




Page 3

'Projects ought to uplift livelihoods of rural communities'



Page 4

NHC counts profit as Dar housing scheme sells out



Page 6

Committee wants strategic investments in Saadani park

Page 13

Bank of Tanzania sets date for next CBR announcement

CBE set to claim overdrawn cash

Tanzania thrives with 54 licensed tech hubs

Investors await clarity on Fed's 2024 rate cut view

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.

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

TURN TO PAGE 2



Guillaume Mallevey (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. Photo: Correspondent Marco Maduhu

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-

TURN TO PAGE 2

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/AS01E 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/AS01E 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 par-

ticularly devastating for low- and middle-income 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/AS01E 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

TURN TO PAGE 2

SPORTS

Page 20



Bulgaria refuses to underestimate Taifa Stars

Page 19



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

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

TURN TO PAGE 2



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

FROM PAGE 1

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

FROM PAGE 1

by the Gates Foundation. In 2020, GSK announced a partnership with the Gates MRI for further development of M72/ASOIE. 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 long-term 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 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/ASOIE 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

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/ASOIE 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/ASOIE 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.

"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/ASOIE provided approximately 50% protection (13/1626 versus 26/1663) against progression to active pulmonary tuberculosis for three years in Mycobacterium tuberculosis-infected 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.



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

TAZARA in rolling stock pact with US-linked logistics giant

FROM PAGE 1

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

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 resonates with the government's

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.



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

FROM PAGE 1

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 Mwendu, served in the post

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

An online biography says that growing up in Kenya, Mwendu Caroline Mueke (MPA '01) 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 shaped Mwendu's experience at

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). Mwendu's Capstone project focused on decentralization and local governance in Sub-Saharan Africa - an area that had particular relevance to Mwendu's personal career interests.

Also while at Wagner, Mwendu 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," Mwendu 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 an important effort worth contrib-

uting to."

The experience that Mwendu 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, Mwendu 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.



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. Photo: Correspondent Christina Mwakangale

By Guardian Reporter

'Projects ought to uplift livelihoods of surrounding rural communities'

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 Selemeni as saying this while visiting Ecosystem-Based Adaptation for Rural Resilience (EBARR) in Mpwawa 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-

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 easily.

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 Ilemi 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.

In a briefing to the envoy, Luvanda emphasized the collective achievements and persistent challenges in agriculture development within the Ilemi 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



EMBASSY OF DENMARK
Dar es Salaam

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY OFFICE ASSISTANT

The Embassy of Denmark in Tanzania is seeking a highly organized and personable individual to join our team as a Receptionist, Consular Assistant, and Secretary. This role is pivotal in providing overall administrative support, managing the reception area, assisting with consular services, and maintaining efficient office operations. The Office Assistant will also be a backup for the Ambassador's Personal Assistant (PA). You will be answerable to the Chief Financial Officer (CFO).

You will be part of the Embassy's Administration Team. The main tasks of the Administration Team is to ensure a well-functioning Embassy by supporting all staff with service-oriented and operational tasks.

You will be responsible for the Embassy's reception area, as the receptionist, you are the face and voice of the Embassy. As a consular assistant, you will independently assist with consular and other citizen services. Lastly, the position also requires you to be able to assist with other cross-cutting administrative tasks.

Key responsibilities and duties:

- Greet visitors and provide excellent customer service in person and on phone.
- Manage incoming calls, redirect them appropriately, and take messages when necessary.
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- Provide administrative assistance to embassy staff, including scheduling appointments, managing calendars, arranging meetings, coordinate and book travel arrangements and accommodation for Embassy staff.
- Handle incoming and outgoing correspondence, including emails, letters, and packages.
- Maintain electronic and physical filing systems, ensuring documents are organized and easily accessible.
- Undertake general administrative duties, including expense settlement processing and calendar coordination.
- Assist Danish citizens and residents with consular services, including visa applications, passport renewals, and other documentation.
- Provide information and guidance on consular procedures and requirements
- Responding to travel and safety enquiries from Danish citizens and assist with emergency assistance to Danes in distress in Tanzania.
- Liaise with relevant authorities and agencies to facilitate consular matters.
- Assist with translation and interpretation (Danish-English-Kiswahili)
- Prepare and format documents, reports, and presentations as required.
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- Assist as a backup for the Ambassador's PA and contribute to cross-cutting team tasks such as events, receptions and functions planning.

