Expressions of Interest (EOIs) by email or letter, along with name and contact details of the person(s) wishing to attend an inspection of the property to our contacts shown below.

Further details are available upon request. Viewing dates will be arranged through Knight Frank Please call: +255 2113300,+255 717145273

Only those bids which meet the following qualifications will be considered:

- All bids must be accompanied with a deposit of TZS5 Million refundable to unsuccessful bidders
- The successful buyer will be notified and required to deposit 5% of the quoted bid amount within ten working days. The amount paid shall form part of the agreed purchase price once the contract is signed. All persons or institutions whose offers are rejected by the vendor will have the 5% deposit returned to them.
- · Each offer must clearly indicate the contact person, his/her e-mail, physical and postal address and his/her telephone numbers.

OFFER SUBMISSION DEADLINE: 31st MAY 2024 AT 1400HRS

Offers, clearly marked "OFFER FOR THE PURCHASE OF PROPERTY ON PLOT 186150/47, NEW BAGAMOYO ROAD, DAR ES SALAAM", and a bid has to be submitted to:

The Managing Director Knight Frank (T) Ltd. International House 3rd Floor P.O. Box 9333, Dar es Salaam.

JOB ANNOUNCEMENT **PEOPLE & CULTURE (HR) OFFICER**

The WWF (World Wide Fund for Nature), an international conservation organization, is seeking for a competent and highly motivated People & Culture (HR) Officer, to be based in Dar es salaam.

Mission of the Department

To ensure WWF Tanzania Country Office applies the highest standards in human resources management in order to facilitate the implementation of its Conservation Strategy.

Major duties and responsibilities:

- Assist in ensuring that personnel contracts are fair and compliant with both WWF Standards and Tanzania Employment and Labour Relations Act 2004.
- Assist in ensuring that personnel recruitment, induction, performance appraisals, contract compliance and renewals, and exits are correctly managed.
- Assisting in ensuring that best practice in human resources management is available for and applied to all WWF Tanzania personnel.
- Ensure that personnel recruitment, induction, performance appraisals, contract compliance and renewals, and exits are correctly managed.
- Ensuring that WWF TCO staff does work in an environment that is safe and free from all forms of discrimination or harassment.
- Preparation of Weekly, monthly, and Quarterly People & Culture reports and the preparation of presentations for managers on a need basis.
- Works closely with and seeks support from, the Head People & Culture and the Heads of Departments/Programs, and liaises, as appropriate with the ROA, WWF International and other WWF offices, on matters of Human resources in consultation with Head of P&C

Required Qualifications and skills: University degree in Human Resources Management, Public Administration or other related fields, post-graduate diploma in Human Resources Management, Proven track record in human resources administration and management, at least 2 years of professional experience in Human Resources Management; Experience working in International NGO will be a strong asset. Knowledge of the institutional, legal and policy framework of employment and HR management in Tanzania.

information: Detailed Terms of Reference can be obtained Additional via http://wwf.panda.org/who_we_are/jobs/. Applications must include a complete Cover Letter & CV with full contact details of three referees with the subject line - P&C Officer and should be addressed to the Head of People & Culture, via email to: hresources@wwftz.org by Tuesday, 02nd April 2024 at 17h00.

Only the shortlisted candidates will be contacted, and the interviews will take place in Dar es Salaam.

Female applicants are encouraged to apply.

WWF is an equal opportunity employer and committed to having a diverse workforce.

WWF has a principle of zero tolerance to fraud and corruption, if you encounter such an incident, then report by sending an email to fcci@wwftz.org

NATIONAL.NEWS

Leaders make case for education of girl child

By Guardian Reporter

EDUCATION is the sure path that can take more women to high leadership positions here at home and abroad, it has been said.

Guardian

Speaking recently in Dar es Salaam at Women in Management Africa (WIMA) leadership summit panel discussion which was organized to coincide with the International Women's Day, discussants spoke of the importance of giving girls education before all else.

Prof Marcellina Chijoriga, Principal of Mwalimu Julius Nyerere Leadership School who moderated the panel discussion, urged parents to invest in the education of a girl child as education is what enables her to participate in various high leadership positions.

"My call to mothers and fathers is to teach and educate your daughter to be a better person so that she can go far. If you invest in a daughter, you have invested in the family and the mother in general," she said.

She also urged women to learn to work together and take on leadership roles.

"My confidence is what allowed me to work with four presidents. Your power comes from you. I thank President Samia Suluhu Hassan for appointing me to head the Mwalimu Julius Nyerere Leadership School," she said.

WIMA executive director Naike Moshi said the biggest challenge for women is still the lack of education.

"With only 32 percent of girls completing secondary school, it is clear that a big push is needed for parents and guardians to educate the girl child," she said.

Elizabeth Karua, Geita Gold Mining Limited (GGML) legal counsel, said that in order to increase women's participation in the mining sector, the company gives priority to female candidates and the recruitment process

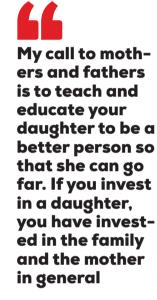
normally has a 50/50 gender balance in the pool of shortlisted candidates.

"The working environment at GGML allows women to get senior positions and others become managers," she said.

Simon Shayo, AngloGold Ashanti's Vice President for Sustainability and Corporate Affairs (Africa) said policies and guidelines have not only increased the number of women involved in the mine's activities, but have also changed the characteristics of men who have realised the importance of women's presence in the mining sector.

Stephen Mhando, GGML public relations and communication manager said 13 percent of the mine's employees are women and they have been given high management positions which motivates other women to join the mining sector.

"GGML sponsors women's empowerment initiatives such as WIMA is proud to show how we care for women and work closely with them. If you compare where we came from and where we are now, it is a big step," he said.





Geita Gold Mining Ltd legal counsel Elizabeth Karua (C) speaks on ways to enhance women's participation in the mining sector. It was a Women in Management Africa leadership summit held in Dar es Salaam earlier this week. She is with ASNL Advisory Limited director (Supply Chain Advisory) Humphrey Simba (R) and Business Women of Africa Collective Capital CEO Gugu Ntuli. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

MOI establishes seven medical specialty services in three years

Correspondent By Joseph

Mwendapole

THE Muhimbili Orthopaedic Institute (MOI) has established seven specialty medical services within three years that it says attracted many Tanzanians and foreign patients.

The new treatments came as a huge relief to Tanzanian patients who previously had to travel abroad as well as reduced the burden of

medical expenses.

Prof Abel Makubi, MOI executive director, said this yesterday in Dar es Salaam when speaking to journalists about the success of the institution in three years of President Samia Suluhu Hassan.

He mentioned the services as chronic pain treatment, brain examination without opening the skull and spinal cord stretching for children and surgery to remove tumours from the brain floor.

modern method of opening a small area, MRI services and new CT scan and VIP services for special patients and international patients," he said.

"We have been receiving patients from Comoros, Malawi, Zambia, Botswana, DR Congo, Uganda, Burundi and Rwanda. As an institution we have implemented the government's vision to promote medical tourism."

He thanked the government for huge investment in both modern "Others are spine surgery with a equipment and training of human

resources in health which enabled MOI to achieve the feat.

He said within that three-year period, MOI has succeeded in improving the intensive care unit by installing new and modern equipment as well as new buildings to store CT scan and MRI machines.

He said that MOI trained 20 of its specialists in neurology, orthopaedic surgery, nursing, physiotherapy and went abroad to receive training through the Samia scholarship programme.



Stronger health systems. Greater Health Impact

Management Sciences for Health, Inc., 5th Floor – Diamond Plaza

Parliamentary committee wants strategic investments in the Saadani National park **By Guardian Reporter**

as well as an apron for tourist planes.

About the proposal to improve infrastructure in the area, minister

PUBLICATION OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND DISCLOSURE OF FUND-ING SOURCES FOR MANAGEMENT SCIENCES FOR HEALTH (MSH) TANZA-NIA FROM 1ST JULY 2022 TO 30TH JUNE 2023

Management Sciences for Health (MSH) is a global not for profit organization that is committed to saving the lives and improving the health of the world poorest and most vulnerable people by closing the gap between knowledge and action in public health. The below are the extract of audited financial statements of MSH Tanzania for the period from 1st July 2022 to 30th June 2023.

This publication is made in accordance with regulation 13 (a) of the Non-Governmental Organizations (Amendments) Regulations, 2018 which obliges NGO receiving funds exceeding TShs 20 million in a year to publish its fund received and its expenditure in a wide circulated newspapers and other media channels which are easily accessible by the targeted beneficiaries.

During the year under review the projects were funded by United states Agency for International Development (USAID)

STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE				
	2023	2022		
Income	TShs	TShs		
Receipts from HQ	4,219,965,291	4,360,126,635		
Expenditure				
Program direct expenditure	3,710,757,279	3,501,455,373		
Program operating expenditure	509,208,012	858,671,262		
Surplus or (Deficit) for the year	-	-		
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION				
	2023	2022		
Assets	TShs	TSh		
Non-current assets: Property and Equipment	9,209,652	13,951,607		
Receivable from exchange transactions	61,015,834	34,721,622		
Cash and cash equivalents	354,605,324	52,570,580		
Deferred income grants receivable	-			
Total assets	424,830,810	101,243,809		
Net asset: Reserves	(296,962,467)	(182,382,369		
Liabilities:				
Non-current liabilities: Deferred capital grants	9,209,652	13,951,607		
Current Liabilities: Payable under exchange transactions	386,967,107	259,233,845		
Deferred income grants payable	325,616,518	10,440,726		
Total net assets and liabilities	424,830,810	101,243,809		

5th Floor - Diamond Plaza, Mirambo Street, Telephone: 255 22 2700671/255 22 2701843 URL: http://www.msh.org

THE Parliamentary Committee on Land, Natural Resources and Tourism has urged the Saadani National Park to set aside areas for investments to attract more investors.

Committee Chairman Timotheo Mnzava said this yesterday during the committee's visit to inspect projects in the park located in a triangle facing Tanga city, Bagamoyo historical town and Zanzibar.

The committee inspected various projects being implemented such as the construction of a hostel building, a toilet, food court, roads

Mnzava also called for repair of the infrastructure, particularly the road, construction of a jet bridge and airport in the conservancy.

Some members of the committee called on the Tanzania National Parks (TANAPA) to promote investment in the beach area to increase tourists visiting the park. Angellah Kairuki, Minister for Natural Resources and Tourism said that the government sees the importance of having a plan for investment and directed TANAPA to prepare specific long-term investment plans in the area.

Kairuki said that the ministry is looking into how to invest more money to improve the airport, roads within the park and monitoring of the jet construction.

permanent Hassan Abbas, secretary in the ministry said that the government is preparing its strategy to develop the beach which will classify all beach areas for investment.

The visit was attended by the management of TANAPA, Saadani National Park and some staff members from the ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism.



Monduli district urban planning officer Reginald Tesha (L) serves as facilitator at a capacity building seminar for residents of Selela village yesterday. The thrust was on the importance of having customary land titles, particularly for women from pastoral communities. Photo: Correspondent Getrude Mpezya

NEWS

Female presidential candidate inspires new hope in Senegal

DAKAR

SENEGAL'S female only presidential candidate may stand little to no chance of winning in Sunday's election, but activists say her presence alone helps to advance a decades-long campaign to achieve gender equality in the West African nation.

Anta Babacar Ngom, a 40-yearold business executive, is a voice for both women and young people – groups hit hard by the country's economic troubles, widespread unemployment and rising prices. She has promised to create millions of jobs and a bank for women to support their economic independence.

"Our country has enormous potential. The natural resources are there, and they can be developed," she told The Associated Press in a recent interview. "The young girls I meet ask for my support. They do so because they know that when a woman comes to power, she will put an end to their suffering. I'm not going to forget them."

Few expect Ngom to emerge among the leading candidates for the presidency, but activists say the fact that a woman has made it to the presidential race for the first time in years reflects how women are inching ahead in the struggle for equality.

"We have to be there, even if we don't stand a chance," said Selly Ba, an activist and sociologist. "We don't stand a chance in these elections. But it's important that we have women candidates, women who are in the race."

Ngom is the first female candidate to run for president in over a decade, reflecting how progress has been frustratingly slow in the minds of activists who say there has been a reversal among young people toward more traditional views of the roles of women in society.

The divided views over evolving traditional values and norms are emerging on social media. Popular accounts, often Senegalese posting from abroad where there is more freedom to speak out, debate taboo topics like sex before marriage and

return to the traditional notion of marriage, said Marième Wone Ly, the first woman to lead a political party in Senegal over two decades ago.

"We have to be very careful. There is a certain regression," she said, referring to how erroneous interpretations of religion can act against the forces of progress toward equality. "We've gone backwards a bit despite parity."

Through the 1990s, Senegalese mobilized through women grassroots organizations. The country appointed its first female prime minister in 2001, and in 2010 a law that required all political parties to introduce gender parity in electoral lists helped to drive up female participation in politics.

"Women's rights have evolved at the political level over the last 10 years and particularly since the gender parity law came into force," said Bousso Sambe, a former parliamentarian, adding that women have yet to systemically take advantage of the law.

In 2012, two women ran for president, and while they earned less than 1 percent of the vote each, analysts say their participation was important. Women in Senegal now make up more than 40 percent of parliament, one of the highest levels of representation in Africa.

"It's crucial to strike a balance between modern evolution and respect for our customs. Women must be able to express themselves without hindrance while preserving our cultural identity and valuing the traditional values that has shaped our society," said Ngom.

Ngom – who runs her family's food company – has made the economy a focus of her campaign, which most analysts agree is a key concern for the population. Economic hardship has driven thousands of Senegalese to attempt dangerous journeys in search of a better life in the West.

Ngom's supporters say they are proud to back a female candidate and hopeful for a change in the next government.

"Our children are dying at sea because of unemployment and

job insecurity. Unemployment is endemic. Women are tired," activist

Aicha Ba said at a recent rally in

Women must be able to

express themselves without

hindrance while preserving

valuing the traditional values

that has shaped our society

our cultural identity and

support of Ngom.



Mkomazi National Park chief conservator Happiness Kiemi (L, with microphone) briefs Kilimanjaro regional commissioner Nurdin Babu (R), various other officials and local residents earlier this week on the wildlife management education and sensitisation campaigns park officials conduct from time to time. Those targeted include residents of villages bordering the reserve. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

Russia donates grain, fertiliser to Zimbabwe

HARARE

ZIMBABWE'S President Emmerson Mnangagwa has received 250,000 tonnes of wheat donated by the Russian government and 23,000 tonnes of fertiliser provided by the Uralchem-Uralkali group of Russian companies.

ambassador Russia's to Zimbabwe Nikolai Krasilnikov said yesterday that the grain transfer is "humanitarian assistance".

"Both deliveries were carried out in line with the implementation of the initiative of the President of the

to provide assistance to African countries," Krasilnikov added.

Last year Russia announced a free grain transfer program to African countries.

Aside from Zimbabwe, the programme also covers Burkina Faso, Mali, Eritrea, Somalia and the Central African Republic.

The aid comes as Zimbabwe and several other southern African countries battle food shortages due to an ongoing drought attributed to the El Niño weather phenomenon. El Niño shifts weather patterns,

Russian Federation Vladimir Putin leading to droughts or excessive rainfall.

> The UN World Food Programme said in January that 2.7 million rural Zimbabweans require food aid.

Domestic demand for wheat is about 360,000 tonnes per year. Stocks of wheat were 140,000 tonnes at the end of November 2023. Wheat is widely consumed by more than 10 million people in Zimbabwe, mostly as bread. Daily bread production is estimated at 850,000 loaves with monthly wheat consumption of about 25,000 tonnes.



Both deliveries were carried out in line with the implementation of the initiative of the President of the **Russian Federation Vladimir Putin to** provide assistance to African countries



Güardian

whether polygamy is fair.

One TikTok user, who goes by the name Ngo Ke ta, plays the role of a popular agony aunt, posting clips in Wolof, the language spoken most widely in Senegal. One clip with over 2 million views describes a bitter feud between a woman and her husband in a polygamous marriage, and invites followers to comment.

Some young women in Senegal

Farmers get support to combat climate change

By Jon Wright, Suffolk

CHURCHES in Suffolk, UK have embarked on fund raising to help farmers in Tanzania combat the effects of climate change.

The Bishops' Lent Appeal at the Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich has paid for training and equipment in Kagera Region.

The Church and Community Mobilisation Process (CCMP) in Tanzania also provide seeds for drought resistant crop varieties.

"We see climate change with our own eyes," said CCMP leader Thomas Shavu.

"There is a lot of evidence; streams are disappearing; potato, cassava and bananas, they are getting blight.

"Farmers are struggling to know when to plant their crops."

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) - a United Nations body - has said it is "indisputable" that human activities cause climate change.

"In years back, they would know 'this is the planting season, this is the weeding season', but nowadays no-one knows.

then stop. If you plant, then plants strengthens the link between us."

would dry. Or you plant late and the rain continues," he said. "Sometimes it's very heavy and

causes flooding, or comes with winds and destroys crops.'

Last year's appeal raised £25,000, and the diocese said it reached more than 50 villages, teaching new farming methods, supplying seeds and saplings, and training people to build rainwater tanks.

It also paid for training for a local doctor in ophthalmology, provided bursaries for students in theology and bought motorbikes to help priests get around their parishes.

Last month, the Reverend Dr Mike Harrison, Suffragan Bishop of Dunwich, visited Kagera along with eight vicars and curates from Suffolk.

Speaking at the end of the twoweek trip, he said: "The priests that have come out here go back, and having been inspired here, inspire the congregations of which they are part of.

"Every person that is inspired by this link becomes a string, if you like, a little thread that goes together.

"And as those threads gather we make them into a strong rope "The rain may come early, but that becomes something that

Avocado farming instructor Aidan Kiwale pictured in Mufindi District yesterday conducting basic training in modern agriculture to 180 youths from Luhunga, Mdabulo and Ihanu wards, Photo: Correspond

Hope of Aids cure after breakthrough in varsity's gene-editing technology

AMSTERDAM

SCIENTISTS say they have eradicated HIV from infected cells using Crispr gene-editing technology, which won the Nobel Prize.

Crispr acts like molecular scissors, cutting DNA to remove or deactivate harmful sections.

The goal is to completely eliminate the virus from the body, but more research is necessary to ensure safety and effectiveness.

Current HIV treatments can suppress the virus but not eliminate

Presenting their initial findings at a medical conference, the University of Amsterdam team emphasizes that their work is still in the early stages and not a cure for HIV yet.

