



Treasury tasks ITA to sort out digital business taxation format

By Correspondent James Kandoya

ACADEMICS at the Institute of Tax Administration (ITA) have been tasked to conduct targeted research to help the government address challenges of taxing online and international businesses.

Elijah Mwandumba, the Treasury deputy permanent secretary, said in an address at the 17th graduation ceremony at the institute's premises in Dar es Salaam yesterday, underlining the government's wish to close revenue gaps and combating tax evasion in the evolving digital economy.

There are significant revenue losses the government concedes in online and international business activities, he said, in remarks the top official attributed to the minister, Dr Mwigulu Nchemba.

"We hope the research findings, when taken up as regulatory changes, will help reduce tax evasion and address revenue gaps faced by the government," he said, expressing confidence that ITA research would provide clear guidelines for regulating the specific sub-sectors.

In other remarks, he urged the Tanzania Revenue Authority (TRA) to enhance tax literacy among the public as a means of enhancing compliance when broadening the tax base.

He asked the graduates to seize opportunities in emerging industries, commercial enterprises and the minerals sector to generate income, while Prof Henry Chalu, the chairman of the governing council, pointed at the importance of collaboration in achieving optimal tax compliance.

He urged private sector firms to hire tax experts to streamline the payment process and minimize errors, also challenging ITA graduates to conduct impactful research that would support the revenue body in expanding the tax base and reducing tax evasion.

Yusuf Mwenda, the TRA director-general, stressed the critical role of integrating science and technology into training programmes at ITA, urging experts there to develop innovative tax systems, identify new revenue streams and address tax evasion gaps.

He highlighted the need for evidence-based

TURN TO Page 2

Call: Prioritise mineral value addition to turn Tanzania into Africa's mining hub
Page 3



Poultry farmers trained to mitigate climate change impacts
Page 4



Committee lauds investors for measures on workplace safety
Page 5



Zanzibar President Dr Hussein Ali Mwinyi delivers address at the signing ceremony of the Zanzibar Port Improvement Plan at Zanzibar State House yesterday. Photo: Zanzibar State House

'Zanzibar growth plans tied with port services'

By Guardian Reporter, Zanzibar

ZANZIBAR President Dr Hussein Mwinyi has outlined the government's strategies to drive economic growth, emphasising plans to create a more business-friendly environment for all those using its ports.

He laid out the government's intentions when witnessing the

signing of the Zanzibar port improvement charter, a collaborative initiative between the government, port stakeholders from public and private institutions, as well as the UK-based Tony Blair Institute (TBI) at the Zanzibar State House.

The plan is geared to eliminate bottlenecks by clearly assigning responsibilities to each stakeholder,

with specific performance indicators set out in the plan, which includes streamlining container offloading, vessel berthing and customs clearance processes.

All these features are designed to improve port service efficiency, where container handling will be simplified in loading and

TURN TO Page 2

Govt forms inter-agency team to fight cybercrime

By Correspondent James Kandoya

A DEDICATED task force with expert teams from four ministries and sector institutions is being formed to tackle the growing challenge of cybercrime, the government has stated.

Hamad Yusuf Masauni, the Home Affairs minister, cited the formation of the task force in a press briefing in Dar es Salaam yesterday following a meeting with top officials of the key service providers, that is, mobile phone companies.

Jerry Silaa, the Information, Communications and Information Technology minister has been tasked to coordinate the close collaboration with telecommunications companies, he said, identifying regions with noticeable levels of cybercrime as Rukwa, Mbeya, Morogoro and Dar es Salaam.

"This initiative underscores the government's commitment to safeguarding the country's

The road ahead may be challenging, but the resolve of the task force and its partners suggests a future where the digital space is safer for all

digital landscape," he said, noting that the task force will be composed of permanent secretaries for Home Affairs, Information, Constitutional and Legal Affairs as well as Community Development, Gender, Women and Special Groups.

"This inter-ministerial collaboration ensures that the issue is tackled from various angles, combining legal, technical and community-based approaches,"

TURN TO Page 2



Decades of tough rhetoric and generous funding from all over are yet to show much tangible evidence of the sort of interventions humankind needs to make to spare the world's natural vegetation from extinction induced by "development activities". Pictured is a charcoal sales point at Kivule in suburban Dar es Salaam, as found yesterday. It's but just one of numerous pointers to the gravity of the danger forest cover is slowly but surely facing globally. It's also part of proof that pronouncements and declarations on the bearing this has on the impact of climate change are yet to make much difference. Photo: Correspondent Jumanne Juma



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Food poisoning deaths now a national disaster

STORY ON PAGE 2



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Govt forms inter-agency team to fight cybercrime

FROM PAGE 1

he said

The permanent secretaries will coordinate efforts within their ministries and provide regular updates to ministers, enabling a unified and responsive strategy, he said, affirming that the task force began its operations immediately following the decision. The partnership emphasizes the critical role of private sector involvement in combating cyber threats, he said, while minister Silaa set out 13 measures to curb cybercrime, citing the need to encourage the public to report cybercriminal activities to law enforcement.

Tightening the registration processes for mobile phone users to reduce anonymity and raising awareness about digital safety to empower mobile phone users are other anticipated measures.

Improving financial literacy, with a significant role for the Bank of Tanzania to ensure secure online transactions is also taken up, along with implementing the national ICT policy to strengthen online services and the regulation, he stated.

Artificial intelligence

use has also been instrumental in tracking and identifying untrustworthy mobile phone users, significantly reducing cybercrime incidents, he said, pointing at over 80.7m simcards having been registered across the country.

"While this achievement reflects progress in establishing accountability, the government remains focused on enhancing systems for better tracking and prevention," he asserted.

The new initiative signals a significant shift in local digital governance by technology and cross-sectoral cooperation, as the government aims not only to mitigate immediate threats but create a culture of digital responsibility among the citizenry, he stated.

By prioritizing education, policy enforcement and innovative technologies, Tanzania has positioned itself as a leader in combating cybercrime within the region, he suggested.

"The road ahead may be challenging, but the resolve of the task force and its partners suggests a future where the digital space is safer for all," he added.



Prime Minister Kassim Majaliwa represents President Samia Suluhu Hassan in opening the Fifth Business and Economic Development Conference in Dodoma city yesterday. Photo: PMO. Photo:

Food poisoning deaths now a national disaster

PRETORIA

SOUTH Africa has officially declared a food poisoning crisis a national disaster after the deaths of at least 22 children and hundreds of reported illnesses across the country.

The outbreak has been traced to food contaminated with insecticide compounds, allegedly sold by local vendors in township convenience stores known as Spaza shops.

Thembi Simelane, the Justice and Constitutional Development minister, made the announcement on Thursday at a Pretoria press conference, following reports of

nearly 900 cases of food-borne illnesses across all provinces in the country since September;

Gauteng and KwaZulu-Natal provinces were reported to be the most affected, with at least 22 children having died, prompting urgent measures.

Observers said the declaration is the most significant step yet to tackle the public health crisis after President Cyril Ramaphosa ordered the immediate closure of Spaza shops linked to the vast poisoning incidents.

"Any shop that fails to register within 21 days or does not meet health standards will be closed," the president said in a televised

address, with the disaster response plan also involving stricter regulations on pesticide use.

This includes inspections of licensed manufacturers of terbufos, an agricultural pesticide identified as being linked to the serial poisonings, while the president pledged to strengthen measures for the traceability, repackaging and disposal of pesticides and food products to prevent further contamination.

John Steenhuisen, the Agriculture minister, clarified that the terbufos found in the contaminated food likely did not originate from South

Africa's five licensed pesticide manufacturers.

"The terbufos found in the Spaza shops differ significantly from the colour and texture of locally produced batches," he stated, noting that the chemical was detected in three out of 84 Spaza shops inspected in Soweto, while fatalities and hospitalizations have been reported across five provinces.

Health inspectors have launched nationwide raids, seizing expired food items and stepping up food safety inspections, even as Stella Ndabeni-Abrahams, the Small Business Development minister, stressed that the issue

extends beyond Spaza shops. "South Africa has more than 150,000 Spaza shops, but the investigation reveals that fewer than half of them are involved in the current outbreak," she said.

The outbreak follows a deadly listeriosis crisis in 2023 which affected three provinces, with Gauteng recording the highest number of cases (581), followed by Western Cape (118) and KwaZulu-Natal (70).

The government's swift action aims to prevent further loss of life and strengthen food safety measures to ensure such incidents do not recur, officials noted.



Natural Resources and Tourism minister Dr Pindi Chana has an audience with members of the Tanzania Tourist Board management team in Dar es Salaam yesterday. Photo courtesy of NR&T ministry

Treasury tasks ITA to sort out digital business taxation format

FROM PAGE 1

solutions since tax reductions are often proposed but few offer data-supported alternatives to generate revenue.

ITA rector Prof Isaya Jairo showcased the institute's contributions to strengthening revenue collection systems across Africa, highlighting that this year 417 graduates received qualifications in various fields.

One is the East African customs and freight forwarding practicing certificates (195 graduates), basic technician certificates in customs

and tax management (28 graduates) and diplomas in customs and tax management (61 graduates).

Others are bachelor's degrees in customs and tax management (119 graduates) and postgraduate diplomas in taxation (14 graduates).

He highlighted ITA's growing influence through partnerships with Somaliland, Zanzibar, Botswana and Malawi, noting that the institute serves as a hub for advancing tax systems by combining conceptual insights with practical training to meet the demands of the profession.

UK sanctions Angolan Isabel dos Santos in corruption crackdown

LONDON

BRITAIN has imposed sanctions on Angola's Isabel dos Santos, a billionaire businesswoman and daughter of a former president, as part of a crackdown on money laundering promised by the new Labour government.

The measures also impact an exiled Ukrainian oligarch, Dmytro Firtash, and Aivars Lembergs, one of Latvia's richest men.

Describing the three tycoons as "notorious klepto-

crats", it has frozen their UK assets and implemented a travel ban on them.

Britain's foreign secretary said they "selfishly deprive their fellow citizens of much-needed funding for education, healthcare and infrastructure - for their own enrichment".

London says dos Santos abused her position at Angolan state oil company, Sonangol and telecoms company, Unitel, to embezzle at least \$440 million. Dos Santos, whose late father, Jose Eduardo dos Santos, ruled Angola

for 38 years - claims to be Africa's first female billionaire.

Her downfall began soon after a new president came to power in 2017, and in the past few years she has faced numerous corruption charges in multiple countries.

She has denied the allegations, saying she is the target of a political vendetta.

Dos Santos has described the British sanctions as "incorrect and unjustified" adding that she was not given an opportunity to defend herself and will appeal the decision.

'Z'bar growth plans tied with port services'

FROM PAGE 1

unloading across all ports, he said.

He reassured the Zanzibar business community that the government is committed to carry out these efforts, aligned with the 2020-2025 election manifesto, specifically Clause 167(b), demanding enhancement of port services by installing modern equipment and using updated technology.

The goal is to increase the number of containers handled from 82,312 in 2018 to 105,000 by 2025, and to reduce the time vessels are docked from seven days in 2018 to five days by 2025, he said.

Currently, the Malindi, Fumba, and Mkoani Pemba container terminals are capable of handling over 105,000 containers annually, whereas the agreement between the government and stakeholders focuses on effective implementation and performance.

Annual evaluations will be held to monitor progress against established milestones, as when stakeholders fulfil their responsibilities effectively, Zanzibar can achieve significant success, he said.

He cited successful port service improvement initiatives in Singapore in South Asia, the neighbouring port of Mombasa, and the Gambian port of Banjul as examples of what can be accomplished with similar efforts.

Constructing the Mangapwani integrated port will be designed to handle large oil and gas vessels as part of efforts to enhance port services, he stated, linking the plans with Clause 167(c) of the manifesto, which directs the government to build infrastructure for vessels passing along the East African coast, for refuelling, fresh water and maintenance services.

He tasked the Works, Communications and Transport ministry, which oversees infrastructure management, to engage closely with port users, while urging port stakeholders to cooperate to enable high-quality, efficient infrastructure.

This will benefit citizens and support social well-being and Zanzibar's economic growth, he stated, underlining the need for partnership with various stakeholders, particularly in the transport sector.

Akif Ali Khamis, the Zanzibar Ports Corporation (ZPC) managing director, hailed the government's transformative efforts in the port sector, citing recent contracts with Zanzibar Multiple, Fumba Port and Mkoani companies for container offloading.

Frank Matsuert, leading the Tony Blair Institute team, also praised the government for effectively implementing the port services improvement plan. This will unlock significant economic growth for Zanzibar through its port gateway, he added.

Tanzania urges SADC nations to be ready for peacekeeping missions when required

By Correspondent James Kandoya

TANZANIA has urged participants at the Southern African Development Community (SADC) peacekeeping training to serve as ambassadors and remain prepared to support peacekeeping missions when required.

Speaking on Thursday in Dar es Salaam during official closing of SADC Regional Peacekeeping Training Centre (SADC RPTC) programme, Tanzania People's Defence Force (TPDF) Chief of Staff, Lieutenant General Salim Hajj Othman, emphasized the importance of the initiative.

The programme which brought together 150 participants from SADC member states, including Namibia, Zambia and Mozambique, underlined the region's collective commitment to maintaining peace and security.

Othman highlighted that the training demonstrated SADC's ongoing efforts to strengthen regional peace and security by building capacity and promoting sustainable development.

"This initiative strengthens the bonds between SADC member states, fostering collaboration and mutual benefits," he said.

"I urge you to remain committed to making a positive impact in your respective roles. Be exemplary ambassadors of SADC and apply the knowledge you've gained to create safer, more just societies."

Rear Admiral Gottlieb Pandeni, Commandant of SADC RPTC, praised the training's success in enhancing the bloc's peacekeep-

ing capabilities.

He noted that the programme fosters experience-sharing and collaboration among participants which strengthens the region's ability to maintain peace.