Qualifications and requirements:

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- Ability and interest in learning new tasks within both legally and technically challenging topics.
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- A high sense of responsibility or service-mindedness.
- Flexibility to adapt to changing priorities and work independently or as part of a team.

If you are interested in this exciting career opportunity, send your single page application letter and updated CV (Maximum 5 pages) as one file to **Prospect Africa**. Write **"Office Assistant"** in your e-mail subject line. Do not send copies of certificates, letters of recommendation etc. Applications should not be sent directly to the Embassy.

The deadline for receipt of applications is **5th April 2024**. Only short-listed candidates will be contacted. If you do not hear from us within 4 weeks after the closing date, kindly, assume your application was not successful. The selected candidate must present a "No Criminal Record" and pass security clearance by the Danish authorities prior to the appointment.

Executive Search and Selection Division
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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.

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 of the Parliamentary Public 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 shattered 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.

Kenyan doctors' nationwide strike enters its seventh day

NAIROBI

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

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

The impact of the strike is being felt across the country with many patients left unattended or being turned away from hospitals across the 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 as I'm 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 public-health 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.

SNV

Netherlands
Development
Organisation



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



VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

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

The 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 26th 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.



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

GOVERNMENT authorities in Kilimanjaro Region have been 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 in Same District because everyone 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

By Correspondent Joseph Mwendapole, Kibaha

WMA testing electric meters after consumers' complaints

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

Kibaha District, Coast 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

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

Region.

She said that the verification of 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 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 neighbourhood. 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.



for a living planet®

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.

Additional information: Detailed Terms of Reference can be obtained 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

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.

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 Naibe Mushi 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.



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



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

By Correspondent 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.

"Others are spine surgery with a

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 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.

Parliamentary committee wants strategic investments in the Saadani National park

By Guardian Reporter

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

as well as an apron for tourist planes.

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.

About the proposal to improve infrastructure in the area, minister 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.

Hassan Abbas, permanent 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



Stronger health systems. Greater Health Impact

Management Sciences for Health, Inc.,
5th Floor - Diamond Plaza
P.O. Box 50104
Dar es Salaam Tanzania

PUBLICATION OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND DISCLOSURE OF FUNDING SOURCES FOR MANAGEMENT SCIENCES FOR HEALTH (MSH) TANZANIA 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 |
|--|---------------|---------------|
| | TShs | TShs |
| Income | | |
| 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 |
|--|--------------------|--------------------|
| | TShs | TShs |
| Assets | | |
| 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 |

Female presidential candidate inspires new hope in Senegal

DAKAR

SENEGAL'S only female 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-year-old 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 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

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 women mobilized through 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 Sambé, 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 support of Ngom.

Women must be able to express themselves without hindrance while preserving our cultural identity and valuing the traditional values that has shaped our society



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.

Russia's ambassador 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

Russian Federation Vladimir Putin 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,

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

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.

"The rain may come early, but then stop. If you plant, then plants

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 two-week 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 that becomes something that strengthens the link between us."



Avocado farming instructor Aidan Kiwale pictured in Mufindi District yesterday conducting basic training in modern agriculture to 180 youths from Luhunga, Mdbulo and Ihanu wards. Photo: Correspondent Francis Godwin

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

it.

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.

Dr James Dixon from the University of Nottingham agrees, stating that further investigation is required.

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

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.

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

Hosting African horticulture seed bank here sure blessing

ALL those enthusiastic 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

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.

Ending Haiti chaos needs novel, uncharted methods

OBSERVERS see a 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 kidnapers, 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

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.