While rare cases have shown apparent cures after aggressive cancer therapy, this approach isn't advisable solely for **HIV treatment**

University of Nottingham agrees, stating that further investigation is required.

Efforts are ongoing by other scientists and Excision BioTherapeutics, with three HIV

Dr James Dixon from the patients showing no major side effects after 48 weeks.

However, experts like Dr Jonathan Stoye from the Francis Crick Institute warn about the challenge of removing HIV from all potentially infected cells and the risk of long-term side effects.

Effective treatment can suppress HIV, but some infected cells remain dormant, posing a risk if treatment is stopped.

While rare cases have shown apparent cures after aggressive cancer therapy, this approach isn't advisable solely for HIV treatment.

Guard www.ippmedia.com THURSDAY 21 MARCH, 2024 **Taking A New Look** At The News **ESTABLISHED IN 1995**

Hosting African horticulture seed bank here sure blessing

about horticulture have had quite a few stories to celebrate lately - and should be looking to see more of those days in the future.

This is now that the world market and even regional markets have a new star commodity: green gold in the form of vegetables and fruits.

The only worry may be that so many people are rushing into green gold, especially the coveted avocado, such that by ages-old and familiar boom-bust cycles, that could be spelling an abrupt end to the boom.

But now is the time of counting our chickens regarding new vast markets in India, China and others. It's a happy day.

Thus the setting up of an African seed bank for fruits and vegetables as launched in Tanzania's tourism and horticulture capital, Arusha, or within its wider agglomeration was a sign that the subsector is doing quite well.

Still there is unfinished business with policy issues and implicitly as regards the future not of avocado, which is already established in the market, but of commercial agriculture generally.

There is no doubt that the sector is growing and catching up locally, while there are acute policy issues to be attended to more definitively: what seeds to use, significance of local research and market primacy, etc

Basing the seed bank at the local horticultural capital clearly implies that farmers or any of their support organisations know where to find the seeds when they need them and when they need to change varieties.

It is a bit of guesswork as to how much is already known of seeds and their being marketed around the

LL those enthusiastic world as well as how much we need to conduct research on seeds so as to distribute (not market) them around the country.

> That can be confusing and definitely has implications in terms of costs, prices, living conditions and resource allocation - for grain seed research, whether the seeds are actually available and Arusha is Africa's centre.

How far we are enthusiasts of a global seed industry in the sense of a networked pattern is not entirely clear, but we will be hosting a seed bank and conduct considerable seed research.

There is a feeling that the research sentiment excludes the seed bank logic, as if we don't want their seeds and what we learn about seeds is irrelevant outside the country.

That much was visible in a recent stakeholder appeal that we need to set up a bank of indigenous grain seeds, as if we wish to have some kind of patent or intellectual right in the seeds.

It may happen that anything between 30 and 50 cent of children starting schooling are already in a low or advanced condition of inability to learn.

In the circumstances, completing standard VII without actually having mastered reading, writing and simple math (even when most may ably count money and survive with it), seed policy is more than competition for patents.

It needs clarity whether we need fortified grain or curl up comfortably in our labs with local seeds while half of a generation is incapable of dreaming for education.

In these days of extensive graduate unemployment, we need think much longer and harder on how to move forward with enhanced optimism.

EDITORIALS.OPINION

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In Pakistan, death can be just a WhatsApp share away

KARACHI

Justice Zafar Yab Chadhar's March 6 order sentencing 22-year-old Junaid Munir to 'be hanged by his neck till he is dead' on charges of sharing blasphemous material over WhatsApp was devastating for his family.

"The earth moved from underneath my feet," is how 57-year-old Chaudhry Munir Hussain, Munir's father, described his feelings as he heard the judge read out the judgment that day in a court in Gujranwala, a city in Punjab province.

"My daughter [who had accompanied Hussain to the court] collapsed and fell down on the floor there and then," said Hussain, adding, "She was unable to sit for her civil services examination," that was taking place around the time.

the intent to "outrage the religious harassment. feeling of Muslims".

The accusation perplexes Hussain.

"We are devout Muslims belonging to the Barelvi Sunni sect. There are verses etched at the entrance of my house, paying homage to Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him). For over 40 years, my family has been serving the neighborhood mosque and sweeping its floors, which we consider an honorable duty. We illuminate the entire lane every year to celebrate the Prophet's birth. Do you think we would ever defame him?" Hussain tried to reason. He said his son has been falsely accused and framed on this serious charge. "I brook no enmity with anyone," adding cautiously, "There are people who want to get hold of our property for a very long time."

Munir, a first-year law student, was arrested on June 15, 2022, from Lahore by the FIA's cybercrime wing, under anti-blasphemy laws in the Pakistan Penal Code, 1980. His case was later shifted to Gujranwala at the direction of the Lahore High Court, with explicit orders that the trial be completed within two months. But it took the court two years to convict him.

"The last two years have been like a thousand years for me," said Hussain. "Our lives have been ruined by these cruel people."

Munir has also been charged under cybercrime legislation, the Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act (PECA), 2016, termed a draconian law by human rights defenders.

Farieha Aziz, a cybercrime expert and co-founder of Bolo Bhi, an in Rawalpindi in 2022 for allegedly advocacy forum for digital rights, said: "Various sections of PECA 2016 criminalize speech in an excessive and overly broad manner and have been used routinely against journalists, academics, and political workers from time to time." PECA, she said, has anti-speech, anti-privacy, and anti-Internet provisions. "It is not uncommon for people to be booked for alleged blasphemy online," said Aziz. We have seen how malicious online campaigns have been run against activists in the past, labelling them as blasphemers or pushing for them to be booked under the blasphemy law where no such offense has been committed but this is used to silence them by putting a target on a person's back, which has offline consequences and endangers their life." Lawyer Mohammad Jibran Nasir and Dr Arfana Mallah, associate professors at the University of Sindh, in Jamshoro, have had their share of close calls for speaking in support of alleged blasphemers. But the bigger concern, said Aziz, was that "accounts are hacked or impersonation accounts put out material" that is not by the accused. And even before that is established, the latter is booked. "Expanding the use of blasphemy cases against people for what they say or share on social media is an invitation for witch hunts," stated Patricia Gossman, Associate Asia Director at Human Rights Watch, in a dispatch. "The Pakistani government should amend and ultimately repeal its blasphemy laws, not further extend their scope online," said the statement.

couple denied it, saying they were illiterate and did not know the language. In 2016, a Christian named Nadeem James was sentenced to death for sending a poem to a Muslim friend that insulted Islam and 30-year-old Taimoor Raza was sentenced to death after getting into a sectarian debate about Islam on Facebook with a man who was a counter-terrorism official.

Then there is the case of Junaid Hafeez, a lecturer at the Bahahuddin Zakariya University in Multan, a city in Punjab, who has been imprisoned since 2001 after being accused of uploading blasphemous material over Facebook by a student. His lawyer, Rashid Rehman, was murdered in 2014.

More recently, Aneeqa Atiq, 26, was sentenced to death by a court sharing blasphemous material via

Ending Haiti chaos needs novel, uncharted methods

BSERVERS see catastrophe stalking Haiti, which is right on the doorstep of the 'triple hemisphere' of the Caribbean states, North America and South America and where all semblance of public order has collapsed.

They see Haiti being on the way to becoming the world's first totally criminal state to have ever existed - and that this will likely lead to vast slavery of the population as gangs divide up the country while the world looks on generally nonchalantly.

The only irony in all this may be that, while this is secular slavery, the world will not be able to prevent with some other states at the mercy of kidnappers, etc.

The writing seems to be on the wall with respect to the collapse of liberty which the former 'slave country' that rebelled against slave masters and declared its freedom is about to witness.

The signal is the lack of clarity on the beleaguered country's political future as there is no central organisation, apart from the narcotic bands and all sorts of acolytes.

Even worse, all semblance of commerce has ground to a halt as mobs loot shops without let or hindrance. Calls from the US or Kenya, to cite but those two, have a hollow ring.

US Secretary of State Anthony Blinken recently demanded that Haiti's interim prime minister Ariel Henry organise a transitional government before new elections.

Looking simply at the itinerary of the acting leader in the past three years shows that he is evidently not in a position to do anything of the sort, and it is clear that no Haitian politician can take centre-stage and survive. The gun rules the streets

a and the talk is directed at ambiguous United Nations help.

> Henry is described as a Haitian neurosurgeon and politician who has served as acting prime minister and acting president since July 2021, after the assassination of President Jovenel Moïse.

> This means that there have been no functioning political institutions since that assassination and that the Haitian president was himself hanging by a thread of legitimacy or semblance of power.

The real holders of power, the state within the state that runs the country's streets and extracts loyalty from all and sundry saw the president disobeying, they simply killed him.

President Moïse was on the verge of rebuilding a new military force in 2017 after the army was disbanded in 1995, as earlier it was the bulwark of oppression - organised from State House.

Now the goons of another generation are tormenting the people just as before, organised by the gangs earlier the president's very allies. That is how Haiti has perennially worked to destroy itself. President Moïse was a sort of

Patrice Lumumba in a chaotic country where elites want freedom to torment, not where they can be taken to court to answer for confirmed offences.

Since there is no reform formula grasped by the United Nations at the moment but only the holding of new polls, the gangs could even allow that to happen.

However, the country will rot until the population picks up the resolve they need to unite and move to free the country against the gangs. Any polls organised by the gangs will just perpetuate the status quo, essentially meaning the rule of the gun.

He was talking from Tokyo, where he is staying. He has lived between Pakistan and Japan for the past 30 years, running an "import-export car business in Japan." But this time he had fled Pakistan, believing his life was under threat.

Blasphemy is an offense with an unwaivable death penalty but is notoriously known to be used to carry out personal vendettas.

To date, no one has been executed, yet scores continue to be convicted and then languish in jail. Data provided by the Centre for Social Justice (CSJ) shows there are 587 prisoners in various jails across Punjab. Among these, 515 are under trial, including 508 male, six female, and one juvenile prisoner, all confined under blasphemy.

The momentum has gained. In 2023 alone, said CSJ, at least 329 people were accused of blasphemy. Of these, 247 (75%) were Muslims, 65 Ahmadis (the Pakistani constitution has declared them non-Muslims), 11 Christians, and one Hindu. The religious affiliation of the remaining five remains unknown. Punjab was the most affected province, where 179 were accused.

At least 2,449 people had been accused of blasphemy between 1987 and 2023. The highest number of accused were 1,279 Muslims, followed by 782 Ahmadis. The highest number of cases (1770) were reported in Punjab (72%), according to the CSJ.

The signed and stamped warrant' on Munir, sent to the superintendent in Gujranwala's Central Prison by the judge, quoted here verbatim, states videos and photographs showed "writing most sacred name of the Holy Prophet Hazrat Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) and the kalma [declaration to Islam] on sex part of human bodies with intention to defile the Holy name of the Holy Prophet (PBUH)". It added that it was done intentionally and deliberately with

According to the community living in his village, Hussain belonged to a humble background, but his business picked up and he did extremely well, which may have caused jealousies.

"Still, I went to those who had accused my son, fell on their feet and apologized to them on behalf of my son if he had hurt their sentiments," said Hussain. "I even got fatwas [ruling on a point of Islamic law] from different religious seminaries that said a person can be forgiven."

"Wherever there is even a slight bit of doubt, confusion, or the case is not clear-cut, one should find a middle ground," according to Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mehmood Ashrafi, chairman of the Pakistan Ulema Council (PUC), talking over the phone from Islamabad. Over the years, the council has intervened in 103 out of 114 cases that have come to its attention, and the accused has been saved from the wrath of people.

Ashrafi had also been part of another high-profile case where Junaid Jamshed, a pop singer turned popular religious scholar, was accused of blasphemy but later acquitted.

Having seen the material sent allegedly by Munir, which he found "extremely obscene," and being privy to the investigation, Ashrafi said, "The FIA [Federal Investigation Agency] had investigated this thoroughly and I don't think anyone is framing the boy."

"I would think the FIA should have the technical capacity and the resources to discern, decipher, and verify people who impersonate other people's pages and carry blasphemy, or deepfake out AI-generated content," said and Nighat Dad, heading the Digital Rights Foundation, adding her organization's experience with the FIA's cybercrime wing had shown

Dad admitted: "Technology can be extremely harmful, especially where the law enforcing agencies are not so well equipped.' But this is not the first time.

In 2014, a Christian couple was sentenced to death for sending a blasphemous text message in they are adept at handling cyber English to their local cleric. The

WhatsApp.

When not imprisoned, those who have been marked are often killed by the people. In 2017, Mashal Khan, a student at Abdul Wali Khan University in Mardan, in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, was beaten to death by students accusing him of posting blasphemous material over social media. An investigation later proved he was innocent. Last year, seven people were killed extraiudicially. From 1994 to 2023, 95 people have been lynched.

"We've also seen campaigns targeting activists fighting for any change in the blasphemy law and know how lethal these can be, leading to the loss of lives, as we saw with Salman Taseer and Shahbaz Bhatti for proposing amendments and reforms to the country's blasphemy laws," said Aziz.

So far, only one person has ever been punished: Mumtaz Qadri, the bodyguard of Governor Salman Taseer for killing his employer. Qadri was hanged for killing the governor in 2016.

Earlier this month, in a brave attempt, a young policewoman, Shehrbano Naqvi, averted mob lynching of a woman wearing clothes that had Arabic calligraphy written on them, which people thought were verses from the Quran. Following the incident, the CSJ issued a statement calling for action to address "the flaws in the existing laws and looming religious intolerance."

"My son is suffering from a very rare sickness called immune thrombocytopenic purpura (ITP), an autoimmune disorder," implored the worried father. "He is just skin and bones under the khaki-colored jail uniform. It breaks my heart to see my child, who keeps insisting he is innocent," said Hussain in a heavy voice. He said he is going to appeal his son's sentence in the Lahore High Court this week.

IPS UN Bureau Report

FEATURES

Guardian

Primary school's new examination format for Standard Seven to add value to learners

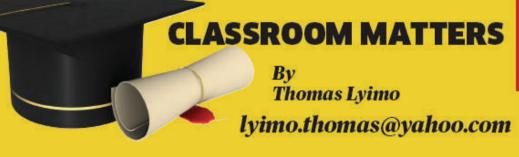
HANGES in the education sector have now become a custom. It is said that if you do not change the change will change you. To change or to be changed all produce changes.

The wisdom of thinkers emphasize that we better prepare to change than waiting for changes to change us. The cost of correcting the weaknesses after the change has changed you is huge.

Recent introduction of the new format for primary school leaving examination is a proof that changes are necessary in our education sector to restore or embrace some qualities which will make our education better enough to take us where we want to be. The current format which if the changes will be implemented would have ended last year was subject to criticism in some ways.

We have been taught and emphasized on constructive criticism. Good academicians are those who consider reality and cling to objectivity rather than subjectivity. It has been something which does not give someone a sleep as critical thinkers sees multiple choice questions in mathematics examination as a challenge.

The new format which comes into



force this year eliminates multiple choices in mathematics and reduces the number of the same to a reasonable degree in other subjects, criticism from positive thinkers may be reduced to the tolerable degree.

The need to improve our education has been like a song in our country because what is expected from education has not been seen in a degree that is satisfactory. Despite having a lot of graduates, academic progress in the country still does not impress citizens. Critics still see areas of weakness in the education sector.

Graduates have been criticized of being unable to think extra mile thus posing a lot of burden to the government by

blaming it though it has given them education which is a key for life. It becomes a promising step for the National Examination Council of Tanzania (NECTA) to come up with the new format which

may help to eliminate some weaknesses in our education sector, hence producing competent graduates who can fit in local and international labour markets. The new format which NECTA has

proposed will demand leaners to write their own answer than choosing from the given ones. The new format will be beneficial in the following ways;

One of the benefits is promoting critical thinking. As learners think to write answers for the questions, critical thinking develops. Critical thinking cannot

develop unless the learner has been given a situation that can make them think. Those learners who will pass the examination of the new format will be considered as critical thinkers because the new format will not give learners an opportunity to relax in an examination and pass. It will be a seeking of excellence and recognition battle.

Another benefit is having much reliable evaluation. There have been some complaints by secondary school teachers that they receive learners who cannot read and write. This may be the defect of having an examination which has a lot of multiple choice questions where a learner can guess answers and pass the examination.

Teachers can be blamed for what they are not concerned. With the new format where it is only those who know can pass the Standard Seven final examination will join secondary school. This will make teachers relax and value the education foundation that primary school teachers have built. Wrong evaluation may lead to some annoying statements which mock primary school teachers in some ways.

The new format will also stimulate serious teaching. For learners to pass well

in the examination under the new format they must be taught well. Teachers put much effort in the teaching process to produce learners who are competent and hence capable of facing the challenges of the modern world. Claims by some people that teachers teach examination questions instead of contents will no longer be heard. The new format forces teachers to teach contents and not examination questions.

Again the new format is beneficial in the sense that it enables learners to be expressive. Among the qualities of a good graduate is expression. If a graduate is not expressive he may fail to bring impact to the society.

People cannot do what they have not understood. They need to be convinced sometimes. The ability to convince is made possible through clear expression. We can expect much good from the new format as the graduates who will be expressive will add a value to the education system.

For any major changes to take place there must be a time for research and evaluation. Improvement is the product of time. When changes occur in the society is when what was sufficient and adequate in the past becomes inadequate. Teaching is producing learners who can describe and not guessing.

Tanzania shines in world female labour force participation

By Telesphor Magobe

ANZANIA is one of the three countries with a high number of females in the workforce in the world, according to a 2023 report based on World Bank (2022) data.

Rwanda (83 percent), Madagascar (82 percent) and Tanzania (80 percent) are the three sub-Saharan countries, whose female labour force participation is ranked higher than comparable countries in Eastern Europe, the Middle East and South America, the report shows.

World Bank (2022) suggests that women's economic empowerment in the past 20 years played a key role



in the country's transition to lowermiddle income status and it continues being a priority. "In terms of economic opportunities, Tanzania's female labour force participation rate is one of the highest on the African continent, highlighting the active role that women already play in the country's economy.

Moreover, women in Tanzania have been able to access a wider range of economic opportunities, with the ratio of female to male participation rates in wage and salaried work increasing to 64 per cent in 2019 from 35 per cent in 2000."

This high number of females in the workforce in the world is expounded by a study conducted by Sunday et al. (2024), which also suggests that "Tanzania's female labour force participation rates exhibited higher rates compared to both global and sub-Saharan Africa averages."