"This training initiative is a significant step in our commitment to peace and security," he said.

"It has integrated training for police, military, civilian and immigration components, reflecting our collective determination to uphold peace and stability in the region."

The event also marked the launch of a national level rollout of peace support operations training programme which incorporates lessons from both continental and regional experiences.

Brigadier General George Itang'are, Commandant of TPDF Peacekeeping Training Centre, highlighted the diverse participation which included representatives from Mozambique, Namibia, Zambia, Malawi and other SADC member states. He noted that the new curriculum also addressed issues such as pandemics, enabling peacekeepers to respond effectively to such challenges.

Senior Assistant Commissioner of Police from Zambia Adrian Kashala expressed gratitude on behalf of the participants.

"The training has been a fruitful session, achieving the objectives and significantly enhancing our capabilities," he said.

"Your dedication has been instrumental in the success of this programme and we reaffirm our commitment to ensuring peace across the region."



Dar es Salaam Rapid Transit (DART) executive director Dr Athumani Kihamia briefs journalists in Dar es Salaam yesterday on the use smart cards as a way of minimizing inconveniences in accessing the agency's transport services. Photo: Correspondent Joseph Mwendapole

Call: Prioritise mineral value addition to turn Tanzania into Africa's mining hub

By Guardian Correspondent

DEPUTY Speaker of Zanzibar House of Representatives, Mgeni Hassan Juma, has stressed the need for establishment of facilities that add value to minerals for the country to achieve its goal of becoming Africa's mining hub.

Juma made the remarks on Thursday when closing the 2024 International Mining Investment Conference, held for three days in

Dar es Salaam. The Deputy Speaker represented Zanzibar President Dr Hussein Ali Mwinyi.

She emphasized that value addition to minerals is crucial, insisting stakeholders should be encouraged to invest in supporting such kinds of activities.

"Discussions held during this conference focused on finding solutions to challenges facing the mining sector, particularly in the areas of capital and modern tech-

nology for mineral value addition. For the sector to create more jobs and increase its contribution to national income, minerals must undergo value addition," she said.

She noted that the government has created a conducive environment for both domestic and foreign investors, something which will help grow the mining sector. Minister for Minerals, Anthony Mavunde, highlighted significant achievements of the conference, which attracted over 1,500

participants from Africa and beyond.

"Given the large turnout of participants, we consider having a dedicated venue for mining sector conferences similar to the Mining Indaba in South Africa. I urge regional commissioners to allocate special areas in their regions for such conferences," he said. Speaking on the mining sector in Zanzibar, Mavunde said: "When people hear about Zanzibar, they think of tourism only but a few months ago, a mineral survey report

revealed the presence of heavy mineral sands in Zanzibar, specifically in Pemba. With these resources, we believe significant investment will come to Pemba, benefiting both the economy and islanders."

Zanzibar Minister for Water, Energy and Minerals Shaib Hassan Kaduara stressed the importance of strengthening collaboration in conducting in-depth mineral research for the benefit of all parties.

Earlier, Deputy Minister for Miner-

als Dr Steven Kiruswa said the conference's theme 'Mineral Value Addition for Socioeconomic Development' aimed to promote activities that enhance the value of minerals in the country.

Dr Kiruswa said the theme aligns with implementation of the 2009 Mining Policy which requires the government to ensure minerals produced in the country undergo value addition before they are exported.



Clearing of rubble continues yesterday at the site of the multi-floor building which collapsed in Dar es Salaam's sprawling Kariakoo market zone on Saturday, leaving several people dead and dozens injured. Photo: Correspondent Imani Nathaniel

DART urges city commuters to abandon cash, adopt smart cards for fare payment

By Correspondent Joseph Mwendapole

THE Dar Rapid Transit (DART) has urged commuters to purchase smart cards to end the inconvenience they currently face when paying bus fares in cash.

DART Chief Executive Dr Athuman Kihamia made the call in Dar es Salaam yesterday when addressing reporters on the public response following the introduction of smart cards for fare payment.

Dr Kihamia explained that the smart cards which were launched in September this year were introduced after recognising the inefficiencies and outdated nature of the previous cash-based fare system.

"The introduction of the smart card represents a modern and efficient method used worldwide. We urge passengers to move away from the old cash-based system and embrace the digital solution," he said.

He highlighted that for just 5,000/-, passengers receive a smart card preloaded with 3,000/- and the cards can be easily used at both the smart gates on main roads and inside the rapid buses.

"To make the journey more convenient, passengers can simply swipe the smart card at the gates or on-board the buses. This is a huge improvement compared to the previous cash system," he said.

Dr Kihamia noted that DART had already purchased 200,000 smart cards which are being sold to passengers. He expressed appreciation for the positive response from the public.

"We are delighted by the overwhelming demand for the smart cards. We encourage more passengers to buy them and move away from the disruptive cash system," he said.

In September, Minister of State in the President's Office (Regional Administration and Local Government) Mohamed Mchengerwa officially launched the smart cards and smart gates which will be installed across all expressways.

Negotiators race to reach deal as climate talks face deadlock

By Special Correspondent

COUNTRIES taking part in the United Nations Climate Summit (COP29) entered the last scheduled day of talks yesterday with no visible progress on their chief goals.

From the start, COP29 has been about climate finance – money that wealthy nations are obligated to pay to developing countries to cover damages resulting from ex-

treme weather and to help those nations adapt to a warming planet.

Experts put the figure at \$1 trillion or more, but draft texts that emerged Thursday after nearly two weeks of talks angered the developing world by essentially leaving blank the financial commitment.

As negotiators, observers and civil society organization representatives waited for a new draft text to be released on Friday, many

said they were frustrated and disappointed with the talks so far.

"No deal is better than a bad deal," said Harjeet Singh of the climate advocacy group, Fossil Fuel Non Proliferation Treaty.

Singh said the key bottleneck is rich countries' reluctance to say how much they are willing to pay for countries to transition away from fossil fuels and toward clean energy, adapt to the drought,

storms an extreme heat and pay for losses and damages caused by climate change.

Independent experts put the figure needed at \$1 trillion per year.

"Things are absolutely stuck," he said. "It's negotiation in bad faith by developed countries."

Bryton Codd, part of Belize's negotiating team, said there is a lot of frustration felt by participants at the climate talks.

"I'm just waiting to see if that (climate finance goal) will actually be presented," he said.

The talks often run into overtime as wealthier nations are pressed to pay for impacts caused largely by their emissions from centuries of burning fossil fuels.

The late finish also adds pressure on Azerbaijan, the oil-rich nation presiding over this year's COP, or Conference of Parties.

In a statement late Thursday, the presidency struck an optimistic tone, saying the outlines of a financial package "are starting to take shape" and promised new draft texts on Friday.

"COP29 urges all parties to engage urgently and constructively in order to reach the ambitious outcome that we all need," the statement said.

Rights body trains observers for upcoming civic elections

By Correspondent Zuwena Shame

THE Legal and Human Rights Centre (LHRC) has conducted a number of training sessions for election observers who will be deployed across various regions to monitor the upcoming local government elections scheduled for November 27.

In September, LHRC received formal authorisation from the President's Office (Regional Administration and Local Government) to provide voter education and act as official election observer as stipulated in the regulations governing the 2024 local government elections.

Speaking to journalists in Dar es Salaam yesterday, Fulgence Massawe, LHRC Director of Advocacy and Reforms stated that the 45 election observers who participated in the training were equipped with essential skills in election ethics, rules and regulations, and critical issues to consider during election monitoring.

"The training covered key areas, including electoral integrity, ethical standards and procedures for reporting irregularities. Our goal is to ensure that the election process is transparent, free and fair. Observers are also trained to identify any potential challenges and report them accordingly," he said.

He further emphasized that the role of election observers is to oversee the entire electoral

process, ensuring it adheres to established legal frameworks while addressing issues that may arise during observation.

"Once the observation exercise is completed, LHRC will compile a detailed report on the election which will be submitted to the President's Office. The report will include our findings and recommendations for improving future electoral processes," he said.

Additionally, Massawe called on candidates from all political parties to focus on constructive campaigns, presenting their manifestos in a manner that promotes peace and fairness throughout the electoral process.

"We urge candidates to engage in peaceful campaigns that focus on issues rather than resorting to divisive tactics," he said.

"It is crucial that all parties uphold fairness and respect for the democratic process."

He also appealed to Tanzanians to actively engage in the election process by critically evaluating candidates' platforms and making informed choices for the future of the country.

"Citizens should use this campaign period to assess the candidates' statements and promises, reflect on their policies, and make decisions that will best serve the nation for the next five years," he said.



Bodaboda taxi riders, students and various other people join a procession in Dar es Salaam's Mbagala suburb on Thursday during a campaign against sexual corruption. It was organised by local CSO Women in Development Efforts Organisation, popularly known by the Kiswahili acronym WAJIKI, with support from Women Fund Tanzania Trust. Photo: Correspondent Sabato Kasika

RC appeals for continued support for clean cooking energy agenda

By Guardian Correspondent,

Sumbawanga

RUKWA Regional Commissioner, Makongoro Nyerere has called on Tanzanians to continue supporting President Samia Suluhu Hassan's efforts in advancing the clean cooking energy agenda across the country.

Nyerere made the call here on Thursday after receiving an im-

plementation report for the Rural Energy Agency (REA) projects, presented by Advera Mwijage, Director of Innovative and Alternative Energy Technologies in the Ministry of Energy.

In his remarks, Nyerere praised President Samia's leadership in promoting clean energy initiatives both domestically and internationally, stressing that her commitment has helped raise awareness on the importance of

safe and environmentally-friendly cooking methods.

He further noted that the clean cooking energy agenda is not only a national priority but has also gained significant global attention due to its positive impact on health, the environment, and economic development.

"President Samia is at the forefront of pushing the clean cooking energy agenda on the global stage, ensuring that Tanzanians

have access to safe, affordable and sustainable cooking solutions," he said. "It is crucial that we continue supporting her efforts and work together to promote the widespread use of clean cooking energy across the country."

In her presentation, Mwijage elaborated on the government's efforts to provide access to clean cooking solutions, explaining that the aim is to ensure that Tanzanians, particularly those in rural and

peri-urban areas, can cook safely without harmful emissions.

She highlighted that National Gas Limited, a service provider, was to distribute 9,765 subsidized six-kilogram gas cylinders along with the necessary accessories to rural and peri-urban areas in Rukwa Region.

"The gas cylinders will not only reduce the reliance on firewood but also provide a more efficient and clean alternative for households, improving both health and

environmental outcomes," Mwijage said.

"Our objective is to make clean cooking energy affordable, accessible and user-friendly for all Tanzanians." In addition to the distribution of gas cylinders, Mwijage said that the government was working to expand infrastructure and ensure that clean cooking solutions are within reach for all citizens, particularly in underserved regions.



Tanzania Public-Private Partnership Centre executive director David Kafulila (L) has a word in Dar es Salaam yesterday with Tanzania Medium and Small Truck Owners Association chairman Chuki Shabani shortly after a meeting on investment in the city's Bus Rapid Transit project. Photo: Correspondent Beatrice Moses

Eye expert warns women on risks of fake eyelashes

By Correspondent Christina Mwakangale

AN ophthalmologist with Muhimbili National Hospital (MNH)-Mloganzila Dr Yusta Mtogo has issued a warning to women, particularly young ones who use fake eyelashes to enhance their appearance, highlighting potential risks to eye health.

Dr Mtogo cautioned that the use of artificial eyelashes can lead to several eye-related issues, including allergies, infections, dryness, redness and even loss of natural eyelashes.

The warning comes as more women, particularly in urban areas, turn to beauty trends that include the use of false eyelashes, a practice that has gained popularity in recent years due to its aesthetic appeal.

Speaking in Dar es Salaam yesterday, Dr Mtogo explained that while many women continue to use fake lashes, it is crucial for them to be applied by trained professionals to minimise the risks.

The problems are often caused by the glue used to apply the fake lashes, which can have harmful effects on the delicate eye area.

"If you prefer to wear fake eyelashes, you must be very cautious to protect your eyes. The adhesives used in applying the lashes can cause irritation, leading to bacterial infections which could make your eyes

feel like there's sand in them," she said.

She underscored the importance of prioritising eye health and ensuring that beauty treatments do not compromise one's wellbeing.

Dr Mtogo added that prolonged or frequent use of fake eyelashes can cause other complications such as puffiness around the eyes and even damage to the cornea.

"In some cases, wearing lashes for long periods or without proper care can lead to eye irritation and, in severe cases, scratches or sores on the cornea which can leave permanent scars," she said.

The specialist further stressed the importance of professional application, saying that improper use of false eyelashes could also lead to the loss of natural eyelashes, which play a key role in protecting the eyes from dust, sweat and other environmental factors.

"Natural eyelashes act as a barrier, protecting the eyes from harmful particles in the air. When they fall out due to repeated use of fake lashes, it can lead to dryness and irritation in the eyes."

Dr Mtogo advised anyone experiencing the symptoms to seek medical attention to undergo thorough eye examination and receive appropriate treatment.

"If you notice any discomfort or issues with your eyes, it's important to consult an eye specialist. Early intervention can prevent serious complications," she said.

Poultry farmers offered skills to mitigate climate change impacts, increase income

By Correspondent Christina Mwakangale

TWENTY farmers at Maguruwe Village, Msimbu Ward in Kisarawe District, Coast Region, have received training on effective poultry farming to help mitigate climate change impacts and improve their incomes.

Maguruwe Village Agriculture Officer, Safina Kisaka,

said in Dar es Salaam yesterday that the training meant to enhance farmers' knowledge, as one of the key challenges in the area is limited capital and inability to afford veterinary medicines and vaccines.

She also highlighted the problem posed by the village's proximity to Kazimzumbwi Forest Reserve from where wild animals, includ-

ing snakes, often attack livestock due to poorly constructed chicken coops.