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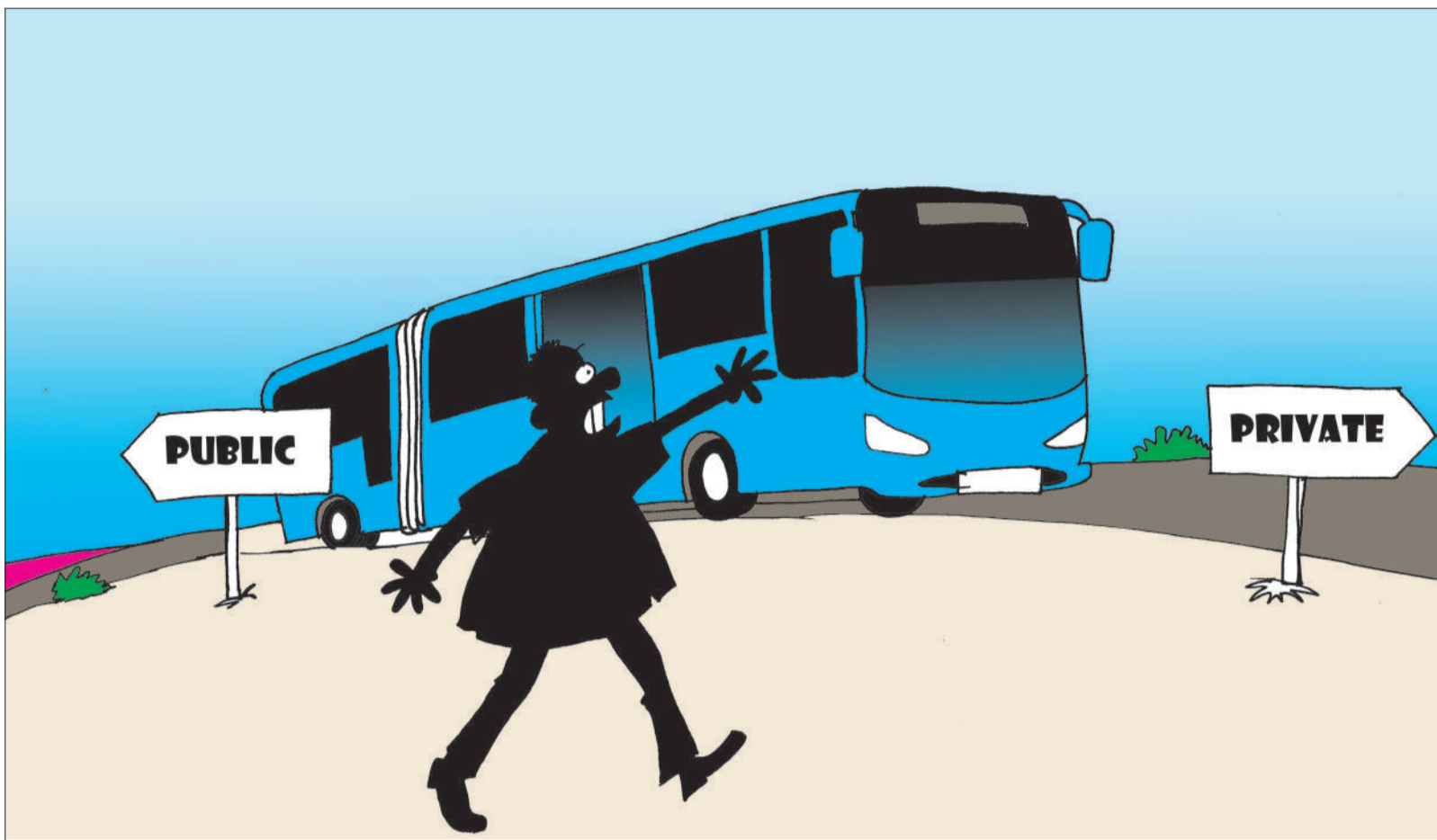
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In Pakistan, death can be just a WhatsApp share away

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. 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

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

The accusation perplexes Hussain.

"We are devout Muslims belonging to the Bareilvi 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."

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 seminars 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 out blasphemy, or deepfake and AI-generated content," said Nighat Dad, heading the Digital Rights Foundation, adding her organization's experience with the FIA's cybercrime wing had shown they are adept at handling cyber

harassment.

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.

Fariha Aziz, a cybercrime expert and co-founder of Bolo Bhi, an 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.

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 English to their local cleric. The

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 in Rawalpindi in 2022 for allegedly sharing blasphemous material via 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 extrajudicially. 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