The study covered 13,266 correspondents of who 24.15 per cent of them were not working and 75.85 per cent were engaged in the labour market through various professional, technical, managerial, clerical, agricultural self-employed, agricultural-employee, household and domestic, services, skilled and unskilled manual groups.

The majority of respondents (57.59 percent) had primary education, 20.29 per cent had secondary education and 1.06 per cent had higher education, making the literacy rate rise to 84.94 per cent.

According to the authors, at least 46.26 per cent of the respondents were married and 68.75 per cent lived in rural areas, while 31.25 per cent lived in urban areas. "This signifies that most of the females surveyed lived in rural areas compared to those living in urban areas. With regard to the wealth status, study says, the poorest constituted about 16. 16 per cent, while the richest quintile constituted about 25.7 percent.'

With regard to education, study findings suggest that as education increases, female participation in the workforce also increases. "Education

provides skills and knowledge that could be integrated into more opportunities, more productivity that exposes females further to a wide range of social and economic opportunities and access to resources relative to those with lower levels of education."

With regard to wealth, the study suggests that as wealth increases (except moving from richer to the richest wealth group), female labour force decreases.

"Wealthier females tend to participate less in the provision of labour since there is no motive for them to work for paid labour and thus, they choose to allocate more time to caring for the family using the wealth they have. The contrary, poor females tend to participate more in the provision of labour since income that was previ- a person's success, they are not easily

ously earned motivate them to work more.'

As is often said that education is power, to guide public policy, Sunday et al. (2024) recommend more emphasis on education attainment, including vocational training that imparts soft skills to females because education is instrumental in female participation in the provision of labour in economic enhancing activities.

Mahmud & Wong (2022) say that "soft skills are ranked the most important by employers." According to A cam & Do an (2021), soft skills refer to the skills, competencies, and characteristics that pertain to personality, attitude, and behaviour instead of formal or technical knowledge.

"While they are necessary to ensure

demonstrated through [academic credentials] and can only be evaluated by specialists."

Tanzania's population has increased about five times since 1967 from 12,313,469 persons to 61,741,120 persons in 2022, according to the Population and Housing Census (PHC, 2022). In Mainland Tanzania, the population has increased to 59,851,347 and in Zanzibar to 1,889,773 persons.

More than half (53.4 per cent) of Mainland Tanzania's population is of the working age (15-64) and of Zanzibar 56.3 per cent of the population is of the working age (15-64) in 2022. While the female working age population for Mainland Tanzania has increased to 2,636,117 (in urban areas to 935,385 and in rural areas to 1,700,732), the male working age population has increased to 2,658,902 (in urban areas to 809,217 and in rural areas to 1,849,685 persons).

In Tanzania, gender is integrated into the National Five-Year Development Plan (2021/22-2025/26) and the Tanzania Development Vision 2025 emphasises the county's commitment to promoting gender equality in all social, economic and political contexts.

In light of this, the government has made policy reforms to support greater gender equality and women's empowerment in terms of education, health, employment, access to assets, and protection from gender-based violence. This has put the country in a better position towards achieving sustainable development goals (SDGs) by 2030.

FEATURE

Access to financial services transforming women's lives

By Kate Whiting

Guardian

HE climate crisis is having a disproportionate effect on the livelihoods of rural women who rely on agriculture as a source of income.

Heat stress and flooding in low and middle-income countries means women are \$53 billion worse off than men each year, according to The Unjust Climate, a new report from the United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).

It also finds that a 1°C increase in long-term average temperatures would lead to a 34 percent drop in the income of households run by women, relative to male-headed households.

The report says there is "an urgent need to support female-headed households to better adapt their agricultural systems to climate change". But they also need better access to financial services, including credit and insurance.

Women's World Banking is a global NGO focused on doing just that - making sure that all women have access to the full range of financial products and services.

President and CEO of Women's World Banking, Mary Ellen Iskenderian, says: "We estimate there are roughly 780 million women who do not have access to formal financial services. And they are now overwhelmingly the very poor, the very rural or those living in quite remote areas.

"The good news is ... remoteness is no longer a complete barrier, we're getting further and further out into remote areas with cell phone technology. And the price and cost of those financial services is coming down."

Iskenderian spoke to the World Economic Forum about the work the NGO is doing to transform women's lives. This is an edited version of the interview.

Women need a safe place to save their money

Globally, an estimated 780 million

women have

no access to formal finan-

cial services,

says the President and CEO

of Women's

World Bank-

Ellen Iskend-

ing, Mary

erian.

They need to be able to make and receive payments conveniently, and not too expensively. And, yes, they need access to credit. Microfinance was very often small, expensive loans, so we want to make sure women are not being taken advantage of and that access to finance doesn't increase their debt or other risks.

Let's not forget insurance, because the ability to mitigate and manage risks is essential to protecting all that a family and that a woman may have built through her business or her savings. Insurance is increasingly more important given all the climate risks many of the women we serve are now facing.



in South Asia, can be a real barrier to women's access to the phone.

During COVID, we saw some real strides forward in India, for example. The first round of COVID relief payments from the government were made available only to women and only digitally. In the first three to four weeks of the lockdown, 25 million new accounts were opened, primarily by women. You saw them getting access to the cell phone, which had been sort of ture of capability requiring financial institutions, such as to include training with any product. In Indonesia, for example, every woman who receives a loan must undergo training and have the capability and confidence to use the technology.

Women's access to financial services has a profound impact

It has had such a profound impact on so many women's lives that we needed to measure it meaningfully. At Harvard, conclusive evidence that shows that when a woman is able to accumulate assets, she can leave an abusive situation.

But when you start to hear a woman talk about the plans for her future or the plans for her children and where she fits in in a way that's not just about planning for the day-to-day or the immediate hand-to-mouth need - there's been an important change that's taken place inside of her. Bridging the gender gap in finances It's been a real learning for me to start to see the work we do through the lens of resilience. We had always looked through the lens of security, providing that safety net, but also providing prosperity. But now resilience, the ability to recover, is so closely linked to having financial access. We see women are very likely to be displaced in the case of a climate crisis. But more often than not, the male household member leaves to find work in a drought environment, leaving the woman at home to take on all sorts of responsibilities, as well as those of managing the household she already has.

She is got to be able to receive payments and remittances from him, and the rest of the family. She needs a safe place to save, to build that safety net. If she has a business or a farm, she needs to be able to borrow to climate-proof her property.

We are seeing some fascinating technologies, very small, reasonably priced, solar-based, drip irrigation pumps, and

What are the main barriers to access to digital financial services?

Access to the technology, literally the [mobile] handset, remains one of the biggest barriers and some of that is cost. The handset may not be too expensive, but the data package and all of the ongoing services attendant to that phone can be very expensive. Social norms in some places, particularly a cultural taboo for many women.

It's not just a question of understanding how the numbers fit together and how the technology works, but having a sense of confidence in using it. We tend to talk about digital financial capability as opposed to literacy because that seems to be the turning point when a woman feels comfortable using the services; when she finally feels at ease with that phone.

Happily, we're seeing more and more governments who have always been big champions of financial literacy, now really recognizing this bigger pic-

[public policy expert] Martha Chen developed a framework 30 years ago specifically for microfinance, but she worked with us to expand it. She talked about the changes in a woman's life as a result of access to finance, grouping them into four different types:

A woman's household decision-making power dramatically increases when she has access to finance and some control over how the money gets spent. Data indicates women are more likely to vote or even stand for a local village council or local office when they have access to finance. There's also quite solar pumps for rural women. They need to be able to borrow to get access to that technology. And we're also starting to see some interesting microinsurance products for smallholder farmers, crop insurance, and weather index insurance.

If a woman doesn't have a bank account, if a woman is not included in the formal sector, she won't have any access to those risk mitigation products. So all of the things we've been talking about for so many years just around inclusion have now become central to climate resilience as well.

CAPITAL RATIBA YA VIPINDI JUMATATU - JUMAPILI

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
TIME PROGRAMME	TIME PROGRAMME	TIME PROGRAMME	TIME PROGRAMME	TIME PROGRAMME	TIME PROGRAMME	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 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 18:10-21:00HRS 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 BUZUKI TIME 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)

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FEATURE/ NEWS FEATURE

Angolan youth embrace Chinese language learning for future careers

LUANDA

N the bustling streets of Luanda, Angola's capital, a wave of enthusiasm for learning the Chinese language is sweeping through the young population.

Inside the Agostinho Neto University (UAN), one of Angola's most prestigious higher education institutions, an entrylevel Mandarin course is underway at the university's Confucius Institute.

"What's on the table? A bottle is on the table," Sun Yun said in Chinese, repeating and using body language to make it easier for her Angolan students to understand.

"They have only studied for three months, but they can already practice dialogues in pairs based on the textbook content," said Sun, a teacher at the Confucius Institute. She oversees three classes with more than 100 students, including university students from the UAN, other institutions, and high school students.

"Their passion for learning is strong, and they practice on their own after class. On the one hand, they have a passion for the language and the country; on the other hand, they believe that mastering the language could open the doors to Chinese companies in Angola, a career path they have dreamed of," she said.

Raul Carvalho, who studied Chinese at the institute a few years ago, now returns whenever he has time to help with teaching. For him, his initial interest in learning Chinese led to his professional success.

"In Angola, it's not easy to find a good job. But the Mandarin I have learned paves the way for a promising career,"



Angolan Chinese language learners Carvalho said. He began his journey of sing songs dur-ing the "Chinese Bridge" World Proficiency Com-petition in Luanda, Angola.

learning Mandarin in 2017, signing up for classes immediately after seeing the Confucius Institute's post online. The first step is always

the most difficult. Pronun- the cooperating institution taught me authentic Chi-

ciation, grammar and even sentence logic confused him. However, with perseverance, the young man got a scholarship in 2018 to study at Harbin Normal University in northeast China's Heilongjiang Province, were all very patients and

of the Confucius Institute at nese expressions," he rethe UAN.

"I would go out of class and chat with people I met, from street chess players to restaurant owners. Even though I spoke slowly, they

called.

He took high-speed trains, wandered the night market and became a regular online shopper. With recommendations from Chinese friends, he delved into the diverse offerings of Chinese cuisine, quickly becoming an enthusiastic aficionado.

Guardian

In 2022, Carvalho nailed the interviews and got a project assistant and translator job at China Energy Engineering Corporation's Angola office, where he could use his professionalism while improving his Chinese at work.

He now teaches his 18-year-old sister Chinese, hoping to give her a bright future like his.

Carvalho's experience mirrors that of thousands of Chinese language learners in Angola. As the number of Chinese enterprises in Angola has exceeded 400, many Angolan youths believe that proficiency in Chinese is becoming an increasingly important skill in the southwestern African country's labor market.

According to Zhao Yufeng, co-director of the UAN Confucius Institute, China-Angola cooperation has deepened under the Belt and Road Initiative, and the interaction of language and culture is important.

"We are working with various government departments and academic institutions on language training projects to build a platform to advance cooperation between the two countries,' said Zhao.

Since its establishment in 2015, more than 2,000 students have enrolled in the UAN Confucius Institute. Pedro Magalhaes, rector of the UAN, said Angola's development "cannot be separated from China" and hoped that exchanges between the two countries' higher education institutions will promote friendship.

By Mike Knowles, Johannesburg

PPLE and pear growers in South Africa are making significant investments in solar energy systems as the country's electricity supply continues to falter. For over 15 years, South African producers have contended with frequent rolling blackouts known locally as load shedding.

Designed to protect a national network that cannot meet demand, the outages cut electricity supply from homes and businesses in different parts of the country at different times, typically for peri-

South African apple and pear growers turn to solar energy

ods of up to four hours.

For orchards and packhouses, load shedding means potentially devastating interruptions. That's why so many of them have invested in their own private energy supply, using generators, lithium batteries, and solar arrays.

Many of the producers that supply Tru-Cape, one of South Africa's biggest topfruit exporters, have made significant investments in alternative energy sources.

In doing so, they say they have not only secured their production and reduced their costs, but also reduced their environmental footprint.

The Van Niekerk Boerdery near Caledon, for example, says it has reduced its carbon dioxide emissions by over 32 tonnes and planted the equivalent of 45 trees since it added solar panels in October 2023.

"Although it is born out of necessity, every farmer wants to care for the environment," says Wimpie van Niekerk, who oversees the apple and pear orchards on his family's farm. "Solar energy is available. It benefits me, and it benefits the environment, making it a win-win situation."

The greatest advantage of solar energy, he says, is the independence it provides. Wimpie's cousin Niekie, who is credited as the brains behind the development, has apparently ensured the new system is part of a cost-efficient energy strategy.

"In the past, [state energy company] Eskom used to dictate when and if we could farm, but thanks to alternative energy sources, we can now farm the way we should," Van Niekerk adds.

Greater efficiency

One of the farm's biggest energy requirements comes from its irrigation pipelines and pumps. These have been enlarged and equipped with variable speed drive technology, which means larger orchard areas can now be irrigated in shorter periods.

The four Eskom power points on the farm have been consolidated into one larger point, which results in a further saving.

New solar panels at Van Niekerk Boerdery's Spes Bona farm



And the solar panels themselves can generate 100 kW of power and are connected to the generator, which means it can run on solar when the sun is shining.

"We are still grid-tied, but approximately a third of our energy consumption now comes from the sun," says Van Niekerk. "Our system is much more efficient; resulting in significant cost savings, and we don't have to worry about the availability of electricity and irrigation water."

Rossouw Cillié, from Laastedrif Agri near Ceres, also has a strong passion for the environment and sustainable farming.

Like the Van Niekerk Boerdery, his farm is building so-called balancing dams at elevated locations, which means water for irrigation can be distributed using gravity alone.

It has also recently pioneered the recycling of effluent through a natural wetland filtration process to water its crops.

Last year, it upgraded its alternative energy system and now generates approximately 300 kW of solar energy for its packhouses, or around a third of its total usage.

With a backup generator no longer using so much diesel, this has resulted in CO2 emissions falling by over 380 tonnes since January 2023.

Carbon calculations

In the Ceres region, Nico Verhoef from Witzenberg Properties believes all producers should make it their priority to protect the environment.

The company has one central distribution point from which it receives electricity to irrigate approximately 600ha on its two farms, Dennekruin and Die Eike. But it remains a challenge to complete irrigation cycles during load-shedding.

Luckily, South Africa has a lot of scope to generate solar energy. Even though sunshine hours in the Western Cape vary significantly between summer and winter, they apparently align well with Witzenberg's irrigation requirements.

"It offered us the opportunity to

set up a single solar system of about 1.4 MW," explains Verhoef. "At certain times on sunny days - usually between 12pm and 3pm - all our energy comes from the sun. However, when needed, we supplement it with Eskom power or diesel generators."

The cost savings are of course welcome, but Verhoef says he is also excited about reducing carbon emissions.

"Given the fact that South Africa primarily relies on coal and now also on diesel for power generation, solar energy can have a significant impact. There is a push towards environmental audits, and it is reassuring to know that we are ahead of the curve."

FEATURE

Samia's three years tenure sees mining commission transforming the sector

By Guardian Correspondent, Do-

doma

O ensure the mining sector significantly contributes to the country's economic growth, the government has made various efforts, including amending the Mining Law of 2010. The Mining Commission was established under the Mining Act 2010, as amended by the Written Laws (Miscellaneous Amendment) Act 2017.

The commission came into existence through Government Notice No. 27 issued on July 7th, 2017. It has assumed all operational functions previously performed by the Minerals Division under the Ministry of Energy and Minerals, as well as those carried out by the Tanzania Minerals Audit Agency (TMAA) and Tanzania Diamond Sorting Organization (TANSORT).

Explaining responsibilities of the mining commission, Eng Yahya Samamba, the Executive Secretary of the Commission, says they are mandates include issuance and management of mining licenses, overseeing exploration and mining activities as well as conducting inspections of mines and the environment.

Commending efforts made by the President Samia Suluhu Hassan, Eng Samamba highlights that since establishment of the mining commission; many citizens have observed significant changes in the mining sector and have gained increased confidence in both the President and the government as a whole.

Explaining the status of revenue collection before and after establishment of the commission, Eng Samamba elucidates that revenue collection increased from 213.3bn/- during the 2016/2017



financial year to 677.7bn/in the 2022/2023 financial year.

"During the 2022/2023 financial year, we were given the target of collecting 822bn/- by we surpassed the target by 82.45 percent. We have been tasked to collect 882bn/- this fiscal year and we firmly believe that we will surpass the set target," emphasizes

Eng Samamba, attributing the secret of success in revenue collection to patriotism and creativity of employees at the mining commission headquarters, resident mines offices, and mines resident offices, as well as the excellent cooperation from the leaders of the Ministry of Minerals. Discussing the mineral

country, Eng Samamba explains that they were set up as a means to assist small-scale miners in finding a reliable market for their minerals post-mining, enabling the government to generate income and obtain accurate statistics on minerals produced by small-scale miners.

The aim is to sell minermarkets established in the als according to the indica-

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tive prices provided by the mining commission, based on global market trends and to control the smuggling of minerals by unscrupulous miners and traders.

He adds that up to now, the mining commission has established 42 mineral markets and 99 buying centers across the country, which has increased the contribution of smallscale miners to revenue collection from five to 40 percent in 2022/2023.

He emphasizes that included provision of mineral markets have

commission. Our goal is to ensure that every Tanzanian benefits from the Mining Sector," asserts Eng Samamba, adding the commission has been carefully managing to ensure that mining companies provide services to the surrounding community through its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) policy as directed by the Mining Law.

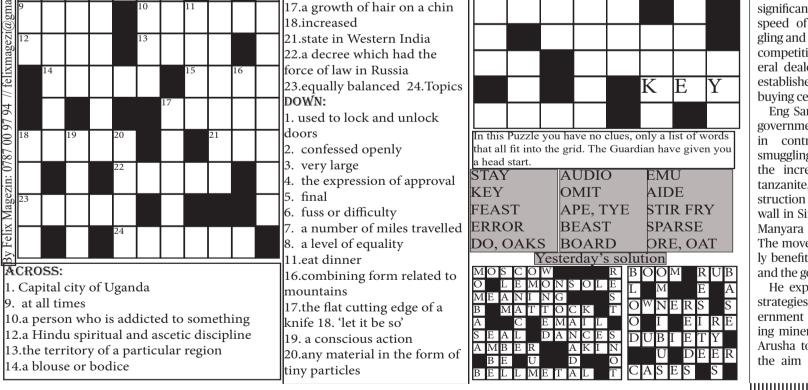
Eng Samamba emphasizes that the issue of safety in mines cannot be overlooked for the success of the mining sector. Recognizing this, the Mining Commission, through the Mines Inspectorate and Environment Department, has been conducting regular inspections in mines as well as providing education.