"Most of the farmers here are individual producers, which makes it difficult to reach them for training. By organizing them into a group, this project will simplify the process of providing education and support. It's hard to offer consistent guidance," Kisaka said.

"The close proximity to the forest reserve contributes to the presence of harmful animals which pose a threat to livestock. However, through this training and the empowerment of farmers, they will be able to build better chicken coops that are less vulnerable to pests and wildlife," she added.

Climate change also poses challenges to farming in the area, leading to high prices of

chicken feed and the village's high altitude means rainwater is often insufficient for agricultural use.

"There are times when even experts like us struggle to offer advice. The land is mountainous and only a few areas are fertile while most of it is very hot," she said.

Veterinary expert David Comalla said that profitable poultry farming depends on factors

such as breed, environment and proper management.

"Farmers need to understand modern farming techniques and consider coop location to ensure proper airflow and protection from pests like snakes."

The project is funded by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) through the Global Environment Facility's Small Grants Programme (GEF-SGP) with technical sup-

port from Tanzania Landscapes Restoration Organization (TaLRO).

Dr Elikana Kalumanga, TaLRO Technical Advisor, explained that the project aims to provide alternative, environmentally-friendly livelihoods for communities near the forest reserve by reducing their dependence on natural resources of the Kazimzumbwi Forest Reserve.



Zuberi Chembera (R), Zanzibar's Deputy Director of Criminal Investigations, gifts cloves to Eunju Ahn, South Korea's Ambassador-Designate to Tanzania, when the envoy had an audience with senior police officers in Zanzibar on Thursday. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

Japan donates \$5.1 million to support climate resilience, sustainable agriculture in Zimbabwe

HARARE

THE United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) has welcomed a contribution \$5.1 million from the government of Japan to support 37,000 climate-affected smallholder farmers across five districts in Zimbabwe.

The three-year project will enhance food security and resilience for smallholder farmers by establishing water-based infrastructure, developing value chains, and strengthening agricultural extension service capacity.

"Under this project, small-scale farmers will be supported in growing sesame seeds to practice market-oriented agriculture and a Japanese trading company called ITOCHU Corporation is expected to play an important role in completing the value-chain of the project," said Japanese Ambassador to Zimbabwe, Shinichi Yamanaka.

"The Japanese government will provide financial assistance of approximately US\$ 72,000 to 'the project for the construction of storages for sesame farmers in Mwenzi District' implemented by Sustainable Agriculture Technology (SAT). SAT is expected to support sesame production and its procurement including value addition

for the local and export market."

The initiative is crucial, as Zimbabwe faces ongoing climate challenges and food insecurity due to the El Niño-induced drought. The project combines food assistance with climate-adaptive practices, to help smallholder farmers to cultivate more sustainable crops. Production of Sesame, a crop with high market potential, will be one of the central value chains, enhancing export opportunities for Zimbabwean smallholder farmers.

"This invaluable contribution from the Government of Japan allows us to make food more available, easier to access, and more reliable for Zimbabwean families," said Barbara Clemens, Country Representative and Director for WFP in Zimbabwe.

"By supporting farmers to grow food in a sustainable way and connect them to markets, we can address immediate food needs and empower communities to build a food secure future."

Japan is a long-standing partner of WFP's assistance in Zimbabwe. Since 2019, Japan has contributed over US\$ 28 million to WFP-supported food assistance and resilience-building for vulnerable communities in the country.

Parliamentary committee lauds investors on workplace safety

By Guardian Correspondent

THE Parliamentary Standing Committee on Social Welfare and Community Development has praised Elsewedy Electric's electrical cable and transformer manufacturing plant in Kigamboni District and Knauf's gypsum plant in Mkuranga District, Coast Region, for their adherence to workplace health and safety regulations.

This came after the committee's visit to both factories and Occupational Safety and Health Authority (OSHA) offices recently.

The visit was led by Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office (Labour, Youth,

Employment and People with Disabilities) Ridhiwani Kikwete, accompanied by OSHA Chief Executive Officer Khadija Mwenda.

The committee members toured the factories to assess implementation of workplace safety and health laws.

The committee's chairperson Fatma Toufiq expressed satisfaction to the factories, declaring them as role models for following safety and health regulations in at workplace.

She emphasized that the committee would continue to advise the government on the importance of safeguarding the health and well-being of the workforce.

"We are here with our colleagues from OSHA, one of the institutions under our committee, to observe how the workplace safety and health laws are being implemented. Based on the information we've received, Knauf is one of the companies that strictly follow safety regulations. We've come to see it firsthand. As a committee, we will continue to advise the government on the importance of ensuring workers' safety and health at work," Toufiq said.

In his remarks, Kikwete said that the government will continue to support investors who not only manufacture goods but also contribute to the country's economic

growth through exports and job creation for young people.

He also commended OSHA for conducting regular inspections that have resulted in improved workplace safety practices.

"In every factory we visited, before starting the tour, we underwent a mandatory safety briefing and we were given instructions on how to stay safe and what risks to be aware of. I am particularly impressed with how safety systems work," he noted.

"This is a significant step in ensuring safety of workers. All of this is a direct result of the regular inspections conducted by OSHA, which have led to substantial improvements

in safety standards. This is a clear indication of the excellent work being done by OSHA."

Mwenda urged employers across the country to prioritise compliance with workplace safety and health laws, stressing that a focus on safety leads to increased productivity by reducing workplace risks.

"The Parliamentary Committee has seen by itself the positive outcomes of our work. At Knauf, for example, investments have increased significantly due to the good working conditions and robust safety systems in place. I encourage all investors and businesses to invest in workplace safety and health systems to protect workers," she said.



Lands, Housing and Human Settlements Development deputy minister Geophrey Pinda addresses residents of Ntilili and Igalukiro villages shortly after handing over 691 customary land ownership certificates at Kasansa in Mpimbwe District, Katavi Region, on Thursday. Photo courtesy of Lands ministry

Youth deploy drones in Malawi markets to map piles of garbage

LILONGWE

TEENAGERS and young adults in Malawi use drones to map high-garbage areas across four major markets in Lilongwe, the country's capital, to improve waste management and reduce risk of disease as part of a pioneering new programme by Save the Children.

The group of 16 young activists use the drones to identify from the sky parts of the market where waste accumulates or where illegal dumping sites have been established. The youth, who call themselves 'Shifters', have deployed three drones - the Mavic 3, the Mavic 3 Enterprise and the Mavic 2 Pro - to capture high-quality images of the garbage hotspots, which are then used to create maps which can be used by government planning departments.

The Shifters are supported by Save the Children's global Shift campaign accelerator model that has supported young people aged between 14 and 25 in over twenty countries to act on issues affecting their communities. Shifters are given the tools, networks, resources and skills required to effectively campaign. As a result of this support, the Lilongwe Shifters were able to use drones to map Chinsapo market, and collect evidence for their campaign.

Uppeh, 25, from Lilongwe, is a member of the Lilongwe Shifters. He said:

"We saw in various areas, specifically in the market, waste was piling up, so as young people who are climate change activists and environmentally cautious, we decided look into it, and act upon the waste situation. We have to look at generating evidence and how best to do that, so we use drone technology. We had to use the drones to get the images and footage, which helped us determine the waste situation in the market we are targeting."

AU donates \$200,000 to flood victims in Liberia

MONROVIA

THE African Union has presented \$200,000 to the Liberian government as humanitarian response towards addressing the plight of flood victims.

The fund was presented to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on Tuesday by the Head of AU Delegation, Ambassador Ana Nembe.

Following a successful tour of returnee camps in Montserrado and Grand Cape Mount counties, Nembe presented the cheque to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as a demonstration of solidarity with those affected by the recent devastating floods.

The presentation ceremony took place at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and was graced by senior officials of the ministry and representatives of the African Union. During the event, Madam Nembe expressed the AU's unwavering commitment to sup-

porting Liberia in its time of need.

Speaking at the presentation, Ambassador Nembe emphasized that the donation underscores the AU's dedication to regional solidarity and humanitarian support.

"This gesture is a testament to the African Union's principle of collective support and our deep concern for our brothers and sisters in Liberia who are facing immense challenges due to the recent floods. The AU stands with Liberia, and we hope this contribution will bring some relief to the affected communities," she said.

Nembe's visit included an extensive tour of camps housing returnees and flood victims in Montserrado and Grand Cape Mount counties. The visit enabled the delegation to gain firsthand insight into the living conditions and urgent needs of the affected populations.

Receiving the donation on behalf of the

Government of Liberia, the Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs, Gabriel Salee, conveyed heartfelt gratitude to the African Union for its timely assistance.

"On behalf of His Excellency President Joseph Nyuma Boakai and the people of Liberia, I extend our deepest appreciation to the African Union for this generous donation. The funds will be utilized for the intended purpose, ensuring that the flood victims receive the necessary assistance to rebuild their lives," said Acting Minister Salee.

He further noted that the African Union's support demonstrates the importance of collective efforts in addressing humanitarian crises across the continent.

Salee assured the AU delegation and the Liberian public that the government is committed to transparency and accountability in the disbursement and utilization of the funds.

"The Ministry of Foreign Affairs will work closely with relevant stakeholders to ensure that every dollar of this contribution directly benefits the affected communities. We owe this to our citizens and to the African Union, whose trust we deeply value," he said.

Salee also used the occasion to call on other regional and international partners to emulate the African Union's example by extending their support to Liberia.

"While this contribution from the AU is a remarkable step forward, the scale of the disaster requires continued assistance from all quarters. Together, we can help our people recover and rebuild stronger communities," he urged.

The presentation ceremony was attended by key officials from both the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the African Union. Among the dignitaries present were the

Deputy Minister for Legal Affairs, Cllr. Jeddi Armah and the Acting Executive Director of LRRRC, Jackson Paye.

The event also provided an opportunity for both parties to discuss broader issues of collaboration and mutual support, further strengthening the bond between Liberia and the African Union. The donated funds are expected to play a crucial role in addressing the immediate needs of flood victims, including access to shelter, food, clean water, and healthcare services.

The floods, which have displaced thousands and destroyed homes and infrastructure, have presented one of the most significant humanitarian challenges in Liberia in recent years. The African Union's support follows similar expressions of solidarity from other international partners, reflecting a unified global response to Liberia's ongoing crisis.

Kenya investigates reported 'abduction' of Ugandan opposition figure in capital

NAIROBI

KENYAN government has said it was investigating the alleged abduction of prominent Ugandan opposition politician, Kizza Besigye from Nairobi.

The longtime vocal critic of Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni disappeared from a book launch in the Kenyan capital on Saturday.

On Wednesday, he reappeared at a military court in neighbouring Uganda, where he was charged with offences including the illegal possession of firearms.

Nairobi's announcement comes amid growing criticism that it does not do enough to protect foreign dissidents on its soil.

Human rights groups accused Kenya of a "pattern" of collaborating with foreign powers over the rendition of political opponents.

Besigye was Museveni's personal doctor in the 1980s when the now-president was still a

rebel leader, but has since been arrested dozens of times over his criticism of the president's authoritarian rule and policies.

He has run and lost against Museveni in four presidential polls since 1986, although he has rejected the results, alleging fraud and voter intimidation.

This latest charge sheet alleges that Besigye was found in Nairobi in possession of a pistol and eight rounds of ammunition.

It claims he had been seeking support to prejudice the security of Uganda's military.

Besigye's wife, Winnie Byanyima, who is the executive director of UNAIDS, said her husband has not owned a gun in the last 20 years, and should be tried in a civilian court.

The 68-year-old is expected to remain in custody at Luzira Prison in Kampala until 2 December.

Museveni's government has been accused of repeated human rights violations against opposition leaders and supporters, accusations it has denied.



Dodoma City electoral supervisor Dr Frederick Sagamiko has a word with journalists and leaders of political parties in the national capital yesterday, chiefly on the countdown to the countrywide local government elections slated for November 27. Photo: Correspondent Peter Mkwavila

Acute hunger stalks one in four in DR Congo, aid agencies say

NEW YORK

UNITED Nations humanitarian aid agencies have warned that one in four people in the Democratic Republic of the Congo suffers from "crisis or worse" levels of hunger that affects a staggering 25.6 million people.

The alert from the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and World Food Programme (WFP) follows a new dire assessment from UN-partnered food insecurity experts has shown the hunger crisis is affecting much of the vast central African nation.

The embattled east is a particu-

lar concern, where the situation is deteriorating after decades of fighting involving around 100 armed groups - including the M23 militia - who vie for control of vast natural riches, threatening regional security.

"In such a fragile context, the cost of inaction is truly unthinkable," said Peter Musoko, WFP Country Director and Representative in DR Congo. "Together, we need to work with the Government and the humanitarian community to increase resources for this neglected crisis."

A map of DR Congo from the latest Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) report shows

that almost all regions are affected by "crisis" levels of hunger - IPC3, with five indicating the highest level of danger.

A further 3.1 million mainly displaced people and returnees in northeast DR Congo are in an even worse situation - IPC4 - which is characterized by extreme food shortages, excessive levels of acute malnutrition and disease, along with a rapidly increasing risk of hunger-related death.

Humanitarians are particularly concerned for vulnerable communities in the provinces of North Kivu, Ituri and South Kivu, where more than 6.5 million people are

displaced. Tanganyika has also suffered intense flooding and is now the "most food-insecure" province in DR Congo.

The humanitarian emergency is largely preventable and continues to be driven by unrelenting armed violence linked to the resource-rich east, conflict and soaring food prices, the UN agencies noted.

DR Congo "boasts fertile lands and abundant water resources and possesses the inherent capacity to attain self-sufficiency in food production", FAO and WFP said in a joint statement.

They highlighted that the country had been held back from be-

coming self-sufficient in food production amid intensifying conflict in eastern DR Congo, the impact of climate change, epidemics and a lack of investment in rural development.

"The IPC figures speak for themselves - we need to take action and ensure that livelihood support is provided at the appropriate level," said FAO representative Aristide Ongone Obame, insisting that the UN agency remained committed to helping households through "targeted interventions" that address the impacts of climate change in the agriculture, fisheries, and livestock sectors.