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

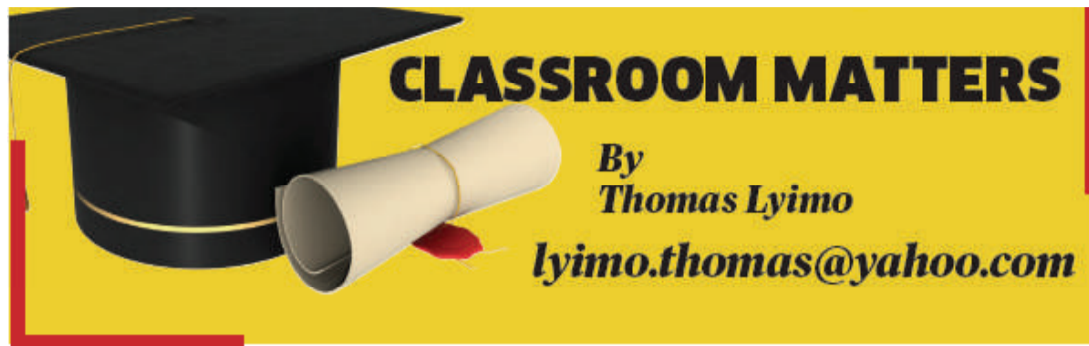
CHANGES in the education sector have now become a custom. It is said that if you do not change the change will change you. To change or to be changed all produce changes.

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 learners 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

TANZANIA 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 lower-middle 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 respondents 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 previously

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 a person's success, they are not easily

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 in-

creased 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.

Angolan youth embrace Chinese language learning for future careers

LUANDA

IN 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 entry-level 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 sing songs during the "Chinese Bridge" World Proficiency Competition in Luanda, Angola.

Carvalho said.

He began his journey of 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-

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, the cooperating institution

of the Confucius Institute at the 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 were all very patients and taught me authentic Chi-

nese expressions," he recalled.

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.

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

APPLÉ 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 periods 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.

South African apple and pear growers turn to solar energy



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 Cillie, 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."

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 reconstruction

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 Cacufo-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 Kiaksi 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 Canberra, Australia, yesterday. XINHUA

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 yawning 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 common 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

Donald Trump wins Republican presidential primary in Illinois

ILLINOIS

FORMER US President Donald Trump has won the Republican primary in Illinois, reported The 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

Decision Desk HQ, The Hill, there are 64 GOP delegates up for grabs in Illinois. Earlier in 2020, President Joe Biden beat Trump in Illinois by nearly 17 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

presidential elections. The Hill reported.

Trump clinched the Republican nomination for president on March 13, while, Biden secured the Democratic nomination a day before. The long-anticipated rematch of Trump and



Biden is expected to mirror the 2020 campaign, though Trump will run this time under the spectre of 91 felony charges related to allegations that he plotted to 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

adult film star ahead of the 2016 election.

However, Trump has now achieved a record of accomplishments and missteps for voters to 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

JERUSALEM

Israeli PM rejects US plea to halt Rafah attack, agrees to talk

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 reside, 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 statement that the delegation, led by Strategic Affairs Minister Ron Dermer, will be dispatched next week



"for the sake of the continuation of the fighting."

Earlier on Tuesday, Netanyahu 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) battalions in Rafah, and there is no way

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 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 CQ 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, Rus-

sia'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."



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 Umyu 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 Umyu Mwalimu (3rd R), and CCM's Tanga Chairman Rajab Abdulrahman (3rd L). PHOTO: CORRESPONDENT JUMANNE 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 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-

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 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.

Injuries now frustrate Yanga's preparations for CAF CL quarterfinals

By Correspondent Nassir Nchimbi

YANGA 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.

Ivoriens Kooussi 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: COURTESY 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:

"What happened today (Sunday) against Azam FC is a sign that the league is a marathon 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.



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 goalkeeper 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 players- who 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.

Dar boxers win two medals in 2024 All-Africa Games

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) presi-

dent Lukelo Wililo said the medals are for all Tanzanians, adding he expects more medals to be won in the showdown.

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 Morocco in 2019.

Salah beat Changalawe 3-2 in last year's African boxing qualifier for the Paris 2024 Olympics which took place in Senegal.

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 full-back 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

TOKYO

JAPAN 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.

AFP

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

LONDON

ISRAEL'S footballers are 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 foreseeable 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



Alon Hazan

in the final.

But for the conflict, Israel may have qualified automatically as they were in a strong position prior to the October 7 attacks by Hamas.

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, which should have been at

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 Middle 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 their war-torn people cause to cheer in Ukraine.

After narrowly missing out on the 2022 World Cup, a squad containing the likes of Real Madrid's Andriy Lunin, 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 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 14 qualifiers for the Euros in 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 Euro 2024 Group F.