He continues by mentioning other achievements, including the increase in the issuance of mining licenses from 5094 licenses in the financial year 2018/2019 to 9642 licenses in the financial year 2022/2023.

He adds that the contribution of the mining sector to the national Gross Domestic Product (GDP) increased from 4.4 percent in 2017 to 9.1 percent in 2022.

Many foreign companies have continued to show interest in investing in the mining sector due to the great work done by President Samia in advertising the investment and business opportunities available in the country as well as creating a conducive environment for local and foreign investors to operate.

Kulwa Mkalimoto, is the Chairman of the Dodoma



significantly reduced the speed of mineral smuggling and have introduced competition among mineral dealers through the established markets and buying centers. Eng Samamba says the government's strategies

in controlling mineral smuggling and ensuring the increasing value of tanzanite, includes construction of the Mirerani wall in Simanjiro District, Manyara Region in 2018. The move has significantly benefited both, miners and the government.

He explains that other strategies set by the government include relocating mineral dealers from Arusha to Mirerani, with the aim of boosting the

such as transportation, agricultural products, security, insurance, law and banking.

economy of the Mirerani

area and curbing mineral

In another aspect, ex-

plaining how the govern-

ment addresses the issue

of Tanzanian participa-

tion in the mining sector,

the commission's boss

says that in recognition

of its importance, in 2018,

the government estab-

lished various rules and

guidelines to ensure Tan-

zanian involvement in ex-

ploration and mining ac-

tivities. This involvement

various services in mines

smuggling.

He states that until the year 2022, 86 percent of goods and services are provided by Tanzanian companies to large mining companies, while 14 percent are provided by foreign companies through a special permit issued by the mining commission. Regarding employment in the mines, 96 percent are Tanzanians, while foreign nationals make up four percent.

"It should be understood that no company is allowed to import goods or services from abroad without obtaining permission from the mining

Regional Miners Association (DOREMA), he commends Minister for Minerals, Anthony Mavunde, for supporting small-scale miners and addressing the various challenges they encounter in the sector.

"The Minister for Minerals has been actively visiting small-scale miners in their mining areas, listening to their challenges and addresses them through the mining commission. This approach has significantly built trust among stakeholders in the mineral's sector and has attracted more Tanzanians to participate in the mining industry," he emphasized.





FACTORS INFLUENCING **CUSTOMER LOYALTY IN THE BANKING INDUSTRY: PART 2** page 14

Thursday 21 March 2024

Bank of Tanzania sets date for next CBR announcement

By Mnaku Mbani

(BoT) has said that will announce the next central bank rate (CBR) for the second quarter on April 4th.

This will be the second announcement since January 1st when the BoT switched from a quantity of money approach towards monetary policy to a framework based on interest rates (price-based).

The central bank said earlier this vear that the change of policy was to align its approach with those of other central banks in east Africa and to ensure the stability of the exchange rate.

During the introduction of the new policy in January, the BoT governor Emmanuel Tutuba said the new rate will not involve capping interest rates on lending facilities offered by other institutions.

During the first quarter of this year ending this month, the Mon-

the CBR at 5.5 percent to meet its he Bank of Tanzania medium-term inflation target of 5 percent, while supporting economic growth to reach 5.5 percent or more in 2024.

Analysts projects that the central bank committee might leave the rate unchanged during the second quarter, due to stable inflation, which was at 3 percent in February, as well as interbank cash market rate for seven days, the major determinants of the policy rate.

The 7-days' interest rates, the operating target remained within the CBR band, though increased to 7.25 percent in January from 6.81 percent registered in the preceding month, said BoT recent monthly economic review.

The central bank further said it continues to monitor developments in the 7-days Interbank Cash Market (IBCM) rate, to ensure it remains within the corridor of +/-2.00 basis points.

Against the outlook for the globetary Policy Committee (MPC) set al economy, together with domes-



tic economic conditions, policies and reforms, the MPC is projecting the growth in mainland Tanzania to be at 5.2 percent in the first quarter of 2024.

The growth is expected to be driven by public and private investment, reforms to improve business conditions, favourable weather, and a rebound in tourism activities.

Inflation is forecast to remain low, at around 3.2 percent, below the target of 5 percent, and the exchange rate is expected to remain

stable, depreciating moderately, according to MPC report.

The outturn was on account of the implementation of less accommodating monetary policy, adequate domestic food supply, and decline in commodity prices, particularly petroleum products, in the world market.

However, the report said, the risks to the projections include the escalation of geopolitical tension, which might disrupt the global supply 8 chain, OPEC+'s decision about oil production, and monetary policy direction on advanced economies.

According to BoT's monthly economic review for February, the global economy shows signs of recovery anchored by moderating inflation and the greater thanexpected resilience of advanced economies.

According to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) global economic update for 2024, the global growth is projected at 3.1 percent

in 2024, higher than the October 2023 forecast, and 3.2 percent in 2025.

Notwithstanding, the conflict in the Middle East and the ongoing Russian-Ukraine war continue to pose threats to global economic recovery, IMF asserts.

"Elevated central bank rates to fight inflation and a withdrawal of fiscal support amid high debt weigh on economic activity," IMF says.

"Inflation is falling faster than expected in most regions, amid unwinding supply-side issues and restrictive monetary policy. Global headline inflation is expected to fall to 5.8 percent in 2024 and 4.4 percent in 2025, with the 2025 forecast having been revised down."

IMF further notes that with disinflation and steady growth, the likelihood of a hard landing has receded, and risks to global growth are broadly balanced.

On the upside, IMF says, faster disinflation could lead to further easing of financial conditions.

"Looser fiscal policy than necessary and assumed in the projections could imply temporarily higher growth, but at the risk of a more costly adjustment later on," IMF notes.

But the World Bank's global economic prospect for 2024 said global growth is set to slow further this year amid tight monetary policy, restrictive financial conditions, and feeble global trade and investment.

Downside risks include an escalation of the recent conflict in the Middle East, financial stress, persistent inflation, trade fragmentation, and climate-related disasters.

The growth in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) is projected to rebound to 3.8 percent in 2024 and 4.1 percent in 2025 as country-specific factors that have temporarily weighed on growth, including reduced fiscal support and metal exporting economies' adjusting to lower prices, WB says.

CBE set to claim overdrawn cash

By Kalkidan Yibeltal, Addis Ababa

ETHIOPIAN'S premier bank has warned its valued customers who withdrew more money than they had in their accounts to promptly return the overdrawn funds by week's end, or risk facing arrest hence prosecution.

Local media reported that over \$40 million (£31 million) was withdrawn or transferred to other banks full visibility and control as we trace their actions and hold them legally responsible," Abe asserted during his interview with Newsday.

Abe noted that some customers who withdrew excess funds have already returned the money to the bank. However, he refuted claims that \$40 million had been taken, stating that the actual amount withdrawn was considerably less.

A comprehensive audit is currently underway and will provide



A branch of the Commercial Bank of Ethiopia in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Photo: File

collaborating with law enforcement ers. to recover the lost funds. It took several hours for the institution to halt functioning as the chief regulatory transactions and address the glitch.

The central bank of Ethiopia,

authority in the financial sector,

Tanzania thrives with 54 licensed tech hubs

By Francis Kajubi

THE ICT Commission has disclosed that as of earlier this month there are active 54 licensed innovation hubs in the country that are run by owners in the private sector.

Dr Nkundwe Mwasaga, Director General of the ICT Commission, revealed the figure on Monday at an evaluation meeting with media stakeholders held in Dar es Salaam that sat to shed insights of the progress realized so far in the media

According to him, there are two Fab labs one in Dar es Salaam and one in Mwanza, there is one regional ICT innovation hub established in collaboration with International Telecommunication Unit (ITU). There is one district ICT hub in Kibaha.

"In lower middle income countries Tanzania is ranked 24th in the group of lower-middle-income countries in terms of ICT pillar performance;

At the sub pillar level, it outperforms lower-middle-income coun-

on Saturday during a system glitch that lasted several hours at the stateowned Commercial Bank of Ethiopia (CBE).

In an exclusive interview with BBC Newsday programme, CBE President Abe Sano stated on Wednesday that the bank has successfully traced most of the transactions made during the glitch.

When questioned about whether the CBE planned to involve the police in cases where customers failed to return the money, Abe promptly responded, "Yes, absolutely. We are already taking steps to do so."

He further emphasized that the bank would proceed with legal actions against individuals who did not return the funds "after the weekend."

"Rest assured, these digital transactors cannot evade accountability as our valued customers. We have

an accurate figure by the end of the week. As the audit progresses, Abe highlighted the necessity for careful examination as some of the 10,000 customers involved in the glitch had legitimate transactions mixed in with the erroneous withdrawals.

While the bank did not disclose the total amount withdrawn, its CEO informed reporters that approximately half a million transactions occurred during the system malfunction.

Abe also attributed the widespread awareness of the technical issue to university students, who made significant withdrawals and brought attention to the situation through social media channels.

The bank boss clarified that the institution will not pursue legal action against students who made unauthorized cash withdrawals.

He also mentioned that the bank is

At campus ATMs, long queues formed as students queued up to withdraw money. A student in western Ethiopia recounted to BBC Amharic that people continued to withdraw money until police officers intervened to stop them.

The student, who is enrolled at Iimma University Institute of Technology, expressed disbelief when informed by friends around 01:00 local time (22:00 GMT) that it was possible to withdraw large sums from ATMs or transfer funds using the bank's app.

Similarly, another student at Dilla University in southern Ethiopia shared that a group of peers withdrew money from CBE between midnight and 02:00 local time.

With a rich history spanning 82 vears. CBE boasts a robust customer base of over 38 million account holdissued a statement last Sunday attributing a system malfunction to "a glitch" that emerged during routine maintenance and inspections.

The official statement primarily addressed the impairment of services following CBE's decision to suspend all transactions, omitting any reference to the funds withdrawn by customers.

Abe clarified that the bank had not fallen victim to a cyber-attack and reassured customers that their personal accounts remained secure and unaffected.

In light of the incident, three universities have issued public notices urging students to promptly return any funds obtained from CBE that were not rightfully theirs, emphasizing ethical responsibility and accountability.

industry, the communication and information sector.

Dr Mwasaga said that eight Jamii ICT Innovation Hubs are in the process of establishment in the regions of Mbeya, Lindi, Arusha, Mwanza, Dodoma, Dar es Salaam, Tanga and Zanzibar.

He said youth in the start-up sector of the age between the ages of 15 to 34 are 33 percent (21 million) of the population of Tanzania as per the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) and have all it takes to compete for these opportunities.

"TCRA's 2023 fourth quarter report shows internet penetration reaching 50 percent. It shows that the number of smartphones is 18 million;

The Tanzania Commission for Universities (TCU) shows that in the academic year ending 2022, more than 2,166 students graduated in the field of ICT," he defended.

Students who are engaged with ICT in primary and secondary school are approximately 12.3 million.

Dr Mwasaga further revealed that in the East African region ICT directly contributes around 7 percent of Africa's GDP. As of 2020, the ICT sector in Rwanda contributed 2 percent of GDP and employed around 8,962 workers (0.26 percent of employment).

"The ICT sector in Tanzania contributed 4.3 percent of total tax revenue in quarter two 2021. The ICT sector contribution to GDP grew from 1.5 percent of the GDP," he said.

He pointed out that Kenya's ICT sector is set to account for up to 8 percent of the country's GDP through IT-enabled services (ITES) and create more than quarter of a million jobs by the end of 2021.

Uganda's ICT sector contributes 9 percent of the country's GDP.

The ICT sector in Rwanda contributed 2 PERCENT of GDP and employed around 8,962 workers (0.26 percent of employment).

tries in three of the twelve sub-pillars that include access, trust and regulation," said Dr Mwasaga.

According to him, at the continent level the country is ranked 9th. It outperforms its region in each of the four pillars.

With regard to sub-pillars, it outperforms the average in Africa in nine of the twelve sub-pillars: access, content, future technologies, individuals, governments, trust, regulation, quality of life and SDG contribution.

The Tanzania Startup ecosystem report 2022 shows that Startup employment rate grew by 14.65 percent, with 89,509 jobs created in 2022.

It is however 15 percent increase in the number of known startups, growing from 587 to 673 in 2022.

According to the African Development Bank (ADB), ICT contributes 7 percent of the cumulative GDP of Africa. ADB states that the ICT sector contributes 1.5 percent of the GDP of Tanzania. He said there are potential opportunities for start-ups to capitalize on.

For instance, the East African Community (EAC) is 174 million people and the combined GDP of the region is about US\$163.4 billion with eight countries.

However, it states the Southern African Development Community (SADC) with an estimated total population of 344 million and a total GDP of US\$720 billion with 16 countries.

"Start-ups have even more opportunities such as the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), the EAC and SADC Tripartite Agreement making a total population of 560 million, and a total GDP of US\$768 billion market value," reads the report.

As of now there emerged a new market through the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) - 1.3bn people and GDP valued at US\$3.4 trillion total market value from the 54 countries.

Investors await clarity on Fed's 2024 rate cut view

New York

THE Federal Reserve is widely expected to hold rates steady when the central bank concludes its policy meeting Wednesday afternoon.

But the bigger question on the minds of investors is whether policy makers still believe three interest rate cuts are likely in 2024.

The answer will come in the form of the Fed's latest "dot plot," a chart updated quarterly that shows the prediction of each Fed official about the direction of the federal funds rate.

In December, the dot plot revealed a consensus among Fed officials for three cuts for 2024, the first sign that the central bank was prepared to start loosening monetary policy.

Now that projection is in question following a string of hotter-



Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell. Photo: Reuters/Evelyn Hockstein

than-expected inflation readings and cautious commentary from Fed officials.

Fed Chair Jay Powell and his colleagues have been emphasizing for months that they want to be sure inflation is moving "sustainably" down to their 2 percent target before starting cuts.

Investors have been adjusting their bets on when those cuts could start. After beginning the year predicting six cuts starting in March, they now expect three starting in June.

Even the odds of a June cut have been falling in recent weeks.

The Fed last hiked rates in July and has elected to keep interest rates unchanged since then in a range of 5.25 percent-5.50 percent, a 23-year high.

The Fed will announce its policy decision at 2 pm ET, followed by Chair Powell's press conference at 2:30 pm ET.

Alongside the policy decision and rate projections, Fed officials will release updated forecasts on inflation, GDP growth, and unemployment.

Separately, investors will also be listening during Powell's press conference for any discussion about

how the Fed intends to slow the shrinking of its massive balance sheet, a lesser-known policy tool the central bank has been using to tighten financial conditions. Over the last two years, the Fed has shed roughly \$1.5 trillion in

Treasury and mortgage bonds that it accumulated while trying to stimulate the economy during the early parts of the pandemic – letting roughly \$100 billion mature every month and run off its balance sheet.

Now that inflation is coming down, the question is when the Fed could start slowing the pace of that run off.

What policymakers hope to avoid is the sort of messy upheaval to financial markets that happened the last time the Fed tried to wind down its balance sheet at the end of last decade.

Agencies

Bänker

FACTORS INFLUENCING CUSTOMER LOYALTY IN THE BANKING INDUSTRY: PART II

BY KELVIN MKWAWA

n last week's article about factors influencing customer loyalty in the banking industry, I discussed why I believe that banks are in the service industry and not in the finance industry hence they should compete in quality service rather than financially. Also, I have said that, for any bank to be successful, it is vital to maintain a high rate of customer loyalty but it has become a challenge to do that due to stiff competition in the banking industry. Thus, the banks need to come up with unique strategies to attract and retain their customers. So how can this be achieved? I stated that banks can retain their customers and turn them loyal by understanding the factors that influence their loyalty.

factors that influence customer lovalty in the banking industry. and last week I talked about the first factor; quality of service. I explained that quality of service plays a crucial role in influencing customer loyalty hence banks need to ensure they deliver exceptional service to their customers all the time. That's where we ended.

Now let us continue from where we ended last week. In this week's article, I will share the remaining two factors that influence customer loyalty in the banking industry:

Brand Image - For a customer, a perceived brand is the evidence of good quality of products and services so the brand image is extremely important in deciding the moment for most customers. The banks should strive to improve their image in the I would like to share three society they operate such

as participating in various Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) projects. Customers want to associate themselves with a good brand hence brand image can impact the decision of the customer to continue to bank with you or not (i.e. be loyal to your organization or not). The process of creating a brand should be the responsibility of each unit of the bank as each one has a role to play to ensure the image of the bank is as influential as it can be.

Customer Satisfaction -Customer satisfaction is one of the most important issues concerning banks so it is crucial for banks to provide diversified products and services that will meet the needs and expectations of different segments of their customers. The banks need to understand that the employees play a crucial role in ensuring

the customers are satisfied so it is important for the banks to invest in its staff and make sure they are treated well and are happy with their responsibilities. As we know, "a happy employee equals to happy customer", so to achieve thorough satisfaction of your customers, first good working conditions and competitive benefits are needed to bring satisfied employees which in return, they will work extremely hard to meet the expectations of their customers. Loyal employees are happier and engage in their work which will lead them to render excellent customer service hence satisfying the customers and making them loyal.

I will wind up by reiterating to the banks that retaining your existing customers is more important than ever before due to the decline in market

growth rate and increase in the competition. In the past two weeks, we have seen that service quality is key in influencing customer loyalty as well as the flexibility of the banks in dealing with the financial needs of the customers. Also, we have seen that banks must convey quality service to ensure survival in today's competitive environment in the banking industry. Furthermore, banks should "take care" of their staff to achieve thorough satisfaction of their customers which will turn them loval. We have seen that satisfying the customers is considered as the most important factor leading to competitiveness and success.

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Kelvin Mkwawa

Government entreated to pursue profitable trade deals for growth

By Correspondent plan." Daniel Semberya

THE government has been urged to sign bilateral trade agreements with other countries which are economically beneficial and profitable to the country and its people.

In an exclusive interview with this paper yesterday in Dar es Salaam, Abel Kinyondo, an Associate Professor of Development Economics at

Prof Kinyondo emphasized the importance of careful consideration when trading with a country like India. He emphasized that countries

> should not rush into signing bilateral agreements, but rather thoroughly assess their own strengths and the competitive advantages of their trading partner in order to adapt effectively.

cal jobs, in the sense that when they are processing and adding value they need people to do that, who are their people. "So, you are exporting those

local jobs and value addition to them." "Another thing we are doing is exporting value addition itself."