Although needs outpace available resources, the WFP reached 1.95 million people in October 2024 alone. But as humanitarian needs continue to grow, the UN agency needs \$350 million over the next six months to continue providing "essential food and nutrition assistance" to the most vulnerable.

In 2024, FAO needed \$233.9 million to roll out relief projects in the DR Congo. By the end of September, it had assisted three million people out of the 3.6 million target and "requires more financial resources to meet the current gap".

Nigeria now 7th globally for international students in US

ABUJA

NIGERIAN student enrolment at U.S. colleges and universities rose to 20,029 in 2023/2024, marking a 13.5 percent increase from the previous year, according to the 2024 Open Doors Report on International Education Exchange. This places Nigeria as Africa's leading source of international students and 7th globally.

The report reveals that U.S. colleges and universities host a record-breaking 1,126,690 international students this year, marking an all-time high for international enrollment. This milestone aligns with the 75th anniversary of the Open Doors Report, the leading benchmark for international educational exchange in the United States.

Notably, Nigeria with 20,029 students, reinforces its position as the top sending country from Africa and the 7th largest globally.

Nigerian students bring a wealth of diversity, perspectives, and academic excellence to U.S. universities, enriching the educational experience for all students.

Nigerian scholars are known for their strong academic backgrounds and commitment to advanced education, with over 55 percent pursuing graduate-level studies in the United States.

The growth in Nigerian students choosing to study in the U.S. reflects both the strong U.S. commitment to high-quality education and the growing interest of Nigerian scholars in international academic experiences.

It also highlights the importance of people-to-people connections that deepen understanding and strengthen bonds between Nigeria and the United States.

Sub-Saharan Africa's student mobility grew by 13 percent in 2023/24, maintaining its position as the fastest-growing region for the second year, following an 18 percent increase in 2022/23. The influx of Nigerian students is a testament to the robust educational ties between the U.S. and Nigeria.



Ally Samaja (L), Assistant Commissioner for Mineral Development in the Minerals ministry, pictured in Dar es Salaam on Thursday briefing Zanzibar House of Representatives deputy Speaker Mgeni Hassan Juma (2nd-L), Minerals minister Anthony Mavunde (2nd-R) and Minerals deputy minister Dr Steven Kiruswa at exhibitions held in tandem with a just-ended international minerals and investment conference. Photo: Correspondent Imani Nathaniel

ACCRA

Ghana, Gambia partner on free roaming services

GHANA and The Gambia are in talks to launch a free roaming initiative, enhancing West African connectivity. Ghana's Ministry of Communications and Digitalisation and National Communications Authority (NCA) are key players in this initiative.

This means mobile users in both countries will avoid extra charges for calls, texts, and data, boosting trade, tourism, and economic integration across borders.

The collaboration aligns with the Economic Community of West African States' (ECOWAS) broader push for seamless regional communication.

Ghana and The Gambia are forging new paths in West Africa's digital landscape, implementing a free-roaming initiative. This move strengthens regional connectivity while highlighting the role of technological collaboration in fostering economic integration. The

initiative enables mobile users travelling between the two nations to make calls, send messages, and use data services without additional roaming fees. By reducing these costs, the programme aligns with the ECOWAS Free Roaming Initiative, which seeks to eliminate barriers to communication across member states.

The free roaming plan is expected to spur economic activities by streamlining cross-border

communication. Businesses and individuals travelling between Ghana and The Gambia can now stay connected without worrying about exorbitant charges, facilitating smoother transactions and personal interactions. The initiative is also expected to attract more tourists by ensuring seamless digital access for visitors.

This collaboration marks another milestone in Ghana's commitment to expanding

digital connectivity, following Ghana's successful implementation of similar agreements with Côte d'Ivoire, Togo, and Benin, with talks of possible roaming partnerships with Liberia.

In June 2023, Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire became the first ECOWAS countries to implement the free-roaming initiative, allowing subscribers to receive calls without paying roaming fees and to be charged local

rates when making calls while in the partner country.

By focusing on digital integration, Ghana and The Gambia demonstrate the power of technology to bridge gaps between countries. This step also serves as a model for other West African nations to join the free-roaming framework, contributing to the larger goal of a connected and economically integrated region.

The implementation comes

when technology is increasingly seen as a catalyst for Africa's development. The reduction in communication costs has a ripple effect, not only improving the ease of doing business but also enhancing cultural and social exchange across borders.

The partnership between Ghana and The Gambia underscores a shared vision of leveraging technology for regional growth. By creating accessible communication channels, the two nations are fostering collaboration that goes beyond borders.

SADC extends mandate of its troops in DRC, Mozambique

HARARE

SOUTHERN African leaders have agreed to extend for another year the presence of regional troops deployed to fight rebels in the conflict-torn eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). They also pledged to work for peace in Mozambique where disputed elections have fueled unrest.

The leaders gathered in Zimbabwe's capital, Harare, for an extraordinary summit under the auspices of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), a 16-nation bloc that includes the DRC.

Regional power South Africa has committed nearly 3,000 troops to the SADC mission in the DRC, which were deployed last December. Just over 2,000 more troops come from Tanzania and Malawi.

The mission is one of a myriad of forces operating in the mineral-rich region, which has been plagued by decades of armed violence. They include Congolese government soldiers, foreign mercenaries, a United Nations peacekeeping force and more than a hundred groups fighting for power, land and precious mineral resources. Others are trying to defend their communities. Some armed groups have

been accused of massacres and ethnic cleansing.

Neighbouring Rwanda has rejected accusations, including those by the Congolese government and UN experts that it supports the M23, the main rebel group operating in eastern DRC, which is currently experiencing one of the world's worst humanitarian crises, with more than 7 million people displaced. UN peacekeepers were due to leave the DRC next month, but rising violence in the east of the country by Rwandan-backed rebels has prompted them to stay. Congolese Communications Minister Patrick Muyaya said a new timetable would be drawn up for the force's departure, although he gave no further details.

Regarding Mozambique, SADC leaders, without providing details, expressed their "unwavering commitment" to a peaceful resolution of the electoral conflict that has sparked weeks of protests, leaving at least 30 people dead.

Mozambique's electoral agency said the ruling FRELIMO party and its presidential candidate had won general elections held on October 9. FRELIMO has ruled Mozambique since independence from Portugal in 1975.

Venancio Mondlane, the independ-



Transport deputy minister Daniel Kihenzile speaks at an event in Arusha city on Wednesday in connection with the introduction of direct flights from France to Tanzania's Kilimanjaro International Airport. He said that would make it easier for tourists to make it to Tanzania's northern tourism circuit. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

ent candidate who came in second with 20 percent of the vote, challenged the result in court and called for protests across the country.

The country's highest court has yet to rule on the opposition's challenge. This week, the attorney gener-

al's office filed a complaint against Mr. Mondlane and the Optimistic People for the Development of Mozambique (PODEMOS), the party that supports him, seeking compensation for damage to state property during the unrest.

Outgoing Mozambican President Filipe Nyusi has said he is ready to meet with presidential candidates to defuse political tensions. Mondlane has gone into exile at an undisclosed location, claiming a plot had been hatched to kill him.

COP29 negotiators seek climate financing deal as deadline nears

BAKU

WITH time running down, negotiators at the United Nations' annual climate talks have returned to the puzzle of finding an agreement to bring far more money for developing countries to adapt than wealthier countries have shown they are willing to pay.

Vulnerable nations seek \$1.3 trillion to deal with damage from climate change and to adapt to that change, including building out their own clean-energy systems. Experts agree that at least \$1 trillion is called for, but both figures are far more than the developed world has so far offered.

With two days left to break the impasse at

the UN talks in Azerbaijan, rich nations have still not revealed how much they are ready to provide the developing world to fight climate change.

"We need a figure," said Adonia Ayebare, chair of the G77+China group of developing nations. "Then the rest will follow. But we need a headline," the Ugandan negotiator told reporters on Wednesday.

Negotiators are debating three key components of the issue: how big the numbers are, how much grants or loans should total, and who contributes. At a session where negotiators relayed their progress on Wednesday, Australia's Minister for Climate Change and Energy Chris Bowen, one of the ministers

leading talks on the money goal, said he has heard different proposals on how much cash should be in the pot.

As well as the \$1.3 trillion proposed by developing countries, nations proposed figures of \$900bn, \$600bn and \$440bn, he said.

Diego Pacheco Balanza, the chair of the Like-Minded Group negotiating bloc, said the group was also hearing a figure of \$200bn in negotiating corridors. "That's not enough," he said.

"Developed countries whose legal obligations it is to provide finance continue to shift their responsibility to developing countries," Pacheco Balanza added.

Developing nations say rich historic pol-

iters have a duty to help and also want public grants from governments - not loans or private capital - to make up the majority of the new finance goal under negotiation.

Some of those on the hook for climate finance, including the European Union and United States, say they cannot show their hand until they know what they are agreeing to.

There is also a demand for emerging economies such as China and Saudi Arabia, which have grown wealthy yet remain classified as developing nations, to chip in.

While talks have gone around in circles for over a week, a slimmed-down draft is expected to land in the early hours of Thursday, en-

suring a sleepless night for negotiators.

"I'm sure we will have some long days and hours ahead of us...This will be a very steep climb," European climate envoy Wopke Hoekstra told reporters. He added "It is important to determine the elements first, so that you can have an informed conversation about what an ambitious and also realistic number could be."

However, the lead negotiator of COP29 hosts Azerbaijan, Yalchin Rafiyev, urged countries to "pick up the pace".

"Let us embrace the spirit of collaboration, compromise and determination to ensure that we leave this conference with outcomes that make a real difference," Rafiyev said.



Police officer Arestico Majula (R), who is facing murder charges, is led out of the Kisutu Resident Magistrate's Court in Dar es Salaam yesterday shortly after the ongoing hearing of the case. Photo: Correspondent Imani Nathaniel

UK launches global clean power alliance, leads energy transition

RIO DE JANEIRO

UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer officially launched the Global Clean Power Alliance at the G20 in Rio de Janeiro yesterday, with 12 countries signing up to join its first mission in a major boost for the world's clean energy transition.

Brazil, Australia, Barbados, Canada, Chile, Colombia, France, Germany, Morocco, Norway, Tanzania, the African Union are the first countries to sign up to its first mission.

The United States and the European Union will also partner with the UK on the initiative.

At the G20 Summit in Rio de Janeiro, the Prime Minister and Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva confirmed the new partnership, saying that it will speed up the global drive for clean power by uniting developed and developing countries across the north and south.

The alliance of countries will work together and share expertise with the goal of meeting the COP28 commitments to triple renewable energy and double energy efficiency.

The Global Clean Power Alliance will have 'Missions' to address the most critical energy transition challenges. The first of these is the Finance Mission, which will be published today and co-chaired by Brazil, will harness the political leadership needed to unlock private finance on a huge scale, so that no developing country is left behind.

It commits to supporting countries to build investment platforms and providing the assistance needed to get clean finance flowing. The UK is leading the way on the green energy transition. One of the Prime Minister's missions is to make Britain a clean energy superpower - making the British people better off by investing in clean home grown power to end national exposure to fossil fuel markets and the dictators who control them.

African legislators called upon to craft crucial regulations for digital economy

ADDIS ABABA

AFRICAN legislators have been urged to craft necessary laws and regulations to help realize the continent's digital development aspirations.

This came during the opening session of the 13th edition of the Africa Internet Governance Forum held recently in Addis Ababa, the capital of Ethiopia, under the theme 'Building Our Multi-Stakeholder Digital Future for Africa'.

Mactar Seck, chief of technology and innovation section at the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), said the continent needs to harness the power of digital technologies to achieve the global Sustainable Development Goals and the African Union (AU)'s Agenda 2063.

According to Seck, the pressing challenges for Africa's digital development include limited connectivity, the digital divide between segments of Africa's population, and cybersecurity-related threats. "We have now 37 percent of people connected. This means 63 percent of our population is offline. We have a digital divide not only between men and women, but also between our people living in the urban and rural areas, and among African countries," he said.

Noting that the cost of information and communications technology services is "very expensive" in Africa compared to the rest of the world, he also raised the issue of affordability as another challenge.

With almost 500 million Africans living without any form of digital identity,

he called on African parliamentarians to coordinate national and continental efforts in crafting inclusive digital development legislation for emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence, blockchain technology, and nanotechnology.

Adil Sulieman, senior policy officer at the AU's infrastructure and energy department, said African parliamentarians are instrumental in advancing Africa's digital information transformation journey. With the African continent striving to achieve greater integration with the establishment of the world's largest free trade zone, Sulieman said the aspiration requires greater internet connectivity, free flow of information, electronic payment, and cross-border transactions.

"African parliamentarians would have

to recommend new rules that would generate trust, protect and secure data across the entire value chain, particularly for the vulnerable and marginalized groups, including children, women, the elderly, and the physically and mentally challenged people," he said.

Negeri Lencho, chairperson of the human resources and technology affairs standing committee at the House of Peoples' Representatives, the lower house of Ethiopia's parliament, said parliamentarians play a significant role in setting legal and regulatory frameworks, directives, proclamations, and policies. These instruments are crucial to fostering the practical implementation of programs and projects that can directly benefit the community.

Lencho further highlighted device

affordability as one of the major challenges affecting Africa's inclusive digital development efforts. "Without smart devices, access to data is going to be very limited. This makes data accessibility a function of an affordable device."

Jointly hosted by the UNECA in collaboration with the Ethiopian Ministry of Innovation and Technology, this year's forum brought together African parliamentarians, experts, and policymakers to identify key challenges, emerging trends, and opportunities for Africa's digital future.

Issues such as cybersecurity and cybercrime, data governance, digital rights and human rights, sustainability and universal access to connectivity, and emerging technologies were among key areas of discussion at the forum.