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, but it has lost its lustre and much of its meaning. There is still the battle for seventh place, for a Conference League place; perhaps, despite the damage they ultimately did to England's coefficient, for a Europa League spot. Their finish to this campaign could shape the next, Howe argued. There is the question of interpretation, of how their version of second-season syndrome is perceived.

Last year was overachievement; this year, underachievement. If they had occurred in reverse order, with top half and a couple of cup quarter-finals followed by top four and a cup final, it may have seemed smooth progress. Now, for a club that had long realised last season may be unrepeatable, merely targeting a top-six spot this year, it is a matter of the level of regression and the consequences.

Some of the mitigation came from Pep Guardiola. "It was the first time they play four competitions and when it is the first time, it is not easy for any club," said the Manchester City manager, after ending Newcastle's quest for a first FA Cup since 1955. "I am pretty sure they will take lessons from that. The potential is there."

The added workload felt doubly damaging; given the severity of an injury list that meant that, unlike some of his



Eddie Howe applauds the Newcastle support after exiting the FA Cup (Getty)

counterparts at other clubs, Howe was not making excuses when citing the absentees in mitigation; and because it was not just the number of the games but the nature of them.

For years, Newcastle had too few big games. Suddenly, they had too many: Carabao Cup ties with City, Manchester United and Chelsea, City again in the FA Cup, European encounters with AC Milan, Paris Saint-Germain and Borussia Dortmund, plus a Premier League fixture list that meant they have played 10 of their "big six" matches by the middle of March. There has been no respite, no reprieve.

And yet, it was a season that began with the brightest of false dawns, the 5-1 demolition of Aston Villa that suggested Newcastle might be the second finest team in the country and Sandro Tonali the signing of the summer.

It was an early indication that Newcastle's peak level remains high. A curiosity of an underwhelming campaign is that their best has still been very good: in home-and-away demolitions of Villa, the evisceration of PSG, the home wins over Arsenal, Chelsea and United.

But, with one exception, those triumphs are all months ago. Since

beating United, they are 14th over 14 games, with only Brentford and Sheffield 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

a place in the last 16 of the Champions League; and the shoulder injury Nick Pope suffered late in the win against United four days later. He has missed those 20 games, which have brought 10 defeats, and an 11th on penalties; others have conceded those 40 goals.

Two injuries have hurt Newcastle still more than all the many others: losing Pope and Joelinton, the sweeper-keeper and shot-stopper and the man whose bruising physicality in midfield meant Newcastle's identity could be intensity. Now it has not been.

They have lost their physical edge, sometimes trying to play last season's high-tempo football without the same running power and with far more fixtures, sometimes shedding

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 relentless 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 were not bought with added funds. Mentions of "the world's richest club" have become rarer as PSR constraints have limited their ability to spend.

And Newcastle are paying the price for their first bad transfer window of their new era. Thus far, only Livramento ranks as a success, Lewis Hall, Harvey Barnes and Tonali as failures. So much can come back to the banned Italian: the over-reliance on Bruno Guimaraes, the way Lewis Miley and Sean Longstaff have been overworked, the loss of solidity in midfield. The feeling that, after 18 months of near-flawless dealing, Newcastle's plans went awry is shown by the reality that Dan Ashworth, who was supposed to oversee their continued rise, is instead on gardening leave while Manchester United pursue him.

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 at times, Guimaraes 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 venture into Europe, some attention shifts to what comes next, to whether next season will be more like last season, or this.

THE INDEPENDENT

Gwiji by David Chikoko



SPORT

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

PAGE 19



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."

"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.

Bulgaria refuses to underestimate Taifa Stars



Tanzania's senior national football team players are pictured training in Azerbaijan yesterday to shape up for the 'FIFA Series' slated to begin tomorrow. PHOTO: COURTESY OF TANZANIA FOOTBALL FEDERATION

By Correspondent Michael Mwebe

BULGARIA national soccer team head coach Ilian Iliev refuses to believe Taifa Stars will be easy opponents in Friday's international friendly between the two squads at the Dalga Arena Stadium, which is located 30 km outside of Baku, Azerbaijan.

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.

"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-

usions 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 different 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 yesterday, 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."

He stressed: "We want to go to the semi-finals and preparations for bat-



Simba SC Information and Communication Manager, Ahmed Ally.

ting 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 semi-finals."

"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.

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, 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 one-notching four goals.

Flexibles by David Chikoko