When value is added the finished products become more expensive. "So, when thinking about trade, we have to think on



The US Ambassador to Tanzania, Michael Battle (L), and Industries and Trade minister, Dr Ashatu Kijaji display signed MoU to boost trade ties between the two countries. File Photo

Indian technology and expertise, and invite their involvement in building the capacity of our people. Collaboration in training programs within our institutions can also be mutually beneficial.

By working together in this regard, bilateral trade agreements can truly make sense, rather than continually signing numerous Memorandums of Underemployed by developed nations.

"We can adopt their successful policies, laws, and operational procedures to enhance efficiency. Moreover, individuals appointed to leadership positions in key sectors like banks, insurance companies, ATCL, and Stamico should be selected based on qualifications rather than personal connections or friend-

Tanzania welcomes strategic Chinese investors

By Francis Kajubi

The Tanzania Investment Center (TIC), in partnership with the private sector, is expecting to host 60 strategic investors from Zhejiang province in Jinhua city, China, next Wednesday. They will be visiting Tanzania to explore investment opportunities in 13 different economic sectors.

TIC, in collaboration with the Tanzania Private Sector Foundation (TPSF), Confederation of Tanzania Industries (CTI), and Tanzania Chamber of Commerce, Industry, and Agriculture (TCCIA), will host the inves-

the University of Dar es Salaam (UDSM), emphasized that people should not be deceived by large numbers or figures mentioned in the bilateral trade agreements.

Referring to a bilateral trade agreement between Tanzania and India, which was projected to exceed USD 7 billion this year, the professor stated, "We require bilateral trade agreements that are sustainable and financially beneficial to our economy, even in the event that we sever ties with countries with whom we have entered into such agreements." The Don insisted, "We will achieve what we

He highlighted, "Our current exports include raw materials such as cashew nuts, gold, tanzanite, legumes like beans, pigeon peas, and chickpeas, as well as cloves, wood, and sesame seeds." He

further stated, "For this bilateral trade agreement to truly benefit our country, we must request assistance in adding value to our raw materials before exporting them or engaging in trade with the partner country."

Prof Kinyondo further noted "When you export raw cashew nuts, cloves, wood and sesame seeds, you export two main things.

Firstly, you export lo-

value addition so as to get value added products.

Instead of buying raw cashew nuts and agricultural produce, India should come here and establish an industry that will process and add value to them before exporting to their country and elsewhere across the global

According to Prof Kinyondo India is absolutely fantastic when it comes to technology ICT health care and services. When engaging in

trade with India, it is crucial to convey the mutual benefit of the partnership. We should express our eagerness to access

standing without tangible progress.

He expressed that despite the signing of numerous bilateral trade agreements by all presidents since independence, our country has not seen significant economic improvement. This is largely due to the lack of strategic and effective implementation of these agreements.

For his part, another guru in economics, Haji Semboja, Professor of Zanzibar University (ZU) told this paper in an exclusive interview that the Indians and the Europeans and Americans have no problem to come build and establish industries here in the country the problem is at our side as a country.

"The Indians can establish an industry anywhere but they would ensure at the end of the day they are the beneficiaries. They are struggling to own the world. They come and stay with you"

He suggested that for Tanzania to progress, it should learn from the strategies ships.

Commenting on why India prefer exporting raw cashew nuts to their country and process and add value to them in their country is because cashew nuts in India are regarded as green gold. They process them and add value to meet the needed international standard and later export them and sell at a high price.

He said according to a study he carried out a few years ago, Tanzania cashew nuts are big and are of high quality after being processed and added value. They are being sold in high standard hotels in Europe and America at a high price.

Refined and finished/partially finished products have greater value than the raw materials they are made from. So, Tanzania should pursue deals that add value, not take value out of Tanzania to fetch a far higher price as a product made or sold in external markets.

KING&FINANC

Professor warns of 7pc interest rate surge by 2025 due to debt

New York

IF you are a prospective homebuyer or real estate investor concerned about high interest rates and you're sick of bad news, you may want to stop reading right now. That's because Joao Gomes, a finance professor at the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania, believes America's \$34 trillion in debt could spark a crisis that sends interest rates spiraling past 7 percent if the government doesn't act soon.

Gomes does not see much evidence that either party possesses the political will, or even the right formula, to manage what he sees as a real crisis on the horizon. He's not alone in that assessment, as

JPMorgan Chase & Co, CEO Jamie Dimon and Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell have both recently expressed deep concern about the amount of debt America is carrying and the potential threat it poses to the economy. Gomes Sees Immediate And Long-Term Danger To The Economy

Although many of his colleagues see America's debt load as a threat far off in the future, Gomes believes it has the potential to roil the American economy as early as 2025. Gomes believes there is a possibility of a debt crisis if the next administration adopts the wrong policies. He also believes the government must act before the problem is allowed to mushroom out of control.

In speaking to Fortune magazine about U.S. debt, he said, "It could derail the next administration, frankly. If they come up with plans for large tax cuts or another big fiscal stimulus, the markets could rebel, interest rates could just spike right there, and we would have a crisis in 2025. It could very well happen. I'm very confident by the end of the decade one way or another, we will be there."

The Effect On The Real Estate Market Could Be Devastating

A lack of inventory and high prices have already put a basketball-sized dent in most Americans' buying power when it comes to housing. If interest rates climb above 7 percent and remain there, the American housing market

could be devastated beyond the point of recovery. That's a possibility if the nations holding U.S. bonds lose confidence in America's ability to pay those debts and begin demanding higher interest rates on future bond purchases.

The end of the decade may seem far off, but six years is not a long time when it comes to something as large as the U.S. economy altering its course. Plans to avoid disaster must be laid now because there is precedent for things spinning out of control much quicker than expected. Gomes points to the recent mortgage meltdown in the U.K. that took place under former Prime Minister Liz Truss as an example.

Agencies

tors at the China-Tanzania Investment Forum.

The forum to be held in Dar es Salaam will see 120 active members from the three local business community bodies presented with business and investment opportunities in China.

Diana Mwamanga, TIC Investment Officer in charge of China Investment Desk, told the press yesterday in Dar es Salaam that the 60 Chinese companies to Tanzania have been picked by the Chinese Enterprises Association for Investment in Tanzania and the China Council for the Promotion of International and Trade Iinhua Sub-Council.

"The Chinese companies are targeting investment opportunities in 13 different sectors such as agriculture and agro processing, mining, manufacturing and pharmaceutical among others," said Mwamanga.

According to her, China is currently the leading foreign with 30 percent of Foreign Direct Investments (FDIs).

She asserted that about 100 enterprises visited last September from the same province to explore business and investment opportunities in Tanzania.

"China considers Tanzania as the best investment destination in the region and the continent at large due to two main reasons, investment incentives and political stability," said Mwamanga.

Kelvin Ogolo, TCCIA Membership Development Manager, called upon the business community to take advantage of the forum by finding business partners and markets for exports.

"We are aware that one of their main focused areas of investment is in the mining sector. They are looking for export of critical minerals and the private sector we are well prepared to capitalize on this golden opportunity," said Ogodo.

Janson Huang, Chairperson SINO-TAN industrial Park who doubles as the Chinese Enterprises Association for Investment in Tanzania said that the forum will involve business to business (B2B) sessions.

"The forum will also see TIC and the Jinhua city people's government signing a memorandum of understanding for further business promotion between the two countries," said Huang.

According to him, the 60 visiting companies literally represent the mark of 60 years of diplomatic relations between the two nations.

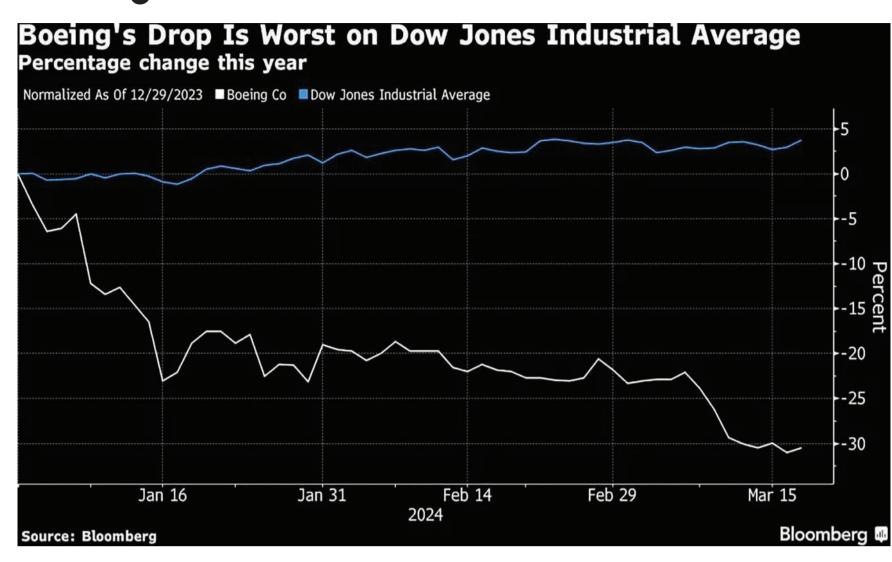
He said that from last year's forum two Chinese companies have settled factories at Kwala industrial park one in cosmetics and the other in garments.

"There is also one company that has entered an agreement with the Mining Association of Tanzania for supplying machineries. There are ongoing dialogues for more investment contracts," said Huang.

Bänker

Guardian

Boeing sees massive cash drain as 737 Max incidence takes toll



NEW YORK

OEING Co. predicted a massive cash drain for the first quarter as regulatory scrutinv and slower output of its 737 Max jetliner following a January mid-air accident take their toll on its finances.

Cash outflow will reach \$4 billion to \$4.5 billion in the first quarter, Boeing Chief Financial Officer Brian West told a Bank of America conference in London on Wednesday. A plan to reach a \$10 billion cash flow target by 2025-26 will be at the far end of that window. For the year, free cash flow will be in the single digit billions of dollars, West said.

"We're not at the moment where we can manage the near term for these financial outcomes because of the work at hand around stability," West said. "Our expectation is that we'll get more predictable and better positioned, but it will take time."

lage failure on a Boeing 737 Max 9 aircraft on Jan. 5 and absorbs the broader hit from the episode. While margins will improve for the year, they will remain negative for 2024, the CFO said.

As part of the fallout from the Jan. 5 episode, regulators have capped Boeing's output to make sure the company has the resources to review its manufacturing processes. West said production rates will be lower in the first half and the rise again in the latter part of the year toward 38 737 Max units a month. Anything beyond that "will be up to the FAA," West said, referring to the Federal Aviation Administration.

Boeing shares fell 1.8 percent in US premarket trading. The company is set to report earnings for the first quarter in late April. Weeks after the January incident, Boeing suspended its forecast for 2024, breaking with tradition of guiding investors for the year, as it worked through fixing its processes and the intensifying public scrutiny on

ficer Michael O'Leary said at a separate conference in Brussels on Wednesday that summer capacity in Europe will be held back by Boeing's delivery delays and separate engine issues afflicting Airbus SE aircraft.

The Irish budget carrier flies an all-Boeing fleet and has been forced to scale back some targets and destinations for this summer because it's not getting the number of planes it had planned for.

Investor expectations have dimmed for what was supposed to be a crucial year in Boeing's recovery from the pandemic and a global grounding of the 737 Max after two plane crashes. Even so, Boeing's not strapped for cash, West said. The planemaker has sufficient reserves to pay for a possible acquisition of Spirit AeroSystems Holdings Inc. in cash and debt rather than issuing equity, West said.

If it's consummated, the deal would reverse Boeing's largest outsourcing

of outsourcing assets.

"We believe that reintegrating these two companies is best for safety and for quality for the aerospace industry," West said. "It's about running the business not as a business but as a factory, and stay focused."

Analysts predict Boeing will burn through \$1.34 billion during this quarter, according to data compiled by Bloomberg, as it works through another crisis engulfing its main cash cow. A year ago, Boeing generated \$2.95 billion in cash.

US regulators are pressuring Boeing to tighten its control over the workmanship in its factories and at suppliers after a fuselage panel blew out of a new Alaska Airlines 737 Max on Jan. 5. FAA Administrator Michael Whitaker walked away from a recent visit to the manufacturer's Seattle-area industrial base concerned that the emphasis on boosting production rates had eroded Boeing's safety culture.

Italian envoy unveils latest machinery for Tanzania agriculture

By Sabato Kasika

The Italian Ambassador to Tanzania, Marco Lombardi, unveiled of state-of-the-art agricultural machinery embedded with groundbreaking technology, saying it is set to redefine the agricultural sector, offering immense advantages to farmers in Tanzania.

During an agricultural training hosted by Italy Trade, the Italian envoy, highlighted the crucial role of modern technology in the agricultural sector. The emphasis was placed on the significance of utilizing advanced agricultural machinery to enhance farming practices and drive sustainable growth.

In conjunction with the training session, the agency will also commence the selection process for sponsoring companies to journey to Italy. During this trip, participants will have the opportunity to learn about and explore the myriad agricultural and business prospects available in the country.

"Renowned Italian agricultural machinery companies such as Masscar, Barbieri, and Ocmis Irrigazione have joined forces to enlighten and empower farmers and tech enthusiasts in Tanzania, catalyzing In addition to the growth of the agricultural landscape," Lombardi elaborated.

The training was graced by the presence of Fabio Ricci from the prestigious fostering collaboration Feder Unacoma company and Riccardo Zucconi, the esteemed Director of the Italian Trade Agency in Addis Ababa overseeing Tanzania, Uganda, Rwanda, **magnates,** and Somalia.

"In addition to showcasing cutting-edge machines, the training served as a pivotal platform for fostering collaboration and fostering direct engagement between Italian enterprises and Tanzanian business magnates," Lombardi elaborated, underscoring the importance of building robust partnerships in the agricultural sector.

Fabio Ricci, Deputy Director of FederUnacoma, underscored their pivotal partnership with Italy in addressing Tanzania's agricultural technology requirements. He pointed out that a substantial surge in imports from Italy commenced in 2022, signaling the escalating demand and impact of advanced agricultural machinery in Tanzania.

Moreover, he highlighted the upcoming international agricultural expos scheduled from November 6 to 10 in Bologna, Italy. These exhibitions, organized by FederUnacoma, offer a vital opportunity for fostering collaboration between Italy and Tanzania in the realm of agricultural innovation.

showcasing cuttingedge machines, the training served as a pivotal platform for and fostering direct engagement between Italian enterprises and **Tanzanian business**

West said margins at the commercial aircraft business will be negative to the tune of about 20 percent in the first quarter as the company pays out compensation for a near-catastrophic fuse-

its production standards.

The slowdown at Boeing is starting to be felt among airlines clamoring for aircraft as they clamor for new jets. Ryanair Holdings Plc Chief Executive Of-

move after nearly 20 years, allowing the aerospace giant to tighten oversight of its most important parts provider. West said the company probably got "a little too far ahead of itself" on the topic

"Their priorities have been on production, and not on safety and quality," Whitaker told NBC News in a Tuesday broadcast.

Bloomberg

Here's why high interest rates haven't caused a US recession

New York

AS the Federal Reserve starts its March policy-making meeting on Tuesday, interest rates remain at a 23-year high, yet unemployment is low, stocks have reached repeated record highs and there's no recession in sight.

Economists are baffled.

Whenever the Federal Reserve lifts rates to battle high inflation, the risk of a recession increases, and the US economy has typically fallen into an economic downturn under the weight of rising borrowing costs. But that has yet to happen this time around.

America's economy remains remarkably solid, despite the high interest rates. Economists say that's partly due to the ultra-low mortgage rates that homeowners locked in during the pandemic, when the Fed slashed rates almost to zero; along with the generally healthy household finances of many Americans in recent years.

Fed Chair Jerome Powell told CBS News last month that it was "critical" for the central bank to raise rates at the aggressive pace it did, even if it meant that Americans might feel some "pain."

"I was being honest in saying that we thought there would be pain. And we thought that the pain would likely come, as it has in so many past cycles, in the form of higher unemployment," Powell said. "That hasn't happened."

While it's a phenomenon that has



perplexed many economists, it has, more importantly, spared Americans so far from the unforgiving economic pain of a recession.

The 'golden handcuffs' of low mortgage rates

The main tool the Fed uses to manage the economy and implement monetary policy is setting its key interest rate, which influences borrowing costs. Whenever it needs to cool the economy by making borrowing more expensive, the

Fed raises rates, which should then bring down inflation.

A mortgage is a hefty, but important type of debt that Americans take on to purchase a home, and it is highly subject to the Fed's rate decisions. That key channel for transmitting monetary policy through to the broader, real economy hasn't functioned as well as it has in the past.

"The majority of debt is in mortgages and a lot of the people who got locked in at low rates have been telling the Fed to raise rates all it wants. They're locked in for the next 20 or 30 years," Dan North, a senior economist at Allianz Trade, told CNN.

The Fed dramatically cut interest rates in the early days of the Covid-19 pandemic to help shore up an economy dealing with high unemployment, prompting mortgage rates to also drop in tandem. But when the US economy rebounded

sharply in 2021, it unlocked a frenzy of homebuying, with mortgage rates still at ultra-low levels.

Those homeowners who locked in an affordable 3 percent mortgage rate, for instance, aren't likely to trade it for anything higher. The 30year fixed-rate mortgage averaged 6.74 percent in the week ending March 14, according to data from Freddie Mac.

That's down from a two-decade high of 7.79 percent in late October, but higher than anything seen from 2008 to 2022.

Those ultra-low rates are the socalled golden handcuffs keeping many homeowners from selling their home, even if they need to or want to.

Fed officials reflected in their latest economic projections from December that they expect to cut interest rates three times this year, which would also lower mortgage rates. They release new projections Wednesday when the Fed announces its latest interest rate decision.

Robust household balance sheets

Consumer finances were in excellent shape when the Fed began to raise rates. Many Americans bulked up their savings accounts in 2020 and 2021 thanks to pandemicrelated stimulus payments and not spending on services due to restrictions around that time.

The job market was also running red hot when the economy came roaring back from the pandemic in 2021 as employers competed for workers by jacking up wages and

beefing up benefits.

Employers are continuing to hire workers at a solid clip, unemployment remains below 4 percent and workers are still raking in stronger wage gains than anything seen in pre-pandemic times. Americans' net worth surged at a historic pace from 2019 to 2022, according to the Fed's triennial Survey of Consumer Finances.

That all means that Americans have been well equipped to deal with the effects of high interest rates.

"Consumer balance sheets have been healthy with fairly low debt rates," Karen Manna, client portfolio manager at Federated Hermes, told CNN.

"Their portfolios are now performing very well, their fixed-income investments are also giving them more, so no one is feeling forced into having to turn over their debt and reckon with higher interest rates, so this is a much different circumstance than we've seen in history," she said.