The Guardian

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**Taking A New Look
At The News
ESTABLISHED IN 1995**

Surely, it's vital to redesign top climate projects before funding

OUR country's delegation to the just-ended 29th conference of the parties (COP29) to the United Nations framework convention on climate change is reported to have had a remarkable presence at the global event.

The delegation was having fruitful discussions with decision makers from our country's development partners, meaning that it was the wider atmosphere that set a different tonality from routine consultations at the diplomatic mission level. It was in a sense a moment to dream big.

There were elements of novelty at least as related to one of 16 priority projects tabled at the meeting involving waste management for energy production.

So far, this sphere is yet to be opened up to the private sector, and it is unclear at what point it needed to be presented to development partners.

One project that did not quite represent an ability to dream big related to improving the bus rapid transit system for Dar es Salaam city, which again can safely be handed to those whose buses are no longer needed on the Dar es Salaam-Morogoro route.

These buses still ply the route but have excessive fleets, while likely to recover rather swiftly with the recent rise in rapid train (SGR) fares. What the city now needs are hourly transit trains from the city's suburbs to the city centre.

Here again there are problems of institutional vested interests sort of cutting into policy with a priori orientations that don't need to be examined on environmental trajectory to see how helpful they still are.

BRT is a new version of the perennial wish of the city council authorities to control the lion's share of bus services. In 1984 or thereabouts, when the private commuter bus sys-

tem was being introduced, operators were being charged a levy for eroding the council's bus business gains. That levy was later scrapped, but the council always dreamed of a big bus service.

Certain other areas were somewhat detailed in a rather discordant manner - in the wish to build capacity in carbon market non-market mechanisms, including pushing for empowering youth or women to adapt to localised climate change impacts.

For once, as properly worked out strategy would first design private sector access to the market in a systematic way, and then see how women and youth groups could be assisted where market mechanisms failed them.

Introducing this need while markets are barely functioning is translates into jumping the gun to privilege methods employed by savings and credit cooperative unions.

Seeking funding for 16 priority projects covering areas such as waste management for energy production, methane reduction and sustainable management of blue economy resources in a massive public sector setting is a missed opportunity.

But that is precisely what many public institutions may be preferring so that we do more of what we are already doing and not moving any differently.

It is aligned with global sentiments on the main issues as the key problem is reducing carbon dioxide production rather than re-absorbing it through massive greening of the world - and especially deserts.

Alongside reduction in emissions by cutting out industry is added big funding, ostensibly meant at being in pursuance of climate justice. Well, preferences can differ so much as to keep people confused as to what path to take.

also think of conjugal ties merely as friendships.

The rule there is what happens on Facebook, with a maxim 'one mistake, one goal', and thus the moment one partner posts or is posted in the arms of another, it is all over. The second type is African situations and seemingly much of South Asia, if not Latin America, where the men are often dirt poor and can't stand being robbed of those they thought they 'possess'. They violently defend their status or kill if they fail.

It isn't too unreasonable to say that the traditional family environment is sort of out of date but trouble is that there is no credible replacement anyone has suggested.

Even the most militant of women's liberation activists never espouse actually ditching the family, raise children in foster houses or suchlike. Instead, men are expected to grasp most of their arguments and act accordingly.

That is largely successful in middle-class homes where loyalties are split, with the conjugal unit little more than a respectability asset but working, giving the children a clear sense of direction and dignity.

A lingering problem with what was being said this World Children's Day is that couples are being told to live for children so as to maintain the same atmosphere even if its energy store is entirely drained.

One expert said that raising a child is an irreplaceable responsibility requiring an environment where children can thrive and grow into good citizens. Too bad, there has never been consensus even on this.

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Plundering dreams for business innovation leaving us destitute

By Emily Cook, PhD

DREAMS promise innovation. We have been told that they are the secret portal to masterpieces. The door to multi-million-dollar business ideas. From the Theory of Relativity to Twilight, dreams are the creator.

Mary Shelley wrote Frankenstein after a nightmare about a mechanical man. Elias Howe dreamed of cannibals waving pointed sticks. In the morning he invented the sewing machine.

Google famously burst into being when a 22-year-old graduate dreamed that he had downloaded the whole internet. Larry Page's night-time vision formed the basis of an algorithm. The code went on to underlie the once most popular website in the world.

Look at the gifts bequeathed on the lucky sleepers throughout history. And, naturally, many of us are keen to put our own dreams to work.

Science has proven that there is a link between dreaming and innovation - and given us a way to control it.

In the last few decades neuroscience techniques have advanced rapidly. Now we can delve objectively into the sleeping brain. The link between dreaming and innovation has become a little clearer.

Ten years ago, researchers noticed something strange about project managers in high-tech organisations. Some of them had particularly creative and emotionally charged dreams. Employees who dreamed meanwhile seemed to deliver better business innovation.

Correlations like this one always demand careful unpicking. The researchers couldn't be sure that it was the dreams themselves that were causing the innovation. There was no evidence that the project managers were receiving nighttime direction on how to build software. The scientists instead offered a more cautious explanation.

People who are open to new experienc-

es and less directive in their approach to life dream more often. It was this flexibility that resulted in the commercial innovation.

Indeed, we have known for a long time that the personality trait of openness is a critical determinant in how someone dreams. Nevertheless, it was a bold step forwards to tie the intimate life of our dreams to business key performance indicators - or KPIs.

Fast forward to 2023. Psychologists are now even able to plant creativity-driving dreams in sleeping brains.

Harvard Medical School researchers are known to have discovered a way to nudge sleepers into dreaming about a specific topic. They exploited the drowsy point right before the onset of sleep. Their new protocol finally gave us control over our dreams' delivery of creativity.

The scientists played sleepers a voice saying: "Remember to think of a tree." This worked. On average, 70.3 per cent of the dream reports included a tree. Critically, upon their waking up, creativity in tree-related tasks improved.

If our ambition is to recruit our dreams to get busy on problem-solving whilst we sleep, we are very close to the finish line.

If our goal was to recreate the spark of illumination that uncovered things like the structure of DNA, we might be disappointed.

Time has come for us to pause and examine our desire for control. I am a dream-fanatic and psychologist. These scientific advances should delight me. Instead, the intrusion seems sacrilegious.

Perhaps I am jaded or burned-out from the relentless march of hustle culture. I am growing suspicious of our unquestioning worship of finan-

cial value creation.

Humanity has been debating the nature of dreams for millennia - and won't stop any time soon. In the midst of this conversation, there is one thing the neuroscientists, the religions and the psychoanalysts agree on: dreams are complex and beautiful happenings.

But when did our dreams mutate from miracle to resource? Our culture is obsessed with productivity. In the 16th century, England became protestant. Much of the Western world has remained this way since. The US has been mostly protestant since the first European settlers arrived. One of the central beliefs of this kind of Christianity is the Protestant Work Ethic.

Working hard is a sign of moral character. Failing to do so is laziness - and a sin. It's not fashionable to talk about sin any more. But we continue to place productive accomplishment at the centre of our existence.

Every year, in September, villages across Britain celebrate Harvest Festival. The elderly parishioners of my childhood church get busy. I grew up watching their generous collection of tinned food - passing it on to the local less fortunate.

No one commented on the healthy but jobless members of families who accepted our offerings. At least not publicly. The sweet old ladies were too polite and English for that. But we all knew, and we resented their life of leisure. Today we are still captivated by the performance of productivity. It's not surprising that we looked disapprovingly at the wastefulness of sleep - then rallied our efforts to mine it for monetisable creativity.

We were foolish to think that our subconscious would obey, whether you ascribe to the activation-synthesis model or thank Morpheus for your

visions. You know that dreams don't belong the waking mind. They won't live in the realm of Monday morning to-do-lists. They don't care about you innovation program deadlines.

[In Greco-Roman mythology, Morpheus is one of the sons of Hypnos (Somnus), the god of sleep. Morpheus sends human shapes (Greek morphai) of all kinds to the dreamer, while his brothers Phobetor (or Icelus) and Phantasus send the forms of animals and inanimate things, respectively.]

Thankfully, some parts of our world and some parts of ourselves are beyond capitalism.

There's an odd British folktale I heard once, left over from the times before. It wasn't written down until 1553 but it is much older than that. It has persisted in my homeland, in one form or another, since the first century.

This isn't a particularly satisfying tale. There isn't a moral message or a snippet of wisdom to pocket. This isn't the kind of dream that launches the next Google.

Generations of storytellers have sensed that there is something of value in these words. Even if they can't quite be sure what it is. Perhaps its purpose was simply in its sharing. Driving us to huddle amongst friends and argue over its meaning.

An excuse to extravagantly and selfishly waste time.

Dreams offer something more valuable than money. That is the truth about dreams, really. The self-help gurus and scientists might not be ready to admit it just yet.

Dreams aren't obedient dogs. They won't entertain you with tricks on command. They are not your best friend or your reliable work colleague.

In an age of project plans, and straight lines, and endless trudging progress, dreams are rebellion. A much-needed reminder that we don't need to be useful in order to be valuable.

Dreams might guide you, but they won't serve you. You will need to learn to be grateful for the hazy half glimpses of genius.

In music one doesn't make the end of the composition the point of the composition... Same way in dancing, you don't aim at one particular spot in the room... The whole point of dancing is the dance.

Anyone who has ever tried to coax a cat into an embrace knows that the beauty is in the boundaries.

•medium

Africa marks World Children's Day with rising domestic violence cancer

VOICES are being heard from various countries on what African civil society and governments were doing this World Children's Day (November 20).

One such instance was a strident call to end domestic violence within families, with speakers pointing out that this situation increasingly threatens children's rights.

It was a call to observe moral precepts, which everyone knows by heart, and implicitly avoiding to approach the problem. Everyone dreams of a happy family and, if it appears that there are too many cases of violence, it is the foundations.

Late 20th century society especially in the West moved from duty, which begot forms of slavery, to rights, whose penultimate expression is anarchy.

Thus, people move into families or create families where the boundaries aren't visible, and resilience - ability to withstand the lack of boundaries - all too often being in short supply.

The perfect family in history is where the man decides everything and the woman obeys, but that is now ruined by the opening up of non-domestic economic activities to women. There are plenty of advisers, both secular and spiritual, as to how to handle this situation. But reflexes differ, and no amount of advice changes conditioned reflex - though it can perhaps alter some decisions.

There are two typologies of family breakdown or lack of cohesion - one typical of Western society where youth are marginalised or live on allowances and women are not just free to make money but



By Telesphor Magobe

Unregulated brickyards seen largely responsible for low quality buildings

THE collapse of a Kariakoo multi-storey building in Dar es Salaam this week, which until Wednesday morning had left 20 people dead and several others injured, according to President Samia Suluhu Hassan, can teach us to look into the quality and safety of the buildings we erect to see whether they are fit for human habitation.

When President Samia visited the collapsed building in Kariakoo on Wednesday she said she had formed a 20-member committee of experts to look into the quality and safety of Kariakoo buildings and advise the government on what to do.

In my opinion, it is not only in Kariakoo, but also other parts of the country have buildings whose quality and safety is questionable. Where there is poor quality control brick-makers tend to produce low quality bricks which look strong because they are hard-pressed by a brick-making machine, but are not really strong. There is a high disproportion of sand to a 50kg-bag of cement. In this way, with a brick-making machine bricks are pressed hard, watered a lot so that they become hard, but are not really strong. Often during loading a vehicle with low quality bricks or unloading it some of the bricks break into pieces and others show some cracks.

Many people like to buy and use cheap products because that is what they can afford or they want to save money for other things. But it is at a cost because they may buy cheap and low quality products which are



"When I first asked you, why did you tell me '40 bricks' if you knew you were producing up to 70 bricks from a 50-kg bag of cement?" The young man laughed, and then said "that was just the language of business."

As days passed by, the columnist made more inquiries about the quality of bricks in other areas and found out that a 50kg-bag of cement generally produced 70 bricks, which translates into producing low quality bricks.

Therefore, brick-makers are after profit and not quality. They produce low quality bricks, which are detrimental to buyers or builders and the owners of the buildings that use such bricks.

Some people enclose their houses with a wall and use low quality bricks, but just after a few weeks the wall starts cracking. In other places some walls collapse because they are of low quality or were erected on weak foundations. In the circumstances, accidents which involve the collapse of buildings or walls may happen from time to time.

We cannot prevent all accidents in the construction sector, but we can prevent the majority of them if all stakeholders adhere to quality control. To ensure this is done and maintained brickyards should be inspected from time to time to ensure they produce quality and durable bricks. This includes all producers of building materials. So, there is a need to ensure the houses we build or the buildings we erect are fit for human habitation and are safe for us respectively.

Today's quote: "Quality means doing it right when no one is looking." - Henry Ford

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detrimental to their safety. If brickyards have poor quality control there will be the likelihood of continuing experiencing tragedies until producers start producing quality bricks and other building materials. The decentralisation of the production of building materials is a good thing and should be encouraged, but it should be subject to quality control.

Many businesspeople want to make money without spending much on quality. For instance, brick-makers are not interested in the quality of the bricks they produce, what they are interested in is the money they get from their labour. After all, they are lowly paid.

Low quality building materials flood the local market because buyers can afford them, and some of the buyers say it is better to use low quality products than not to get them at all. Once the businesspersons know that they have a market they will continue dealing in low quality products due to high demand. No wonder quality control authorities confiscate counterfeit products and destroy them from time to time, but businesspeople continue dealing in low quality or counterfeit products because of the profit they make from them.

One day the columnist passed by a brickyard and found some young men making bricks. Just out of curiosity he

stopped, greeted and asked them how many bricks they made per 50kg-bag of cement, and one of them replied "40 bricks".

A few minutes later the columnist saw the young man who had said they produced 40 bricks per 50kg-bag of cement, and asked him, "Excuse me, you told me that you were producing 40 bricks from a 50kg-bag of cement and I am looking for good bricks, can you assure me of producing 40 bricks from a 50kg-bag of cement?" The young man replied "to tell the truth, we produce up to 70 bricks from a 50kg-bag of cement."

The columnist asked him again,

The Law and You



Education crisis: Over 160,000 students abandon school as dropout rates soar

By Adonis Byemelwa

IN a country where education is touted as the key to progress, an alarming trend is emerging: school dropouts. Despite the government's ambitious policy to provide free education, many young people of school-going age are abandoning the classroom for various livelihoods, from farming and livestock keeping to riding motorcycles.

A growing number of these students have completed their primary education and, after passing their Standard Seven exams, decide to quit school altogether—a phenomenon locally known as 'mdondoko' or school dropout.

This disturbing trend is reflected in the number of candidates registered for the 2024 National Form Four Examinations, which started earlier this month. According to Dr. Said Mohamed, the Executive Secretary of the National Examination Council of Tanzania (Necta), over 160,000 students who should have sat for the exam are missing from the official list of candidates.

"Out of the 690,341 students who sat for the Form Two exams two years ago, only 529,321 are registered for this year's Form Four exams," Dr. Mohamed said in Dar es Salaam. "This means that nearly 161,000 students who should be taking the exam this year will not be participating."

The decline in student participation is not just a statistical anomaly but a clear reflection of a deeper issue that needs urgent attention. With each passing year, more and more students are dropping out, especially those in the primary and early secondary levels.

Dr. Mohamed's analysis highlighted that while the total number of Form Four candidates this year stands at 557,731, the dropout rate among secondary school students is a cause for concern. He explained that the number of private candidates for the exams has also grown, pointing to a trend where students are either opting for non-traditional routes or abandoning formal education altogether.

The factors driving this increase in school dropouts are multifaceted. Experts say one of the most significant causes is economic hard-



Attending the G20 summit is a milestone for Tanzania, marking a new level of recognition for its developmental aspirations and achievements.

ship. Many families, particularly in rural areas, struggle to meet the costs associated with education.

While the government's free education policy covers tuition, indirect costs such as uniforms, books, and transportation often push families beyond their financial limits, forcing children to stay home and work to support their households. As Richard Mabala, a seasoned teacher, explained:

"Despite the government's free education initiative, families still have to bear the burden of school-related expenses. For some, these costs are too high, leading to children either missing school or dropping out entirely."

Dr. Roze Matete, a researcher in education and lecturer at the University of Dodoma (UDOM), pointed out that the pressure from parents also contributes significantly to school dropouts.

"In many regions, especially those with mining activities, it is common for children to leave school to take on responsibilities such as tending to livestock or helping in family businesses. Parents, especially in these areas, do not see anything wrong with children of school-going age participating in economic activities," said Dr. Matete.

Further exacerbating the issue is the limited focus on skills development within schools. Moses Kyando, the director of the non-governmental organization MOFET, which deals with educational issues, stated that the education

system often prioritizes academic subjects over practical skills, leading students with limited academic capabilities to lose interest in formal schooling.

"Many children who struggle with subjects like chemistry and physics may not find school engaging. Instead, they turn to developing talents like music, sports, or even farming. This lack of vocational skills in the curriculum leads to students feeling disconnected from the education system," Kyando said.

While 2023 saw a slight reduction in school dropouts, the problem remains critical. The Education Statistics Report (BEST) revealed that in 2023, 306,113 students dropped out, compared to 327,900 in 2022. This decrease, though encouraging, still highlights a major problem.

More troubling, the report found that the majority of dropouts come from the lower levels of education, particularly those in the fourth grade, first form, and second form, who together accounted for 55.6% of all dropouts in 2023.

At the root of this issue lies the pervasive poverty that affects many families in Tanzania. Many students, especially those from poorer households, feel compelled to abandon their studies to help provide for their families.

This is especially true for students in rural areas, where economic pressures can outweigh the perceived benefits of education. Oscar Mkude, an economist at the University

of Dar es Salaam, agrees that poverty remains the primary driver of school dropouts. "It's not just about removing school fees. Families are still grappling with the hidden costs of education. Programs like Tasaf (Tanzania Social Action Fund) could play a crucial role in providing the additional support these families need," Mkude said.

In addition to economic barriers, students also face significant challenges in transitioning from primary to secondary education. One of the most difficult adjustments is the change in the language of instruction, which shifts from Kiswahili to English.

For students from rural schools, particularly those with fewer resources, this linguistic barrier can create a significant gap in their academic progress. The government has tried to address this challenge through a program introduced in 2022 aimed at improving English language skills for Form One students.

Nevertheless, experts argue that this initiative is not enough and that a more holistic approach is needed to better prepare students for secondary school academically and psychologically.

"Many students are unprepared for the shift to secondary school, especially those from rural or underfunded schools. They struggle with language, and this affects their overall academic performance," said Muhanyi Nkoronko, an education researcher at the Open University of Tanzania. "We need to do

more to prepare them, both academically and emotionally, for the demands of secondary education."

School violence and bullying also contribute to the high dropout rates. Reports indicate that a significant number of students leave school due to violence, whether it's bullying from fellow students or conflicts with teachers. This toxic school environment discourages students from continuing their education.

The government has acknowledged the need for a broader, more integrated approach to address these issues. Efforts to improve access to education, support families with financial aid, and enhance the quality of teaching are necessary to reduce the dropout rate. Programs like the Tasaf initiative, which provides financial assistance to low-income households, can help alleviate some of the pressures that lead to students abandoning their education.

Tanzania is not alone in facing this challenge. Across the continent, several African nations have made strides in reducing school dropout rates. In Rwanda, for example, the government's policy of free and compulsory education has significantly boosted enrollment rates, while Kenya's scholarship programs for students from disadvantaged backgrounds have helped many continue their education. These examples show that with the right investments in education, it is possible to turn the tide on school dropouts.

In Tanzania, there is still hope. Experts argue that through continued investment in education, targeted interventions for at-risk students, and a greater focus on vocational training, the country can reduce its dropout rates and ensure that more children stay in school.

"Reducing dropout rates requires a multi-faceted approach. It is not just about free education; it's about creating an environment where students feel supported, both academically and emotionally," said Dr. Matete. "If we address the root causes—poverty, lack of resources, and poor preparation—we can improve the education system and keep more children in school."

The statistics are sobering, but the solutions are clear. As Tanzania seeks to provide quality education for all, it must confront the underlying factors that lead to school dropouts, ensuring that every child, regardless of their background, has the opportunity to succeed.

By Umar Manzoor Shah

Brazil vows to make COP30 a catalyst for climate action and biodiversity celebration

AS Brazil gears up to host COP30 in Belém next year, Moisés Savian, the country's Secretary of Land Governance, Territorial and Socio Environmental Development, outlined the event's significance in showcasing Brazil's environmental policies and fostering global collaboration.

In an interview with IPS, Savian highlighted Brazil's progress under President Lula's administration and outlined the country's aspirations for the upcoming climate conference.

The 2025 UN Climate Change Conference (UNFCCC COP30) is scheduled for November 2025 in Belém, Brazil. This event will feature the 30th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP30), the 20th Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (CMP20), and the seventh Meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement (CMA7). Additionally, it will include the 63rd sessions of the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA63) and the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI63).

A moment to shine
"The next COP is a significant opportunity for Brazil. Our nation is blessed with immense natural resources, diverse ecosystems, and cultural richness. Hosting this event allows us to highlight our environmental policies and contribute meaningfully to the global dialogue on climate action."

Savian said that past COPs held in nations like Dubai and Azerbaijan were remarkable in their own right but Brazil's edition will be distinct.

"Brazil's unique societal fabric, comprising contributions from people across the globe, coupled with its vast ecological diversity—from the Amazon to the Cerrado—will add an unparalleled dynamism to COP30," he said.

Achievements in environmental protection
Savian says that under President Lula's administration, Brazil has made significant strides in reducing deforestation and transitioning toward sustainable agriculture. "In the past year alone, we have reduced deforestation by 30 percent in the Amazon and 25 percent in the Cerrado. These achievements reflect our commitment to protecting our vital biomes."

In the agricultural sector, Brazil is heavily investing in an ecological transition to reduce emissions.

In 2023, Brazil revised its Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) and enhanced its climate ambitions, committing to a 53 percent reduction in



Moisés Savian, Brazil's Secretary of Land Governance, Territorial and Socio Environmental Development at COP29. He looks forward to COP30 which will be held in his country.

emissions by 2030. The country aims to position itself as the first G20 nation to achieve net-zero emissions while fostering job creation and economic prosperity. Brazil is also finalizing its 2035 emissions reduction targets, focusing on combating deforestation, promoting sustainable agriculture, decarbonizing industries, implementing nature-based solutions, expanding renewable energy sources, advancing sustainable transportation, and developing the bioeconomy. However, despite these initiatives, Brazil's climate plans have received only a fraction of the necessary funding to meet its ambitious goals.

According to Savian, focusing on traditional and indigenous populations, ensuring their rights and territories are preserved is extremely important. "We are formulating a specific national plan for family farming, which constitutes the majority of our rural population. These communities are often the most affected by climate extremes, so targeted public policies are essential."

Global responsibility and support
Savian also addressed the role of developed nations in supporting climate adaptation and mitigation in countries like Brazil. He outlined four key areas where global cooperation is essential.

Financing Climate Action- Developed countries must deliver on their promises to fund climate initiatives. Technological Support- Advanced technologies from these nations can aid in decarbonizing economies like Brazil's. Sustainable Consumption- A focus on low-carbon products and sustainable supply chains is crucial. And Knowledge Exchange-Collaboration in research and capacity-building is vital for global progress.

"Less than 1 percent of global climate financing currently reaches family farmers and traditional communities. This needs to change. While

funding is critical, so too are clear criteria for its allocation and ensuring it reaches those who need it most."

Challenges and priorities for COP29

Commenting on COP29, Savian expressed concerns about slow progress in implementing commitments. He stressed the need for tangible outcomes in three key areas: Climate Financing—establishing actionable frameworks and ensuring funds reach grassroots communities; finalizing regulations to operationalize carbon trading and monitoring mechanisms, including setting up indicators to track progress and results.

"Without a focus on family farming and food system transformation, there can be no just transition," he said.

Brazil's vision for COP30
Savian expressed confidence in Brazil's readiness to host COP30, acknowledging the logistical challenges posed by Belém, a city of 1.5 million people.

"Despite these hurdles, we are committed to showcasing Amazon to the world. This will be a chance for global leaders and citizens to engage with the heart of Brazil's environmental efforts."

He also highlighted Brazil's track record of successfully hosting major international events under President Lula's leadership. "We aim to make COP30 a transformative experience that advances climate goals and deepens global appreciation for Brazil's biodiversity and environmental stewardship," Savian said.

Breaking cycle of GBV against mothers and children is essential for global health

By Rajat Khosla

EACH year, millions of women and children around the world die from preventable causes. Maternal, newborn, and child health (MNCH) is a shared global priority, yet we often overlook one of its most pressing—and preventable—barriers: violence against women.

As we mark the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence, we are reminded that gender-based violence (GBV) is not just a social issue but a critical health crisis that endangers the lives of mothers and children everywhere.

When we consider that a woman experiencing violence is 1.5 times more likely to have a low-birth-weight baby and that this condition greatly increases infant mortality, the need for urgent, integrated action becomes starkly clear. Addressing violence is not peripheral to MNCH efforts—it is foundational.

Violence and health: a devastating cycle

Evidence tells us that intimate partner violence (IPV) directly affects maternal and infant outcomes. Pregnant women subjected to IPV face

a heightened risk of complications like preterm labour and hemorrhage, often resulting in increased maternal and newborn mortality.² The problem doesn't end with pregnancy: children born to mothers experiencing violence have a higher likelihood of malnutrition, stunting, and developmental delays, perpetuating a cycle of vulnerability.⁴

The psychological toll is just as concerning. Women subjected to violence are more prone to depression and anxiety, both of which affect maternal health-seeking behavior.⁵ Depressed mothers are less likely to access antenatal care and postnatal services, further endangering the lives of their infants. In turn, these mental health impacts lead to cascading health and social risks for women and their families, affecting entire communities.

The crisis within crises: humanitarian settings

Nowhere are these challenges more pressing than in humanitarian settings. Conflict, natural disasters, and displacement magnify the vulnerability of women and children, often leading to spikes in sexual violence and the breakdown of healthcare



Pioneering effort to protect women and children in quarantine centres in Viet Nam

systems. In conflict zones, over 60% of women report having experienced sexual violence, according to humanitarian reports.⁶ These women are not only at risk of severe trauma and infection but also of maternal mortality, with rates nearly double those found in stable environments.⁷

It's estimated that more than 500 women and girls die every day from preventable complications related

to pregnancy and childbirth in humanitarian settings,⁸ underscoring an urgent need for an integrated approach to MNCH and GBV response. These statistics are more than numbers—they represent the lives of mothers, daughters, and children who deserve health, safety, and dignity.

The overlooked victims: women health care workers

It's not only patients who suffer. Female health workers, the backbone of MNCH

services worldwide, are often at grave risk. In fragile and conflict-affected settings, women health workers face high rates of violence, including harassment and physical assault.

Research suggests that up to 80% of healthcare workers in these settings report experiencing violence, a statistic that directly impacts their ability to provide care.⁹ High rates of violence lead to burn-out, turnover, and a critical

shortage of trauma-informed healthcare providers when they are needed most.¹⁰

For many, this threat is exacerbated by their roles as frontline responders to gender-based violence. The safety and mental health of our healthcare workforce are inextricably linked to the health outcomes we aim to achieve for mothers and children.

A call to action for integrated policies

As we look to the future, it's time to broaden our understanding of what it means to support maternal and child health. Policies that address violence against women and protect female health workers must become a central pillar of MNCH efforts. This calls for a multi-pronged approach:

Prioritize Funding for Integrated MNCH and GBV Services: Donors and governments should increase funding for programs that integrate maternal health services with GBV prevention and response, particularly in crisis-prone areas.