The central bank's March policymaking meeting runs Tuesday and Wednesday of this week, with a decision announced at 2 pm ET on Wednesday, followed by a press conference led by Chair Powell at 2:30 pm ET. Analysts expect the Fed will hold its benchmark lending rate steady for the fifth-straight meeting.

Guardian www.ppmedia.com

WORD



India's youth becoming job-provider instead of job-seeker, says PM Modi

NEW DELHI

PRIME Minister Narendra Modi, addressing the Startup Mahakumbh yestersday, said India has startups across sectors and people have instead of seeking jobs become a job provider.

"The world sees the capability of Indian youth. Trusting their capabilities, we decided to fuel their aspirations. We have transformed people's thinking; instead of being a job-seeker, the youth is now keen on becoming a job-provider," PM Modi said in his address

The space sector, which was once in shackles of the government, now has over 50 startups, he said. Space sector was opened to private players recently.

India today is the world's 3rd largest startup ecosystem.

There are over 1.25 lakh registered startups which generate employment for over 12 lakh people. India has over 110 unicorns, the country's startups have registered over 12,000 patents by far.

Stating that when the country is working on the roadmap for a developed India by 2047, he asserted that this Startup Mahakumbh has amazing. Strolling along the (exhibition) stalls and watching your inventions, I could feel the vibe that India's future holds many Unicorns and Decacorns. For promoting startups, India made the right decisions at the right time," PM Modi said.

As he arrived for the event, Prime Minister Narendra Modi took a walkthrough of the exhibition section, and also spoke to some of the participants.

Further, PM Modi said 'Startup India' initiative provided a platform for innovative ideas, connected those to funding sources, and began 'Tinkering Labs' and 'Incubating Labs'.

"All such efforts helped the youth from tier 2 and tier 3 cities to incubate their ideas. Today, we can proudly say that our startup ecosystem is not limited to mega cities. In fact, youth from small cities are pioneering the revolution in the startup ecosystem," he added.

Sharing a personal story, he apprised the gathering on how he is using AI to translate his speech in regional languages. His address also found mentions of India's UPI which was widely appreciated by global leaders during the G20 Summit last summer.

"During the G20 Summit, leaders from various countries were awestruck by our UPI. UPI has strengthened our efforts for financial inclusion. It has helped India to bridge the rural-urban divide. India has democratized the use of technology. We have risen above the 'haves and havenots' debate," PM Modi said.

Rwanda seeks to boost fisheries sector through AfCFTA opportunities

KIGALI

LONDON

grandchildren.

said at the time.

It had been taken by

Kate, 42, at the Scottish

royal residence Balmoral

Castle the previous sum-

mer, Kensington Palace

Earlier on Tuesday,

Getty Images flagged to its

clients that the Balmoral

picture had been "digitally

enhanced at source", with-

"Getty Images is under-

taking a review of handout

images and in accordance

with its editorial policy is

placing an editor's note on

images where the source

has suggested they could

be digitally enhanced," a

While Getty, Reuters

and other news organiza-

spokesperson said.

out giving further details.

A second royal photograph issued to the media

by Kensington Palace, the

office of Prince William

and his wife Kate, was digi-

tally altered in eight places,

RWANDA is poised to bolster its fisheries sector by capitalizing on the opportunities presented by the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) agreement, an official has said.

Emmanuel Gatera, manager of the National Standards Division at the Rwanda Standards Board (RSB), said that the fisheries sector is one of the prioritized value chains under the AfCFTA agreement.

"To promote the fisheries sector, Rwanda is actively participating in making continental harmonized standards available," he said in a recent interview with Xinhua.

Gatera outlined strategies implemented by the RSB to support both the aquaculture and fishing industries, saying "the strategies aim to not only enhance standards compliance at the national level but also position Rwanda to leverage the opportunities presented by the AfCFTA frame-

Second British royal photo

involving Kate 'digitally altered'

work." The Rwanda Agriculture and Animal Resources Development Board (RAB) has laid out plans to significantly increase the country's annual fish production through the implementation of the "National Aquaculture Strategy for Rwanda 2023-2035."

This strategy aims to produce over 106,000 tonnes of fish in Rwanda by 2035, with about 80,620 tonnes from aquaculture and an estimated 26,000 tonnes from wild fisheries, according to RAB. Xinhua



Russia to continue demanding transparent probe into Nord Stream blast - Foreign Ministry MOSCOW

RUSSIA will continue to highlight the need to carry out a transparent investigation into the act of sabotage that destroyed the Nord Stream gas pipeline in September 2022, Foreign Ministry Spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said.

"We will wait for the investigation's results. Even if the West fails to complete a probe, there's one going on here. On the international stage, we will continue to continuously emphasize the need for transparency," the diplomat told Sputnik radio.

According to Zakharova (pictured), fact-based logic suggests that Washington, namely the administration of US President Joe Biden, was the party most likely to benefit from the Nord Stream blasts.

The diplomat stressed that in the presanctions era, Russia "and European Union countries achieved fantastic results, building true and practical integration in the economic field, including in the energy sector."

"This was precisely one of the reasons why the United States started to target those ties," the Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman noted. She added that the US simply could not tolerate such a relationship between Russia and the EU and, thus, took radical measures to disrupt it.

The Nord Stream AG company reported on September 27, 2022, that three threads of the Nord Stream 1 and 2 offshore gas pipelines had suffered unprecedented damage. Swedish seismologists recorded two explosions along the Nord Stream pipelines on September 26. The Russian Prosecutor General's Office opened a case into an act of international terrorism over damage to the pipelines. US investigative journalist Seymour Hersh later published an article claiming that US Navy divers, with the assistance of Norwegian specialists, had planted explosive devices under the Nord Stream 1 and 2 gas pipelines in June 2022.

Reuters said on Tuesday after an analysis of the picture by the news organization's photo editors. The picture, released in April last year to mark what would have been the 97th birthday of the late Queen Elizabeth, showed This undated handout image issued by Kensington Palace on April 21, 2023, the former monarch surrounded by some of her grandchildren and great

with indications by Reuters of areas which appear to have been digitally altered by the source, shows a family portrait of Britain's late Queen Elizabeth II with some of her grandchildren and great grandchildren (back row, left to right) Lady Louise Mountbatten-Windsor, James, Earl of Wessex, (middle row, left to right) Lena Tindall, Prince George, Princess Charlotte, Isla Phillips, Prince Louis. (front row, left to right) Mia Tindall holding Lucas Tindall, and Savannah Phillips, at **Balmoral Castle, Britain. REUTERS**

found that there were eight places where the picture had been clearly altered by digital cloning. Reuters could not immediately establish why the alterations were made.

Digital cloning involves copying pixels to either move or mask objects or areas in a photo.

Kensington Palace has declined to comment on the photograph.

A Reuters spokesperson said: "Reuters is updating its procedures related to vetting images from Kensington Palace after confirming a second altered photograph. Consistent with the Thomson Reuters Trust Principles, Reuters requires that photos meet its editorial standards for image quality, ac-

was issued by the palace to mark Mother's Day after post-publication analysis showed it did not meet their editorial standards.

The following day, Kate issued an apology for any confusion. "Like many amateur photographers, I do occasionally exper-

iment with editing," she said in a statement on X. "I wanted to express my apologies for any confusion the family photograph we shared yesterday caused.'

The issue with the edited photographs comes amid widespread speculation on social media about Kate's health since she underwent abdominal surgery in January.

great importance.

"Over the past decades, we have seen how India has left its mark in the IT and software sector. Now we are seeing the trend of innovation and start-up culture continuously increasing in India," PM Modi said.

Taking a jibe, at Opposition political parties, he said many people try to launch political startups but the difference between them and the original startups is the latter's thrust for new ideas.

"Many people try to 'launch' startups, especially in politics, sometimes multiple times... The difference between you and them is that you're experimental. You try new ideas after the failure of one launch," he said.

Over the past decades, India has made huge strides in the software and IT sector.

"Today, the energy and vibe is

UPI is India's mobile-based fast payment system, which facilitates customers to make round-the-clock payments instantly, using a Virtual Payment Address (VPA) created by the customer.

The UPI payment system has become hugely popular for retail digital payments in India, and its adoption is increasing at a rapid pace. The share of UPI in digital payments in India has reached close to 80 per cent in 2023.

A key emphasis of the Indian government has been on ensuring that the benefits of UPI are not limited to India only; other countries, too, benefit from it. So far, Sri Lanka, Mauritius, France, UAE, and Singapore have partnered with India on emerging fintech and payment solutions.

tions did not at the time spot any issues with the handout, the examination of the photograph by Reuters photo editors has

curacy and reliability.

Earlier this month, Reuters and several other leading news organizations withdrew a photograph of Kate with her three children which

On Monday, she appeared in footage for the first time since her operation in a video posted by the Sun newspaper. **Agencies**

Putin calls on political forces to seek compromise to solve common tasks

MOSCOW

ALL political forces in the country should unite in the search for the necessary compromise for the country and the solution of the tasks at hand, Russian President Vladimir Putin said at a meeting with the leaders of the Duma factions.

"The Russian people fulfilled their duty during the elections. Now it's our turn, as authorities, to fulfill their duty before



the people," the president said. "We must, of course, unite in the interests of the state," Putin

pointed out.

"So far, we have been able to do this under rather difficult conditions of external pressure," the head of state noted, expressing hope that representatives of political forces and authorities will be able to 'work just as effectively."

"And then, undoubtedly, all the main tasks we are facing and all the main development goals will be achieved," the president concluded. Agencies

In turn, the New York Times reported, citing US officials, that a certain "pro-Ukrainian" group may have committed the act of sabotage on the gas pipelines. Agencies



This was precisely one of the reasons why the **United States started** to target those ties

ANI

China's Chongqing continues to build barrier-free environment China's Chongqing municipality is a

city built on mountains. The unique landform is an integral feature of this "mountain city" that delights both locals and tourists. However, it also means inconvenience for the 892,400 people with disabilities in the city.

SOUTHWEST

In recent years, Chongqing has been continuously promoting the construction of a barrier-free environment to make life more convenient for people with disabilities and the elderly.

This includes the construction of ramps for wheelchair passage, the installation of connecting corridors and elevators, and the renovation of old residential areas for better meeting individualized needs.

"In the past, it was a challenge for me to go downstairs, but now it is convenient to go anywhere," said Peng Haiting,

64, who has been spending over 10 years in a wheelchair. Suffering from polio since

childhood, Peng relied on crutches to move at first. He could slowly walk on level ground, but had to rely on others to carry him when faced with stairs.

Peng lives in the Zhiyin'ge residential complex in Nan'an district. In 2000, he opened a shop about 1 kilometer from

home. But he had to take a detour of 3 kilometers to reach it. "I could have taken a shortcut, but there were many slopes that I couldn't climb on my own. If I didn't want to trouble others, I had to take a longer route," Peng recalled.

Over 10 years ago, due to the worsening condition, Peng started using an electric wheelchair with the assis-

tance of the disabled persons' federation of Nan'an district.

Today, Peng's life has changed. In just a short 1-kilometer stretch from the complex to the street nearby, both the sidewalks and the road are connected by curb ramps, making it easy for Peng to move on the sidewalk. The sidewalks also have sufficient space reserved for wheelchair

passage. "Don't underestimate these curb ramps. They require careful planning," said Wang Shihong, an official with the housing and urban-rural development commission of Nan'an district.

According to Wang, the renovation of a barrier-free environment has strict norms and standards. There are 49 curb ramps in this renovated block,

all of which have a slope of ject for an old residential less than 12 degrees, and the height difference between the bottom of the slope and the road is no more than 10 millimeters.

Manhole covers are all paved with blind tiles, which reduces unnecessary detours, and the overall roadway slope has been made more gentle, Wang explained.

"Compared to cities in plain areas, the 'mountain city' faces greater challenges in constructing a barrier-free environment. Making it possible for people with disabilities to go wherever they want is not an easy task, but it has to be done," said Gong Yi, an official with the housing and urbanrural development commission of Chongqing.

In 2020, a renovation pro-

complex was launched in the Nanping neighborhood. Barrier-free facilities were not considered when these old buildings were built in the 1980s. As a large number of seniors and residents with disabilities live in the area, they hoped the project could make changes to accessibility.

According to Wang, all urban public buildings and residential complexes newly built in recent years in Nan'an district have taken barrier-free facilities into consideration, and the accessibility renovation in old residential buildings also remains a key focus.

"Before the renovation, we conducted household surveys in collaboration with community commissions to assess the living conditions of disabled

residents in the areas. This ensured that while adhering to accessibility standards for public spaces, we could also accommodate personalized needs as much as possible," Wang told People's Daily.

Mu Qiang, a resident living in Xinxinglu community of Tiansheng neighborhood, Beibei district has also benefited greatly from the barrier-free renovation. Xinxinglu community, built in the 1980s, stretches along a small hill with significant elevation changes, and over half of its 1,300-plus residents are elderly.

"In the past, we had to climb 70-step stairs to go home from the street. Given my wife's knee problems, even with my assistance, she was not able to climb so many stairs, so she

could only nestle at home all year round," Mu recalled.

During the renovation of Xinxinglu community, the installation of accessible ramps was a shared aspiration of residents.

"The design team initially proposed two relatively lowcost solutions, but one had too steep an incline, while the other had a ramp too narrow for wheelchairs to pass through," said Jia Shaobo, an official with the housing and urbanrural development commission of Beibei district.

The commission came up with a new solution - building connecting corridors and installing elevators along the streets. Although this option increased the cost by over 2 million yuan (\$278,048) compared to the previous two plans, it was definitely worth it, Jia said.

People's Daily

WORLD NEWS

Sino-Angolan friendship exemplifies China-Africa ties

LUANDA

ON Friday in Beijing, Chinese President Xi Jinping and Angolan President Joao Lourenco announced the elevation of bilateral ties to a comprehensive strategic cooperative partnership.

Angola, a Portuguese-speaking country in Southwest Africa emerging from a 27-year civil war that ended in 2002, has enjoyed a flourishing partnership with China over the past two decades. This partnership is characterized by cooperation across various fields, and Angola has achieved significant progress in rebuilding the country, industrial modernization and talent development.

As Xi said during talks with Lourenco, China-Angola cooperation is South-South cooperation and cooperation between developing countries. It is defined as mutual help between good friends, reciprocity and win-win collaboration.

Facilitating national reconstuction

Located 18 kilometers south of Luanda, Angola's capital, the "new city", Kilamba stands prominently on the horizon. More than a decade after its completion, this monumental public welfare project, executed by Chinese firms, comprises 700 buildings and 20,000 housing units, providing contemporary living conditions for its 120,000 inhabitants.

"I've been living here since January 2013, and back then, it felt like a fresh, pioneering city, with everything shining," 73-year-old resident Gaspar Pedro told Xinhua.

Pedro's home is situated in a 13-story residential building. Inside his cozy, orange-hued living room, a collection of family photos, including his daughter's wedding and the birth of his grandchildren, adorn one side of the bookshelf. Pedro enjoys a tranquil retirement life here with his wife, frequently visited by their children and grandchildren.

Mario Cassinda, who has managed a restaurant "Puro Tempero" in Kilamba for six years, believes the city has addressed more than just

This aerial photo taken on May 20, 2023 shows a ceremony for the temporary diversion of the Cuanza River at the site of the Chinese-built Caculo-Cabaca Hydropower Station in Cuanza Norte province, Angola. XINHUA housing issues.

"It was constructed on a barren land. Since the city's establishment, it has created more jobs and attracted many people from the outskirts. I can say it's a beneficial project," said Cassinda.

The City of Kilamba, formerly known as the Kilamba Kiaxi Housing Project, was initiated by Chinese company CITIC Construction. It features well-equipped facilities, including schools, water treatment plants and substations, ensuring residents enjoy a comfortable lifestyle.

Chinese engineer Qi Juntuan, who participated in the city's construction, recalled the challenges they encountered, particularly the uncommon issue of poor soil adhesion, a problem rarely encountered by Chinese engineers elsewhere.

"The team, working tirelessly day and night, eventually overcame these obstacles with techniques like layered backfilling," he said. "The thought of applying our knowledge to bring tangible improvements to the local area fills us with great motivation.'

In 2010, Xi visited Angola, when Angola and China announced the establishment of a strategic partnership. Xi personally inspected the project, spending half a day there, inspiring builders from China and Angola.

Rising from once barren land, the new city is a testament to the accelerated cooperation between the two nations.

China and Angola celebrated the 40th anniversary of their diplomatic relations in 2023, and the partnership continues to thrive. Deepened political trust and prac-

tical cooperation have benefited the people of both nations.

China has been Angola's largest trading partner, largest export market and an essential source of investment for many years, while Angola is China's second-largest trading partner in Africa.

Drummond Mafuta, president of the Board of Directors of Edicoes Novembro, one of Angola's largest media groups, commented that when the Angolan civil war ended and the country needed reconstruction, China was the first to extend a helping hand.

Mafuta said friendship with China "is and will always be marked in the history of Angola's reconstruction."

Fostering industrial development

After the talks on Friday, Xi and Lourenco jointly witnessed the signing of several bilateral cooperation documents regarding the Belt and Road cooperation plan, the economy and trade, agriculture, green development and other fields.

Tiago Quissua Armando, a scholar at Angola's Venancio de Moura Diplomacy Institute, sees the outcomes of the leaders' talks as addressing vital issues for Angola, such as economic diversification, industrial investment and agricultural modernization.

"President Lourenco's visit also includes a trip to Shandong, a Chinese province with significant experience in the agricultural sector. Angola can benefit from this experience to enhance its local industry," he said.

Last year, Shandong province signed

a friendly cooperation agreement with Bengo province of Angola, committing to strengthening cooperation in agriculture, economy, trade and vocational education.

One of the flagship Shandong enterprises in Angola is the Sino-Ord Industrial Park. Since its establishment in 2019, the park has launched six industrial projects, with around 200 Chinese employees and approximately 1,700 local workers.

In June 2021, the Angolan president visited the industrial park and praised its role in boosting local employment, increasing tax revenue, and propelling Angola's industrialization and economic diversification efforts.

"Working with colleagues from China and other countries has broadened my horizons and made me realize that only through strengthening international cooperation can our country's development be more hopeful," said Joao Paulo, a senior external relations manager who has worked at the industrial park for many years. In Luanda, the Fatima Furniture Factory of the Qingdao Yewhing Group has set an example in the local industry by providing employment opportunities for hundreds of families.