Strengthen Health Systems in Humanitarian Settings: We must scale up support for safe, trauma-informed healthcare in conflict zones, ensuring that

women and children have access to life-saving care without the threat of further violence.

Protect and Support Women Health Workers: Policies that safeguard the well-being of women health workers are essential. Measures like workplace protections, mental health support, and security protocols can help mitigate the impacts of violence and ensure that healthcare workers can provide essential services safely.

The costs of inaction are too high. Each preventable death of a mother or child as a result of violence marks a failure to uphold the rights to health and safety for all. By placing violence against women at the forefront of our MNCH efforts, we can break the cycle of suffering and create the conditions needed for healthy mothers and thriving children.

This 16 Days of Activism, let's commit to integrated action against violence—because women's health, newborn survival, and child development depend on it. Together, we can build a world where women and children live free from violence, and where health and dignity go hand in hand.

CAPITAL RADIO

RATIBA YA VIPINDI JUMATATU - JUMAPILI

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

Tembelea mitandao ya kijamii ya CAPITAL RADIO



CAPITAL RADIO

Stakeholders now advocate resilient education systems in Africa region

By Getrude Mbago

EDUCATION systems are at the forefront of societal change, and their ability to adapt is essential for fostering sustainable development. Resilient education systems not only maintain functionality during crises but also ensure that education remains a powerful tool for societal advancement and equity.

The 4th International Quality Education Conference (IQEC), held recently in Dar es Salaam, came at a pivotal moment as African nations confront various educational challenges, including the impact of climate change, the pace of technological advancement, and socioeconomic disparities.

The conference organised by the Tanzania Education Network (TEN/MET) and partners and attended by a wide range of stakeholders, including government officials, parliamentarians, diplomats, educators, students, and development partners—focused on the theme: “Fostering Resilient Education Systems for Sustainable Development in Africa.”

At the opening, Faraja Nyalandu, TENMET Board Chairperson, highlighted the importance of investing in information and communication technologies (ICTs), such as connecting schools to the internet, to facilitate quality education.

Nyalandu also noted that despite progress in the education sector, many children remain out of school due to various challenges.

She said the conference aimed at exploring ways educational systems can effectively respond to current challenges and adapt to technological advancements, ensuring long-term development across the continent.

Elke Wisch, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)'s country representative, emphasized the need for investment in quality education to meet the demands of a changing digital economy and the impacts of the climate crisis. She commended Tanzania's education network for its efforts to improve the sector.

“In the context of education, digital transformation not only increases access to technology and learning platforms but also strengthens the education system's ability to foster digital lit-

eracy and 21st-century skills for all children,” Wisch said.

The three-day event highlighted the urgent need for education systems that can adapt to disruptions, ensuring that every child has access to continuous, high-quality learning.

The conference also underscored the importance of aligning education with the African Union's 2030 Agenda and the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals, particularly Goal 4, which seeks to “ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.”

The outcome statement, based on research papers, speeches, and panel discussions, reflects the shared commitment of participants to foster resilient education systems. The resolutions adopted during the conference are as follows:

Participants affirmed their shared commitment to continue discussing the theme of fostering resilient education systems, tailoring actions to their unique contexts.

The importance of leadership in education was emphasised, with a focus on participatory leadership as a necessary ingredient for building resilient systems. This approach establishes a future-focused vision, emphasising lifelong learning and inclusivity.

Participants reaffirmed their commitment to advocate for free basic education, recognising education as a fundamental human right, in line with Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international agreements.

Participants agreed on the need to explore innovative financing mechanisms, including domestic resource mobilisation and public-private partnerships.

Political commitment to prioritising education funding was underscored, with a call for governments to allocate at least 20 percent of national budgets to education and 6 percent of gross domestic product (GDP), surpassing the global minimum.

Strategies to bridge the digital divide, especially in remote and underserved areas, were seen as critical to ensuring equitable access to digital learning resources.

The challenges faced by vulnerable children—such as girls, children from impoverished backgrounds, children with disabilities,



and those in conflict-affected areas—were recognised. Participants reaffirmed their commitment to creating more inclusive education systems that meet the diverse needs of the groups.

Climate change was acknowledged as having far-reaching effects on education, learning infrastructures, and child development, with a call for education systems to adapt to these challenges.

Participants reiterated their commitment to driving transformative change through evidence-based actions and innovative educational solutions aimed at improving academic outcomes.

The importance of collaboration with governments and the private sector to address skills gaps and improve employability was highlighted, particularly through prioritising technical and vocational education.

Participants called on governments and development partners to support comprehensive programmes for girls' education and to adopt gender-responsive budgeting, ensuring equitable resource allocation and systems that support girls' education.

Recognising climate change as a universal threat, participants urged education stakeholders to establish programmes that address its impacts in schools. The programmes should involve parents, students with special needs, and

the wider community to ensure sustainability.

Policymakers were urged to engage extensively with stakeholders during policy and legal reforms to ensure that education systems are resilient. This includes harmonising policies related to education and child protection, such as the Marriage Act and the Education Act.

Participants called on governments and partners to align improvements in education infrastructure with the professional development of teachers, particularly in digital skills.

The potential of artificial intelligence (AI) to transform education was also acknowledged. Participants urged stakeholders to invest in AI-focused teacher training, infrastructure improvement, and ethical standards to ensure that AI tools are culturally relevant and uphold ethical guidelines.

The need for investment in early childhood education was emphasised as a key factor for sustainable and inclusive growth. Governments and education stakeholders were called upon to allocate adequate resources to early childhood education.

Mohamed Mchengerwa, Minister of State in the President's Office Local Government and Regional Administration, reaffirmed the government's commitment to enhancing education systems and in-

creasing funding to ensure quality education for all.

“The theme of this conference reminds us of our responsibility to build systems that are resilient and sustainable,” he said.

He also mentioned recent updates to the Education and Training Policy, aimed at fostering critical thinking, resilience, and practical skills in pupils.

Mchengerwa thanked stakeholders and development partners for their ongoing contributions to improving education quality and pledged continued collaboration to drive educational development.

In his closing remarks, Minister for Education, Science and Technology, Prof Adolph Mkenda said the government has invested heavily in vocational training infrastructure, whereby 106 new technical schools are set to be constructed in the country.

The initiatives are aimed at fostering a generation of skilled professionals who can thrive in various sectors, from agriculture to hospitality and beyond.

He said that by 2027, secondary education will become compulsory for all pupils up to Form Four, marking a significant change in the country's education policy.

Prof Mkenda said the goal is to ensure that every child has the opportunity to complete at least a basic education, which will now include both general and vocational

education streams in secondary schools.

“We want to ensure that all pupils by 2027/28, will have the opportunity to complete at least ten years of education, with the addition of vocational and technical skills that are essential for real-world employment,” Prof. Mkenda said.

The new curriculum will offer two main education streams in secondary schools: a general academic stream and a vocational skills stream.

The vocational stream will include a range of subjects like fisheries, farming, climate change, hospitality and many others which will be directly linked to industries that are vital to Tanzania's economy. Music and sports are also being integrated, allowing pupils to explore creative and physical education alongside academic subjects.

“Education must be a foundation not only for personal fulfillment but also for societal development. Our goal is to bridge the gap between what students learn in the classroom and the skills that are actually needed in the workforce,” he said.

The Minister highlighted that achieving the ambitious goals will require the active participation of not only the government but also the private sector, community organizations and other stakeholders.

Coalition of 92 CSOs tasks Reps on prohibition of GMO products

By Special Correspondent, Abuja

A total of 92 African civil society organisations (CSOs) have urged the House of Representatives to prohibit use and consumption of Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) in the country to protect the environment and the health of citizens.

The coalition made the recommendation early this week at a public hearing on GMOs organised by Joint Committees on Agricultural Production and Services, Privatisation, Commercialisation, Public Asset, Science Engineering and Special Duties.

The coalition, which was led by Health of Mother Earth Foundation (HOMEF), said that the rising cases of cancer and other related illnesses are traceable to the use and consumption of GMOs.

In a document presented to the committee by Ms Joyce Brown, the Director of Programmes at (HOMEF), the coalition explained that GMOs are products of genetic engineering which is a technology that allows scientists to create plants, animals and micro-organisms by manipulating genes at the cellular level in a way that is not possible via traditional or natural processes.

According to them, it allows DNA from one type of organism to be introduced into another related or unrelated species; genetic manipulation is also done within a single organism.

They said that campaign against GMOs is particularly against genetic modification of food crops and animals and any other genetic modification that will alter ecosystem balance, negatively impact agriculture, destroy local economy and foods.

They said that 19 European Union countries, four Asian countries, two African countries, and five countries in the Americas have banned GMOs.

According to them, up to 64 countries require manufacturers to label foods with GMOs as an increasing number of people around the world are choosing to eat organic and non-GMO products.



Members of the coalition at a media session at the House of Representatives complex in Abuja

The coalition cited an array of studies and research that concluded that that use and consumption GMOs have adverse effects on consumers.

The coalition explained that GMOs have direct implications on biodiversity, saying that over 80 per cent of GMOs are designed to be herbicide tolerant.

According to them, this has significantly increased the use of herbicides in the U.S. for example; needful to say that these herbicides are produced by the same companies producing the genetically modified seeds.

They said that the herbicides do not only destroy the target weeds but also non-target organisms that are essential for soil health and overall ecosystem function.

“These chemicals can also run off to contaminate drinking ground water and surface water

including drinking water sources.

“There is also the severe threat of irreversible genetic contamination due to cross-pollination which could also lead to production of uncontrollable plant varieties and mutated plant varieties,” they said.

The CSOs argued that farmers who have been given GM seed to plant as well as extension workers have complained that although GMOs may perform well in the first planting season in terms of productivity, their productivity drastically declines in the second planting season.

They explained that farmers cannot plant these seeds but have to continuously purchase the seeds every new season.

“This signifies an attempt at seed colonialism and loss of our heritage - forcing our farmers and by extension, consumers to depend on mostly foreign corporations for seed.

“GMOs do not improve yields. On Sept. 23, the National Cotton Association of Nigeria (NACOTAN) reported that they ‘did not record any significant increase in their yields compared to the local seed varieties but instead’, since the introduction of GM cotton seeds during the 2020/2021 farming season, yield per hectare has remained almost the same.

“The worrying aspect is where the cotton farmers reported that no other plant has been able to germinate on the farmlands where the GM seeds were planted, even after four years.

“The farm where we planted the GM seeds can no longer germinate our local seeds anymore. The land has been destroyed,” they said.

The coalition said that Nigerian communities and farmers in last the decade are steadily being ensnared into growing GM Crops.

They said that research conducted by Health of Mother Earth Foundation in 2019 concluded that Nigerian farmers know too little about GMOs to make informed decision.

They said that farmers given GM seeds to plant are at best told that the crops would not require too much spraying and will increase productivity.

“We demand a nullification of all the permits issued for the importation and release of genetically modified maize, beans, cotton and other sundry products into the country.

These permits have been issued without regard for the complaints by millions of Nigerians and without the consent of many.

“A close surveillance of our markets and farms to halt illegal entry of GMOs into Nigeria and into our food supply. Best restaurants near me

“An outright ban of all toxic agrochemicals also known as highly hazardous pesticides - especially glyphosate containing ones identified as probable carcinogens. Studies have shown that over 50 percent of pesticides, registered and used by farmers in Nigeria are classified as highly hazardous.

“This is our petition and the concern of millions of Nigerians. We are of strong opinion that if the suggestions in this petition are taken into consideration, it will protect the best interest of the Nigerian people and Africa as a whole,” they said.

Some members of the coalition include Free Nigeria Alliance, Centre for Food Safety and Agricultural Research (CEFSAR) Corporate Accountability and Public Participation for Africa (CAPP), Women Environmental Programme and Food and Health Limited.

Others are Nigerians Against GMOs, Environmental Rights Action/ Friends of the Earth Nigeria (ERA/ FoEN), Nigeria Women Farmers Association (NIWAAFA), We the People, and Association of Women Farmers of Nigeria.

Safeguarding Africa's development amid growing global volatility

By Jean-Luc Stalon

IN recent years, Official Development Assistance for developing countries has declined by billions of dollars, with the share allocated to Least Developed Countries - mainly in Africa - dropping to just 22 percent in 2022, marking its lowest level in more than a decade.

Beyond the overall reduction, aid is increasingly constrained, often earmarked for specific purposes or delivered through concessional loans.

The evolving geopolitical dynamics, global economic pressures and shifting donor priorities are rapidly transforming the development landscape, underscoring the need to rethink how development is financed in Africa.

In an era of constrained global development funding, shifting to a development model that prioritises government financing is not only a necessity, but an opportunity to strengthen the social contract and enhance government accountability. We must focus on catalysing African money to accelerate African development.

Growing population

In Africa, governments face mounting pressure to deliver development dividends for the world's fastest-growing population. With 70 percent of the population under 30 and the total population expected to nearly double to 2.5 billion by 2050, the continent is on the cusp of a significant transformation.

Africa's evolving demographics bring rising expectations, particularly among youth, for economic opportunities, better governance and equitable development. The growing frustration is evident in movements from Kenya's #RejectFinanceBill2024, which opposes tax increases to Nigeria's #EndBadGovernanceInNigeria and anti-corruption youth protests in Uganda.

The slew of protests over the past few years reflects a broader demand for change across the continent and a need for a new social contract.

With more than 670 million mobile phones in circulation - equivalent to one for every second person on the continent - the ability to connect, mobilise and organise is unparalleled, increasing the pressure on governments to deliver, especially when it comes to the basics - infrastructure, access to social services and economic opportunities.

Failure to respond will be a ticking time bomb with



regional and global ramifications.

Development resources

Even in countries experiencing high debt burdens with a debt-to-GDP ratio over 70 percent, governments retain fiscal space to invest meaningfully in development.