"Having the factory or local production not only provides the product but also creates jobs, allowing more Angolans to have a source of sustainability for their families. Now, everyone here dreams of becoming an excellent technician," said Wilson Manuel, a 30-year-old human resources manager at the furniture factory.

Today, products such as cabinets and wardrobes from the factory account for 40 percent of the domestic market in Angola, while the factory's sofa brand occupies a quarter of the market share.

Angola's Minister of Industry and Commerce Rui Miguens said China's industrial development has raised living standards. He noted that Angola hopes to learn from China's experience in industrialization and looks forward to more Chinese companies investing in Angola.

Cultivating future talent

Luis Erivaldo, a young Angolan working at Huawei, developed a strong interest in communication technology during his school years. After four rounds of interviews, he joined Huawei Angola and, over six years, grew from a freshman to a technical director. Xinhua

Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi (L) shakes hands with his Australian counterpart Penny Wong, in

China, Australia to foster stable development of partnership CANBERRA

CHINA and Australia yesterday agreed to promote the stable development of the bilateral comprehensive strategic partnership, with strengthening communication and increasing cooperation.

As China-Australia relations are back on the right track, there should be no hesitation, no yawing and no turning back, and bilateral ties should move forward, said visiting Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi while holding the seventh China-Australia Foreign and Strategic Dialogue with his Australian counterpart Penny Wong.

That is in line with the common interests of the two peoples and the general expectations of regional countries, said Wang, who is also a member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China Central Committee.

The two countries should work together to establish a more stable, more fruitful strategic partnership, Wang said, pointing to the fact that this year marks the 10th anniversary of the bilateral comprehensive strategic partnership.

He said that ups and downs of the past 10 years have not only shown lessons that need to be learned, but also accumulated experiences that need to be cherished.

It is imperative to insist on mutual respect, mutually beneficial and win-win cooperation, independence, and seeking common ground while reserving differences in developing bilateral relations, according to the Chinese foreign minister.

Wang said that China is willing to work further with Australia to prepare for high-level exchanges, fully restart and make good use of consultation and dialogue mechanisms in various fields, give full play to complementary advantages, consolidate cooperation in the areas of energy, mining, agricultural products, tap potentials of cooperation in new energy, digital economy, green development, climate change and other fields, and continue to make the cake of com-

Donald Trump wins Republican presidential primary in Illinois

ILLINOIS

FORMER US President Donald primary in Illinois, reported The Trump in Illinois by nearly 17

Decision Desk HQ, The Hill, there are 64 GOP delegates up elections, for grabs in Illinois. Earlier in The Hill re-Trump has won the Republican 2020, President Joe Biden beat ported.



2020 campaign, though Trump will run this time under the spectre of 91 felony charges related a chieved a record of accomplish-

to allegations that he plotted to ments and missteps for voters to

Biden is expected to mirror the adult film star ahead of the 2016 election.

However, Trump has now







Hill, citing Decision Desk HQ.

Trump, however, has already achieved the required delegate threshold he needs to secure the Republican nominations, and his win in Illinois adds to his winning streak on the GOP side.

According to a tracker from

points, and Trump lost the state to former Democratic candidate Hillary Clinton back in 2016.

Notably, this year, Biden has clinched the Democratic nod and is set to win as many as 147 delegates from the state as both of them head for a rematch in



on March 13, while, Biden secured the Democratic nomination a day before. The long-anticipated rematch of Trump and

overturn his 2020 election defeat, CNN reported. The charges included that he played a lead role in the January 6, 2021, insurrection at the US Capitol; illegally took classified documents from the White House; and covered up hush money payments to an

weigh.

Moreover, Biden is so far running a similar campaign to 2020, appealing to concerns over Trump's authoritarian behaviour and a middling economy, according to CNN. ANI

mon interests bigger.

China hopes that Australia will take concrete measures in upholding the principles of market economy and fair competition rules, thus providing a fair, just, transparent and non-discriminatory business environment for Chinese enterprises to invest and operate in Australia, he said. Xinhua

JERUSALEM

ISRAELI Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Tuesday rejected the US call to cancel a ground operation in Rafah city, where about 1.5 million displaced Palestinians resided, but agreed to send a delegation to Washington for discussions.

The White House confirmed in a statement that Netanyahu and US President Joe Biden agreed in a phone call on Monday, that their teams would meet "soon" in Washington to "exchange views and discuss alternative approaches" to a major ground operation in Rafah. Netanyahu's office said in a state-

ment that the delegation, led by Strategic Affairs Minister Ron Dermer, will be dispatched next week the fighting."



"for the sake of the continuation of

said in an address to the parliament's Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee that a ground assault is the only way to defeat Hamas militants in Rafah. He said he "made it as clear as possible" to Biden that Israel is "determined to complete the elimination of (Hamas) battal-

Earlier on Tuesday, Netanyahu to do this without a ground incursion."

> Meanwhile, Israeli troops have continued their raid on the al-Shifa Hospital compound in Gaza City for the second day, attacking the enclave's largest hospital with tanks and airstrikes.

The Israel Defense Forces said in ions in Rafah, and there is no way a statement that the troops killed

more than 50 Palestinian militants and about 300 have been detained during the raid, which targeted "senior" Hamas militants. Two Israeli soldiers were killed during the raid, IDF announced.

Israel launched its offensive on Gaza on Oct 7 in response to Hamas's attack and immediately implemented a blockade on water, food, electricity, and medicine, creating acute shortages.

US gets 'mixed signals' after Niger ending US military ties

RAMSTEIN AIR BASE

THE United States has received "mixed signals" from Niger following the ruling junta's weekend announcement that it had revoked an accord allowing US troops to operate in the West African country, the top US general said on Tuesday.

Air Force General CO Brown, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, did not elaborate on those mixed signals but his comments appeared to suggest at least some support from within Niger's ruling junta for a continued US military presence.

"As you saw over the course of the weekend, there was some announcements from Niger about our relationship. But even since

then, there have been some mixed signals that we received," Brown told reporters during a news conference at Ramstein Air Base in Germany.

"So we will continue to make plans and prepare - if we stay or depart."

At the State Department, deputy spokesperson Vedant Patel said Washington was still communicating with Niger's ruling military council, known as the CNSP. "We are remaining in touch with the CNSP and seeking additional clarification of their comments, as well as discussing potential next steps," Patel said.

Prior to the July 2023 coup, Niger had been a key partner for Washington's fight against Islamist insurgents in the region.



Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Air Force General CQ Brown, participates in a virtual Ukraine Defense Contact Group meeting, Nov 22, 2023, at the Pentagon in Washington. AP

The military junta that seized power in Niamey has kicked out French and European forces and quit the Economic Community of West African States regional bloc. Like juntas in neighboring Mali and Burkina Faso, it has also strengthened military ties with Russia.

About 1,000 US military personnel remain in Niger, although their counterterrorism operations have been halted.

At a meeting last week in Niger, senior Biden administration officials expressed concerns about the country's potential development of ties to Russia and Iran, the Pentagon said.

High-level Russian defense officials including Yunus-bek Yevkurov, Russia's deputy defense minister, have visited the country and met with the junta leader.

The prime minister of Niger's ruling junta, Ali Mahamane Lamine Zeine, visited Iran in January.

In its statement on Saturday, the ruling junta said it rejected what it called false allegations by the US delegation that Niger "would have signed a secret agreement on uranium with the Islamic Republic of Iran."

Patel did not enter into specifics of the disagreements between the US and Niger on Tuesday, but said officials made "it quite clear that we believed that the CNSP was heading down a path that we just disagree with and took a lot of issues.'

Guardian Sport



Minister for Culture, Arts, and Sports Damas Ndumbaro (4th L), is pictured handing over a trophy to Kiomoni FC's skipper after the latter's club had triumphed in this year's Odo Ummy Cup tournament with 3-1 win over Nguvumali FC in the penalty shootout of the final held at CCM Mkwakwani Stadium in Tanga recently. The champion also got cash prize of 3m/-, a bajaj, a cow, a set of jerseys, and a football. Others are Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM)'s Tanga Urban Constituency Member of Parliament Ummy Mwalimu (3rd R), and CCM's Tanga Chairman Rajab Abdulrahman (3rd L). PHOTO: CORRESPONDENT JU-MANNE JUMA

'Yanga has advantage over Mamelodi Sundowns in CAF CL first leg showdown'

By Correspondent Cheji Bakari, Tanga

A SECTION of soccer stakeholders in Tanga is adamant that Yanga can successfully challenge Mamelodi Sundowns in the first leg of this season's CAF Champions League last eight scheduled to take place at Benjamin Mkapa Stadium in Dar es Salaam on March 30.

The NBC Premier League champion will come up against South Africa's DStv Premiership holder in the last eight whereas Tanzania's other envoy in the showdown, Simba SC, will confront Egypt's Al Ahly in the knockout round.

Simba SC and Yanga booked a place in the premier continental club showpiece's last eight having held sway in the Group Stage of the cally and has lately been doing well in CAF inter-club showdowns.

Mamelodi Sundowns also had a bigger number of players in South Africa's senior national side which excelled in the 2023 AFCON in Ivory Coast- having taken the third place out of 24 sides that took part in the showdown.

Some veteran football players explained that Yanga's fanatics should hardly worry about their club taking on Mamelodi Sundowns because Yanga is of late one of the best outfits in East and Central Africa-having turned out to be consistent in continental showdowns for the past two years.

The veterans also noted Yanga has a good tactician in Argentinian Miguel Gamondi- an experienced

Injuries now frustrate Yanga's preparations for CAF CL quarterfinals

By Correspondent Na Nchimbi

ANGA is hopeful of dealing with a growing list of injured players ahead of the club's CAF Champions League last-eight tie versus Mamelodi Sundowns penned for March 30 in Dar es Salaam.

Several key players of the Tanzanian squad had to leave the pitch during this season's NBC Premier League tie versus Azam FC which ended in a 2-1 loss for the former at Benjamin Mkapa Stadium in Dar es Salaam on Sunday evening.

Ivorians Koaussi Yao and Pacome Zouzoua came off after picking injuries, adding to the list of injured footballers at Yanga that has, among others, midfielder Khalid Aucho who is battling a late fitness clearance to play against Mamelodi Sundowns.

With 11 days left before the premier continental tournament's match is played, Yanga's tactician Miguel Gamondi will be scratching his head to find ways to field fringe footballers should key players fail to heal in time. Yanga's Manager Walter Harrison revealed there



Yanga's Ugandan midfielder Khalid Aucho has been sidelined by an injury. PHOTO: COUR-TESY OF YANGA

are still days to assess the outfit's injured players and see the magnitude of their injuries and how they regain their fitness in time. "I think the injured players have picked minor injuries but we are waiting for the medical

team to give us a report so that we can have a good rehabilitation process with the players, we still have many days to work on their fitness to have them against Mamelodi Sundowns," the official noted. The official said:

eport "What happened today (Sunday) against Azam pro- FC is a sign that the yers, league is a marathon days and we will be back to picking good results after correcting our mistakes in the upcoming games."

"Our fans should not



be worried about these types of games because, in a duel against Mamelodi, we will have a different approach and mentality which is healthy for our mindset, what happened against Azam FC is already history and we focus on having the whole group healthy," he maintained.

The coming days will be crucial for Yanga as the squad waits for positive news about the injured players.

Yao and Zouzoua have contributed significantly in goals and assists for Yanga in both domestic and continental assignments this season, in this case, the duo's absence will be a big blow.

After the loss, Yang president Hersi Said met the players in the dressing room and told them to keep their heads up and focus on the upcoming games- given it is hard to win all league games and results like the one the side posted are normal.

Gamondi will be tested in the depth and quality of his remaining players as the NBC Premier League and CAF Champions League quarterfinals gather pace.

tournament.

The teams have as a result witnessed the East African country writing history as the only one to have entered two sides in the showdown's last eight this season.

Yanga finished second in Group D with eight points, Al Ahly ended as the group leader with 11 points whilst Simba SC finished second in Group B, trailing the leader- Ivory Coast's ASEC Mimosas.

According to CAF Champions League rules both group winner and runner-up make it to quarterfinal stage.

After CAF had conducted the quarterfinal draw in Cairo, Egypt on March 12 some fanatics had expressed worry once it was confirmed Mamelodi Sundowns would lock horns with Yanga in the knockout phase.

Such a worry came about given the stakeholders believe Mamelodi Sundowns is a prominent outfit in Africa, having won many trophies domesti-

gaffer in African soccer.

The Argentinian moreover is skilled in ensuring his club efficiently takes on opponents depending on the type of fixtures and tournaments. "Yanga is, actually, the best team

that has done good registration. The outfit is made up of experienced players with what it takes to solidly play more than one position on the pitch," Richard Nicodemus noted.

They further pointed out that Yanga boasts depth, considering there are competent footballers in almost every position in the club.

"Pacôme Zouzoua, Djigui Diarra, Dickon Job, Nickson Kibabage, Lomalisa Mutambala, Stephane Aziz Ki, Augustine Okrah, Joseph Guede, Kennedy Musonda, Clement Mzize, Kouassi Yao, Ibrahim Hamad, Khalid Aucho, and Mudathir Yahya are some of Yanga's players who know how to play according to a game, there is no doubt Tanzanians need to be confident," Omari Kijazi said.

Gerezani Primary School's pupils are pictured showcasing their soccer skills at Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete Youth Park's ground in Dar es Salaam recently. PHOTO: CORRESPONDENT JUMANNE JUMA

Poor results haunt Singida Fountain Gate FC

By Correspondent Cheji Bakari, Tanga

A string of poor results is haunting Singida Fountain Gate FC as the second round of this season's NBC Premier League is gathering pace.

Such a trend has forced the outfit's leadership to fire interim head coach Thabo Senong and his technical bench and hire Tanzanian Jamhuri Kihwelo to coach the side for the remaining matches.

Singida Fountain Gate FC is one of the NBC Premier League sides that signed several top footballers, seeking to embark on a good run in the top flight.

The side lost key footballers during mini transfer window, having sold seven players to

Ihefu SC. The side further had left full-

back Gadiel Michael and goalgetter Meddie Kagere moving to South Africa's Cape Town Spurs and Namungo FC on loan.

In some of Singida Fountain Gate FC's recent clashes, the squad went down 3-1 to Simba SC at Azam Complex Stadium in Dar es Salaam.

Before the loss, the side- now relocated to Mwanza- had two defeats and one draw. It lost to Tanzania Prisons (3-1) and Kagera Sugar (1-0), and managed a 1-1 draw with Azam FC.

Having gained less satisfactory outcomes, Senong claimed that the absence of key playerswho mostly made the starting squad -has had his technical

bench failing to get a better squad for fixtures.

One of the soccer stakeholders revealed the key footballers were the ones who played a crucial role in the club's success and their absence is now observed.

"Poor results have had Singida Fountain Gate FC dropping to the relegation zone. The club's key players have moved to Ihefu SC," Dotto Mnehele stated.

The team's footballers that headed to Ihefu SC during the mini-transfer period are Elvis Rupia, Duke Abuya, Morice Chukwu, Joash Onyango, Mukrim Issa, Marouf Tchakei and Abubakar Khomeini.

By Correspondent Joseph Mchekadona

TANZANIA's Lightweight boxer Ezra Mwanjwango on Monday became the country's second pugilist to garner a medal in the ongoing All-Africa Games in Ghana.

Musa Maregesi was the country's first boxer to win a bronze medal in the ongoing Games. Mwanjwango last Monday night beat DR Congo boxer Frazier Mujinga 5-0 and the former will tomorrow face Zambian Andrew Chilata in the semi-finals.

Mwanjwango earlier beat William Mohamed of Seychelles through Referee Stopped the Contest (RSC) to sail through to the last eight.

Commenting on the two bronze medals won by the boxers, Boxing Federation of Tanzania (BFT) president Lukelo Wililo said the medals are for all Tanzanians, adding he expects more medals to be won in the showdown.

Dar boxers win two medals in 2024 All-Africa Games

He said the medals are an honour and a present to President Samia Suluhu Hassan who is an advocate of sports development and growth in the country.

Wililo revealed: "So far boxing has already brought two bronze medals, we hope more medals will be won in the Games which are taking place in Ghana."

"The two medals are an award to our President Samia who has had her tenure seeing the sports sector enjoying good support from the government, the medals are the fruits of the seeds she is sowing in the sports industry," he said. Meanwhile, Tanzania's boxer Lucas Changalawe on Monday qualified for the quarterfinals of the Games after beating Egyptian boxer Abdelgawwad Salah.

The win by Changalawe was revenge given the Egyptian- who had already qualified for the Paris Olympics - previously defeated the Tanzanian in the 2022 African qualifiers.

The Egyptian is also the All-Africa Games' Lightweight defending champion, given the boxer clinched the gold medal in the category in the Games that took place in Morroco in 2019.

Salah beat Changalawe 3-2 in last year's African boxing qualifier for the Paris 2024 Olympics which took place in Senegal.

SOCCER.NEWS

in the final.

attacks by Hamas.

But for the conflict, Israel

may have qualified automati-

cally as they were in a strong

position prior to the October 7

On their return to action

in November they suffered

a shock 1-0 defeat to Kosovo

and then failed to win either

of crucial qualifiers against

Romania and Switzerland,

Robinho awaits fate on serving nine-year rape sentence in Brazil

RIO DE JANEIRO

BRAZIL's justice system later yesterday was to decide whether former Manchester City and Real Madrid striker Robinho will serve his nine-year rape sentence, handed down by an Italian court, in the South American country.

Brazil's Superior Court of Justice (STJ) was to examine the Italian request to approve the prison sentence that was imposed in 2017 and ratified in 2022.

"I hope that here in Brazil I can have the voice that I didn't have there," Robinho, who has protested his innocence, said in an interview with Brazilian network TV Record on Sunday.

Robson de Souza, popularly known as "Robinho", remains free despite his conviction for being among a group of six men who gang raped a young Albanian woman out celebrating her 23rd birthday at a Milan nightclub in 2013.

Former Brazil international Robinho was playing his club football for AC Milan at the time.

His sentence was upheld by Italy's highest court, after which Italian prosecutors issued an international arrest warrant.

Brazil does not extradite its nationals, however, and Italy asked that Robinho be made to serve his sentence in his home country instead.

On Sunday, Robinho accused the Italian justice system of "racism".

"It was consensual," Robinho told TV Record. "I never denied it (the encounter). I could have denied it because my DNA was not there, but I'm not a liar.

"I played for four years in Italy and I got tired of seeing stories about racism. The same people who do nothing about racism, which I repudiate, are the ones who condemned me."

If the ruling goes against him, the 40-year-old could still remain free while awaiting an appeal to Brazil's Supreme Court.

Brazil president Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva has said that he hopes Robinho can "serve" the sentence on Brazilian soil.

According to Brazilian media, magistrates are expected to approve Italy's request.

"Approval is not common, because the law that allows it is relatively recent. It would be an unprecedented case in Brazil," lawyer Leonardo Pantaleao told AFP.

Meanwhile, Robinho's case and that of former Barcelona and Paris Saint-Germain defender Dani Alves have sparked criticism over the failure of football authorities in Brazil to condemn violence against women.

In February, former Brazil international fullback Alves, 40, was sentenced to four-and-a-half years in prison for raping a woman in a nightclub in Barcelona. AFP

Japan warns football fans not to go to North Korea for World Cup qualifier

Israel eye history as final three Euro 2024 places up for grabs

LONDON

aiming to make history by reaching the European Championship for the first time amid the ongoing conflict in the Middle East, with the final three places at Euro 2024 up for grabs over the next week.

Twelve teams still have dreams of reaching Germany later this year with three sets of four nations to face off in today's semi-finals and the winners progressing to a final on March 26.

Israel became a member of Europe's governing body UEFA 20 years ago, but are yet to reach the continent's major international competition.

The war between Israel and Hamas has forced Alon Hazan's men to try and finish the job on the road with no international matches going ahead in Israel for the forseeable future due to security concerns.

Today's semi-final against Iceland will be played in Hungary's capital Budapest, with the winners facing Bosnia and Herzegovina or Ukraine away



home but were instead moved to Hungary.

"(It) is more important for us that we can be proud of our country and give some happiness to change the atmosphere," Hasan told Sky. "This is more important than being part of the tournament."

Israel have faced calls to be banned from international football from a group of Midwhich should have been at dle Eastern football associa-

tions, including 2034 World Cup hosts Saudi Arabia. And UEFA will be braced for protests and extra security measures should they reach the finals.

Israel are favoured to get past Iceland, but could face a much sterner test in another nation determined to give 14 qualifiers for the Euros in their war-torn people cause to cheer in Ukraine.

After narrowly missing out on the 2022 World Cup, a squad containing the likes of RealMadrid's AndriyLunin, captain Oleksandr Zinchenko of Arsenal and Chelsea winger Mykhailo Mudryk are desperate to make amends.

Whoever progresses from the League B playoff will face Belgium, Romania and Slovakia in Euro 2024 Group E.

In the League A playoff, Barcelona striker Robert Lewandowski is looking to lead Poland to a fifth consecutive Euros. They host Estonia in the semi-finals with the winners travelling to either Wales or Finland, who face off in the Euro 2024 Group F. semi-finals in Cardiff.

Wales boss Rob Page is relying on home advantage after losing his generational talent Gareth Bale to retirement since the 2022 World Cup.

Former Arsenal midfielder Aaron Ramsey is also an injury doubt, but Wales have only lost once in their last Cardiff. Qualification could be a poisoned chalice though with France, the Netherlands and Austria awaiting the winners in Group D of the Euros. In the League C playoff, 2004 winners Greece are the favourites to reach their first major tournament in a decade. They face a Kazakhstan side that shocked Denmark and Finland in qualifying to narrowly miss out on automatic progression to Germany.

A Georgia team featuring Napoli forward Khvicha Kvaratskhelia and Luxembourg are also aiming to get to their first ever major tournament.

The chance to face Cristiano Ronaldo's Portugal awaits the winners, alongside Turkey and the Czech Republic in

AFP

Newcastle are at a crossroads - this is the path they must now take

By Richard Jolly

NEWCASTLE United have been knocked out of the title race and the contest for the Champions League spots. They exited the Carabao Cup and the FA Cup at the quarter-final stage. They went out of the Champions League and, in effect, into and out of the Europa League on the same evening. They are 10th in the table, closer in points and position to Bournemouth than Manchester United. "If people say our season is over, that is absolute nonsense," countered Eddie Howe. Over? Perhaps not,



their identity to try a low block or, on Saturday, a back five. There have been games where they have subsided too feebly, matches where they have looked exhausted or demoralised, days when they needed substitutes in midfield or attack and had none to call upon.

The limitations of individuals, concealed by their momentum and relentlessness last season, have become glaringly apparent. But it remains the case that Howe still often has half-and-half team selections: five or six of his starting 11 predated the takeover and

Yet, if Newcastle are at a crossroads, they have to proceed with Howe. He has support in the boardroom and the stands. He has earned the right to carry on. This year, as he said, had the potential to be very different.

But this year has been worse for him, just as it has been for his players. Anthony Gordon and Jamaal Lascelles have had better seasons this year but each was a fringe figure before.

The newcomers Miley and Livramento have shown promise. But while Alexander Isak has been brilliant were not bought with at times, Guimaraes

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IAPAN has warned football fans not to attempt to travel to "hostile" North Korea for next week's World Cup qualifier in Pyongyang.

The Tokyo foreign ministry "strongly requests the general public to refrain" from attending the match on March 26, the first for the two sides in North Korea since 2011.

"As you know, North Korea takes a hostile view of Japan and travel is not recommended for the general public," it said on X, formerly Twitter.

Japan and North Korea play in Tokyo on Thursday as part of qualifying for the 2026 World Cup, before the return fixture next week.

Japan's long-standing advice for its nationals is not to travel to North Korea but it does not expressly forbid them from doing so. The two countries do not have diplomatic relations. It was unclear how many fans, if any, would try to travel. They would need a North Korean visa to do so.

Fourteen government officials will however accompany the Japan team for the match as well as a small number of media outlets, Japanese broadcaster NHK reported.

The first leg of their women's playoff for the Paris Olympics was switched from the North Korean capital to neutral ground in Saudi Arabia last month.

Relations have long been dogged by issues including compensation for Japan's brutal occupation of the Korean peninsula between 1910 and 1945 and more recently by Pyongyang's firing of missiles over Japanese territory.

The abduction by North Korean agents of Japanese citizens in the 1970s and 1980s -- forced to train spies in Japanese language and customs -has also long been a major point of contention.

Thursday's match in Tokyo was expected to see a sizeable contingent of North Korean supporters from among Japan's long-standing ethnic Korean community of about 300,000 people.

Most are descendants of civilians taken from their homes during Japan's colonisation of the Korean peninsula.

but it has lost its lustre Eddie Howe applauds the Newcastle support after exiting the FA Cup (Getty) and much of its mean-

perceived.

tential is there."

AFP

battle for seventh place, clubs, Howe was not making excuses when for a Conference League place; perhaps, despite citing the absentees in the damage they ultimitigation; and because mately did to England's it was not just the number of the games but the coefficient, for a Europa League spot. Their finish nature of them.

For years, Newcastle to this campaign could shape the next, Howe arhad too few big games. gued. There is the ques-Suddenly, they had too tion of interpretation, of many: Carabao Cup ties how their version of secwith City, Manchester ond-season syndrome is United and Chelsea, City again in the FA Cup, Eu-

Last year was overropean encounters with achievement; this year, AC Milan, Paris Saint-Germain and Borussia underachievement. If they had occurred in Dortmund, plus a Prereverse order, with top mier League fixture list half and a couple of cup that meant they have quarter-finals followed played 10 of their "big by top four and a cup fisix" matches by the nal, it may have seemed middle of March. There smooth progress. Now, has been no respite, no for a club that had long reprieve.

And yet, it was a searealised last season may be unrepeatable, merely son that began with the targeting a top-six spot brightest of false dawns, this year, it is a matter the 5-1 demolition of Asof the level of regression ton Villa that suggested and the consequences. Newcastle might be the Some of the mitigation second finest team in came from Pep Guardiothe country and Sandro la. "It was the first time Tonali the signing of the they play four competisummer.

tions and when it is the It was an early indifirst time, it is not easy for cation that Newcastle's any club," said the Manpeak level remains chester City manager, high. A curiosity of an after ending Newcastle's underwhelming camquest for a first FA Cup paign is that their best since 1955. "I am pretty has still been very good: sure they will take lesin home-and-away demolitions of Villa, the evisceration of PSG, the home wins over Arsenal, felt doubly damaging: Chelsea and United.

given the severity of an But, with one excepinjury list that meant tion, those triumphs are that, unlike some of his all months ago. Since

ing. There is still the counterparts at other beating United, they are a place in the last 16 of 14th over 14 games, with the Champions League; and the shoulder injury only Brentford and Shef-

field United possessing a worse defensive record. In all competitions, a side who conceded the joint fewest goals in the Premier League last season have let in 40 in their last 20 matches. The numbers are horrific. Newcastle, who were so hard to play against, have been easy opponents at times. They have been the opposite of what they were, of what they want to be.

"This season could have ended up very different," Howe argued. "The big moments have gone against us."

Two, in particular, stand out: the contentious injury-time penalty given against Tino Livramento in Paris, perhaps ultimately costing them

added funds. Mentions of "the world's richest club" have become rarer as PSR constraints have limited their ability to spend.

Nick Pope suffered late And Newcastle are paying the price for in the win against United their first bad transfer four days later. He has window of their new missed those 20 games, which have brought 10 era. Thus far, only Livramento ranks as a sucdefeats, and an 11th on penalties; others have cess, Lewis Hall, Harvey conceded those 40 goals. Barnes and Tonali as fail-Two injuries have hurt ures. So much can come Newcastle still more back to the banned Italian: the over-reliance than all the many others: losing Pope and Joelinon Bruno Guimaraes, the way Lewis Miley ton, the sweeper-keeper and shot-stopper and and Sean Longstaff have the man whose bruising been overworked, the loss of solidity in midphysicality in midfield meant Newcastle's idenfield. The feeling that, tity could be intensity. after 18 months of nearflawless dealing, New-They have lost their castle's plans went awry is shown by the reality physical edge, sometimes trying to play last that Dan Ashworth, who high-tempo was supposed to oversee football without the their continued rise, is same running power and instead on gardening with far more fixtures, leave while Manchester

classy at points, too few of last season's regulars have hit the same standards all year: because of injury in the cases of Pope and Joelinton, Joe Willock and Callum Wilson, but Sven Botman has been nowhere near as good since his return from the sidelines, Kieran Trippier had an uncharacteristic run of mistakes, Miguel Almiron's goals have dried up and the locals Longstaff and Dan Burn, who gave the feelgood factor to a Saudi-owned project, have come in for criticism from their own. It may underline how unlikely last year was. Yet, as Newcastle look to salvage something from this campaign, to get themselves another ven-

ture into Europe, some attention shifts to what comes next, to whether next season will be more like last season, or this. United pursue him.

THE INDEPENDENT

GWIII by David Chikoko

season's

sometimes

Now it has not been.



shedding

sons from that. The po-The added workload

Bulgaria refuses to underestimate Taifa Stars

SPORT

Israel eye history as final three Euro 2024 places up for grabs



Tanzania Premier League Board (TPLB) Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Almas Kasongo.

TPLB clarifies Al Hilal's potential place in NBC PL

By Correspondent Seth Mapoli

THE Tanzania Premier League Board (TPLB) has addressed inquiries regarding the participation of Sudanese club Al Hilal in the NBC Premier League.

Almas Kasongo, TPLB Chief Executive Officer, confirmed that regulations will be adjusted to accommodate the Tanzania Football Federation's (TFF) decision.

He stated: "If the TFF Executive Committee is resolute, then the TFF and TPLB secretariats will collaborate to establish regulations permitting Al Hilal's participation in our league."

Kasongo acknowledged the public's confusion: "Many have questioned how a Sudanese club like Al Hilal can compete in NBC Premier League."

"They want to know the basis, reasoning, and order of participation. Tanzania Premier League Board received Al Hilal's request and processed it for submission to the TFF Executive Committee."

By CorreSpondent Michael Mwebe

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Tanzania is positioned 38 places behind Bulgaria in the FIFA rankings and has never qualified for the World Cup in the team's history.

However, the Bulgarian coach pointed out that Taifa Stars played in the African Cup of Nations finals in January and insisted he is expecting them to be a threat.

The tactician revealed: "First of all, I want to note that we accepted the offer to participate in this tournament, as Azerbaijan creates very good conditions for us. Also, we won't have to travel too far for these two games." "In addition, the national team of Azerbaijan itself is very good. This is a serious opponent - a team that beat Sweden 3-0 deserves respect," he pointed out.

OF TANZANIA FOOTBALL FEDERATION

"In addition, the national team of Azerbaijan has many players from Karabakh, which competes successfully in the Europa League," the coach disclosed.

"As for the national team of Tanzania, they are also a good team that participated in the last African Cup of Nations. It will be interesting to play against them as well."

He insisted: "Creating il-

lusions that we are going to play with weak teams is not so. We should not start with the attitude that we are playing teams below our level. The main thing I want to see is that I want us to be better than the previous two games."

Iliev insisted: "We will now show the players footage of Tanzania from the Africa Cup of Nations. They will be introduced to the team scheme."

"There is a change of coach for the hosts, but I hope there will be no big changes to surprise us with. It will be best to look strong and look for good results."

FIFA is launching a new project called the 'FIFA Series'. According to the new project, instead of the official friendly games on the FIFA calendar, a mini-tournament will be organized with the participation of national teams from differ-

ent confederations.
FIFA's idea with the introduction of the new tournament is to provide more matches, but also to pit teams against each other that would not meet anyway. There is currently no prize pool and no trophy
will be awarded.

One of the first such competitions is planned to be held in Baku from March 18-26.

In addition to the 'FIFA Series' hosts Azerbaijan, the mini-tournament will involve Tanzania as the only African team, Bulgaria representing Europe, and Mongolia from the Asian continent.

Tanzania will tomorrow open their campaign against Bulgaria, the same day hosts Azerbaijan face Mongolia. Bulgaria and Tanzania have never met before.

Taifa Stars will return to action on March 25 against Mongolia, while Azerbaijan faces Mongolia.

Ally: Simba SC's past quarterfinal lessons key to pursuit of CAF CL semi-final spot

By Correspondent Nassir Nchimbi

WITH Simba SC having opted to lure fans in Tanzania to come in big numbers at Benjamin Mkapa Stadium in Dar es Salaam on March 29 when the side takes on Al Ahly in the CAF Champions League quarterfinal, the former's Information and Communication Manager Ahmed Ally reveals they have learned a lot from their previous campaigns. Speaking in Dar es Salaam vesterday, Ally said Simba SC has learned valuable experience from the side's previous quarterfinal matches against TP Mazembe, Kaizer Chiefs and Wydad Casablanca-Knowledge gained from the quarterfinal elimination has turned out to be key to the Tanzanian outfit's quest for qualification for the semi-finals. He said the match against Al Ahly would not be an easy fixture, as the latter has reached the CAF Champions League final five times in the last six years- winning three times and losing twice, as a result, so many precautions ought to be in place to get over the hump. Ally revealed: "This year, we want to play the semi-finals and that is our goal, we have learned many valuable experiences from our previous quarterfinal fixtures, and, this year, it will be different."



Simba SC is currently on a nine-day training camp in Zanzibar where the side will play one friendly match to test its performer's prowess ahead of the first leg scheduled for next week at Benjamin Mkapa Stadium.

The Msimbazi Street club will be boosted by the return of Aishi Manula, Mohamed Hussein, Kennedy Juma,



"Their approval necessitates a formal procedure to allow Al Hilal's participation in the Mainland Tanzania Premier League."

"Concerns regarding Al Hilal's impact on league standings and continental tournaments' participation have also arisen," Kasongo continued.

The TPLB leader noted: "Once the regulations are finalized, these queries will be comprehensively addressed."

This revised statement clarifies the TPLB's role in facilitating Al Hilal's potential participation.

It acknowledges public concerns and assures a transparent process through regulation development.

According to Clifford Ndimbo, TFF Media and Communication Officer, Al Hilal will be included in the league fixtures but their points would not contribute to the final standings. Essentially, these matches will be treated as high-profile friendlies.

Despite the lack of points competition, Ndimbo emphasizes the numerous advantages this inclusion presents.

He anticipates a significant surge in fan attendance for matches featuring Al Hilal, leading to increased revenue for Tanzanian teams through gate collections.

"This is a rare opportunity for our teams to test themselves against a team of Al Hilal's caliber," Ndimbo said.

"It will undoubtedly elevate their performance levels as they learn from a top-tier opponent."

Furthermore, Al Hilal's participation is expected to generate international interest. Their global fanbase will be curious about their performance in Tanzania, potentially leading to wider media coverage for the league.

Ndimbo confirmed that Azam TV, the official league broadcaster, has already committed to live-streaming all Al Hilal's matches.

Ndimbo revealed that Al Hilal's request stemmed from the ongoing political instability in Sudan, which has disrupted sporting activities.

The participation in Mainland Tanzania Premier League presents a solution to maintain their players' fitness and competitive edge.

In another noteworthy move, TFF has also opened the door for Sudanese referees currently residing in Tanzania to officiate league matches.

This initiative aims to further enhance the overall quality of officiating in the competition.

Al Hilal and Sudanese referees' presence marks a unique chapter in Tanzanian football history. It remains to be seen how this experiment will unfold.

He stressed: "We want to go to the semi-finals and preparations for bat-



Simba SC Information and Communication Manager, Ahmed Ally

tling for the semi-final spot are underway."

The official stated: "We need to acknowledge that playing against Al Ahly is not easy. They have their record in this competition with making it to the final always becoming the aim, this match won't be easy but we will succeed in making it to the semifinals."

"March 29 is a day we will fight for our value, and every fan has to come to the stadium and every Simba SC branch leader in Dar es Salaam has to make sure he/she convinces fans to come to buy tickets, last time in the clash against Jwaneng Galaxy we had 32,000 fans and in the fixture against Al Ahly, we need a full house of 60,000 fans," Ally noted. and Kibu Denis who will return to the training camp after playing for Taifa Stars in an international friendly against Bulgaria tomorrow.

Simba SC was last season eliminated from the CAF Champions League last eight by Wydad Casablanca by penalties after the two outfits had managed a 1-1 aggregate result in the two legs and, this season, the former is aiming to secure a place in the semi-finals for the first time in the club's history.

Simba SC came up against Al Ahly in the inaugural Africa Football League quarterfinals and the former crashed out having lost to the latter via an away-goal rule.

The clubs ended up recording draws in the home and away fixtures, managing a 2-2 draw in the first leg in Dar es Salaam and thereafter recording a 1-1 draw in the rematch at Cairo International Stadium in Egypt.

As far as records between the two sides are concerned, Al Ahly SC has won two games and scored eight goals, whereas Simba SC has recorded victory in two duels and drew onenotching four goals.