For example, according to the Kenyan National Treasury's Annual Public Debt Management Report for 2022/2023, total revenue collected by the government was around \$15.3-billion and total government expenditure in 2023 was around \$24.4-billion, of which \$9.2-billion went to debt servicing,

\$14.6-billion went to recurrent expenditures and \$4.7-billion went to development initiatives.

Despite the large proportion dedicated to debt servicing, there remain substantial resources for development, provided these funds are used efficiently and effectively. If done strategically, these resources can support increased domestic resource mobilisation and contribute to long-term fiscal autonomy, enabling countries to invest in development that responds to national priorities, needs and aspirations.

Effective reforms

Maximising the impact of domes-

tic financing depends on parallel reforms that promote good governance, reduce corruption, and strengthen tax collection mechanisms.

Policies such as anti-corruption policies in Rwanda that encourage a zero-tolerance culture against corruption in line with the use of digital platforms for more transparent public financial management and procurement, and the establishment of strong whistle-blower and protection mechanisms, are examples of reforms that can be scaled in other countries across the continent.

Increased transparency and accountability will, over time, expand the tax base which will help promote inclusive growth through improved wages, social benefits and greater opportunities to build a skilled labour force. This shift will also provide more predictable and stable funding that is not subject to

the volatility of international aid, enabling longer-term development planning.

To kick off the necessary reforms needed to adopt this funding model, governments can partner with specialised development agencies such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to support the implementation of national development plans and put in place necessary reforms in areas such as digital finance and governance reforms.

Exit strategies

This engagement will be time-bound and programmes will be designed with clear exit strategies that outline how capacities will be transferred to national institutions throughout implementation.

Successful examples across Africa, such as Senegal's and Gabon's Programme d'Urgence de Développement Communautaire (PUDC) and the Democratic Republic of the Congo's Programme de Développement Local (PDL), demonstrate the UNDP's effectiveness in supporting governments to implement transformative development initiatives.

While this shift towards domestic revenue-centred financing will not be easy, it is a crucial step in safeguarding Africa's development amid growing global volatility and the increasing demand for effective, responsive investments in public services and economic opportunities.

Embracing this model can empower African nations to build a resilient, self-sustained future and secure the development dividends their populations need and deserve.

DM

Electric vehicles in Africa: What's needed to grow the sector

By Special Correspondents

IN sub-Saharan Africa, high levels of particulate matter (PM2.5) pollution from vehicle tailpipe emissions cause poor health, developmental stunting, and even death. Vehicle emissions also contribute to global warming.

Electric vehicles could help solve these problems but they've been slow to take off in the region. Its biggest economy, South Africa, had only about 1,000 electric vehicles by 2022.

We are specialist transport engineers whose research has focused on electric vehicles and road freight transport in sub-Saharan Africa. In our work we look at how electric vehicles could contribute to reducing emissions in the region, and what is standing in the way of electrifying transport.

One of the reasons for low uptake is the high cost of electric vehicles. They also have limited range and their batteries are slow to charge: a problem for long distance or frequent driving.

The inability of countries to generate and distribute enough clean electricity is also a barrier to electrifying vehicles. Just over half of all electricity in the region comes from burning fossil fuels. Powering electric vehicles with electricity generated by burning fossil fuels wouldn't necessarily reduce carbon emissions.

However, the rollout of electric motorcycles and small public transport vehicles has already begun. If all vehicles could be made locally, using clean energy, there would be tremendous economic benefits for the region.

Electric mobility is some way off

Transitioning to electric mobility requires clean energy provision, which means investing in electricity infrastructure. Electric vehicle charging stations can be installed fast: South Africa already has a very high electric vehicle ratio of one charger for every five cars, compared to the UK at 1:20. But these charging stations must be able to deliver electricity when vehicles need it. They need reliable, renewable energy stored in large battery systems to do so - and these large battery systems are still being developed.

In sub-Saharan Africa informal public transport moves about 72%

of the region's passengers. Freight moves goods in the absence of adequate rail. Electrifying these sectors needs careful planning.

Informal "paratransit" or "popular transportation" is made up of minibuses (matatu, ndiaga ndiaye, danfo, trotro), three-wheelers (tuk-tuk) and motorbikes (boda boda, moto).

Planning for the eventual electrification of informal taxis is complicated by the sector's unscheduled, decentralised, often chaotic and demand-driven nature.

Freight transport is a leading indicator for economic growth, and for economies to grow, freight transport must grow. This means that national and local governments must plan and invest in high powered, fast charging stations along transport routes. These must be able to charge different sizes and kinds of trucks. The freight industry cannot absorb these costs alone.

Need for rapid change

The transport sector must make the transition to electric mobility faster than the breakneck speed at which smartphones were adopted if it is to meet Net Zero - an end to carbon emissions - by 2050. Costly electrical and civil infrastructure (roads, minibus termini, truck stops, electricity distribution networks) will be needed - and soon.

Two electric vehicles parked next to an electric charging station

However, our results show that fleets will have to contain a mix of electric and combustion-based engines if countries want to continue to transport the same amount of goods and people they are currently transporting. This is because electric vehicles charge slowly. While a diesel minibus taxi takes only one minute to fill up with enough diesel to travel 750 kilometres, the fastest currently available electric minibus recharges at a mere 2km per minute with DC and 0.3km per minute with AC. The electric taxi's range is also only 21% of the diesel equivalent.

Filling stations in the region generally store the equivalent of up to 225,000km worth of fuel for a diesel minibus. The same size of stationary electric battery storage will store a mere 16,000km for an electric equivalent minibus. Range-extending and potentially swappable battery storage



December 2023 - Dakar, Senegal launched sub-Saharan Africa's first all-electric bus rapid transit network of 23 bus stations.

can be used (where a trailer acts as a mobile battery bank to the vehicle, and is charged from a solar charging station to reduce emissions). But this will increase the cost so much that it may not be financially viable for the freight industry at all.

Building a local electric vehicle industry

Except for South Africa, the region has been a dumping ground for second hand vehicles from developed countries. The comparatively simple designs of electric vehicles provide an opportunity for sub-Saharan Africa to move away from accepting second hand vehicles and towards a new local electric vehicle industry.

Workers in hundreds of thousands of jobs making combustion engines could be reskilled to make electric vehicles. Africa already has the skills to design and produce the

powertrain components, such as batteries and electric motors. Setting up local industries would also spare sub-Saharan Africa from being flooded by cheap electric vehicle imports that don't contribute to local employment.

Ethiopia has recently banned the import of combustion vehicles. Africa's first all-electric mass rapid transit was set up in Dakar, Senegal in 2023. The Golden Arrow bus company in South Africa purchased 120 electric buses this year. Heavy haul electric trucks are also entering the South African market space.

Africa has already produced tens of thousands of electric two- and three-wheelers used for public transport and last-mile delivery. These include Ampersand in Rwanda, Roam Electric in Kenya, and Spiro in Benin. Batteries are usually provided through swapping and payment by

mobile phone. In South Africa, Mellowans produce a last-mile three-wheeler.

A Roam Air electric motorbike recently completed the 6000km journey from Nairobi to Stellenbosch using only the region's abundant solar power. In Kenya, BasiGO assembled buses locally and now provides finance for electric buses. Roam Electric makes locally designed electric buses (and motorbikes). Meanwhile, a project owned by the South African National Energy Development Institute at Stellenbosch University in South Africa has converted a petrol minibus taxi and a 65-seater diesel bus to electric.

Electrification is inevitable

The shift to electric vehicles is inevitable. These steps are needed first:

Review transport policy related to

freight vehicles, such as axle weight and vehicle length, to ensure that imported electric vehicles can operate on African road networks.

Carefully consider import duties and incentives. Rwanda scrapped customs tax on electric vehicles to make them cheaper, but this led to an influx of old hybrid vehicles with depleted batteries. South Africa has vehicle import duties to protect local production, but an additional luxury tax on electric vehicles makes these expensive to buy.

Rethink the taxation model. In South Africa, for example, fuel levies make up a chunk of national revenue.

To make the most of the electric mobility revolution, sub-Saharan African countries need policies and incentives to localise production and invest in green energy, lest they miss the bus.



Dr Richmond Atuahene

Ghana's FinTech boom: Foreign Exchange Act requires overhaul

ACCRA

Ghana's Foreign Exchange Act needs urgent revision to account for the growing influence of financial technology companies in the currency market, banking expert, Dr Richmond Atuahene has advised.

Speaking against the backdrop of recent foreign exchange violations by traditional banks, Dr Atuahene said the current regulatory framework was outdated, having been drafted before the emergence of fintech companies as major players in Ghana's financial sector.

"The rapid evolution of our financial landscape, particularly with fintechs becoming major partners to banks in the foreign exchange market, demands a fresh look at our regulations," Dr Atuahene said.

The banking expert pointed to Bangladesh as a model example, where approximately 90% of foreign exchange comes from remittances.

He suggested that Ghana could achieve similar success by updating its regulations to ensure fintech companies properly surrender remittance inflows to banks.

"Banks need these inflows to support the economy, particularly for imports.

We should revise the Foreign Exchange Act to make it more proactive and aligned with current market realities," he added.

His comments come as the Bank of Ghana (BoG) continues its crackdown on foreign exchange violations, with the Consolidated Bank Ghana (CBG) becoming the latest culprit to face sanctions.

The central bank suspended CBG's Foreign Exchange Trading Licence for one month, effective November 26, 2024. This follows similar actions taken against the Fidelity Bank and others earlier in the year.

The increasing number of violations by traditional banks, according to Dr Atuahene, underscored the urgent need for regulatory reform.

He warned that continued breaches of foreign exchange laws posed a systemic threat to Ghana's financial sec-

tor and could potentially deprive the country of crucial foreign exchange reserves.

BoG last week announced that it had suspended the Foreign Exchange Trading Licence of CBG, with effect November 26 2024, for one month.

This was in accordance with section 11 (2) of the Foreign Exchange Act, 2006 (Act 723).

The central bank, in the notice, explained that the CBG had breached a number of the foreign exchange market regulations. Updated Guidelines for Inward Remittance Services for Payment Service Providers dated November 2023 and the Anti-Money Laundering/Combating the Financing of Terrorism & The Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (AML/CFT&P) Guideline.

"The licence will be restored at the end of the one-month suspension period once the Bank of Ghana is satisfied that CBG has put in place effective controls to ensure strict adherence to the foreign exchange market regulations," the notice indicated.

Meanwhile, CBG has assured customers that the suspension of its foreign exchange licence would not disrupt its core banking operations.

The bank confirmed that all branches and digital platforms remain fully operational, urging customers to remain calm. In a statement, the CBG assured customers that it was working closely with the BoG to address the issues and aims to have the licence restored by the end of the suspension period.

"We want to reassure our valued customers that this suspension does not impact CBG's normal banking operations. Except for foreign exchange products and services, all our branches and digital platforms will continue providing customers with our full range of services. We fully expect to restore foreign exchange products after our engagement with the Bank of Ghana", the statement added.

The bank, consequently apologised to customers for any inconvenience caused by the suspension, adding that it is committed to maintaining the highest standards of operational compliance.

15 pc of Nigerian startups make above N250m annually-report

LAGOS

A new report by TLP Advisory, a venture capital law firm, has found that only 15 percent of Nigerian startups make above N250m (\$149,000) annually.

The report, "A Decade of the Nigerian Venture Ecosystem 2024—Numbers, Insights & Stories," further revealed that 30 percent of the startups generate between N50 million and N200 million annually, with 49 percent generating less than N10 million in the same period.

According to the report, founders have said that revenue is largely determined by the cost of doing business, which is high, as over half of the startups have said that they are currently not making a profit.

"Fifty-one percent of startups are not making a profit, leaving 49 percent recording profitability," the report read. In funding, the tech ecosystem has had it better with the \$1.75 billion raised in 2021. However, between 2022 and 2023, it dropped from \$1.2 billion to \$500 million, leading to the shutdown of numerous startups.

TLP Advisory reported that access to finance is the biggest hurdle for over 20 percent of founders, with 18 percent claiming it as their main barrier.

"Limited or no access to finance is the primary barrier to business growth, with 22 percent of the founders stating it to be their chief problem, coming ahead of "inadequate marketing," with 18 percent confirming it as their main barrier and 15 percent stating their chief problem was "business/revenue model" and "government policies" respectively," it said.

These findings align with other research on access to finance, infrastructure and power supply, government policies, and talent acquisition and retention as the critical challenges of the Nigeria tech ecosystem.

The effect of reduced funding in the ecosystem has been felt across the board, as 54 percent of the re-



spondents indicated that they had not raised any capital—for some of these companies, that means since inception.

Founders revealed that the top reasons for the inability to raise funds were "access to investors," followed by "access to funding information," and "high interest rates."

However, many founders noted that funding was "not needed," while others felt it was too early for their businesses to seek financing.

"People who raised money in US dollars, who are earning in naira, and who have to report to investors who invested in US dollars need to be doing almost three times more work and earning three times more income because the currency has devalued by more than 70 percent," said Femi Longe, co-founder and non-executive director, CCHUB.

For businesses that raised funds within the past 10 years, TLP Advisory's findings suggest that it might be relatively easier to raise funds in the earlier years of a business as 81 percent of the companies secured their funding within the first 4 years of operations, while the other 19 percent were able to secure funding from the fifth year onward, with the number of companies able to secure funding dwindling with each passing year of their existence.

The report revealed that the most common funding sources

were angel investors (including friends and family) (43 percent).

It read, "Forty-three percent of startups raised funds from angel investors as well as friends and family, with 24 percent raising venture capital funding while 18 percent and 15 percent secured funding through debt financing (including convertible notes) and grants, respectively."

The report added that companies believe in having a company culture, with 80 percent of founders indicating that their firms have identifiable company cultures.

When asked about the aspects of their culture that sustain their business, "collaboration and teamwork" emerged as the most significant aspect of culture as 13 percent of respondents confirmed, followed closely by "open communication" and "innovation and creativity" with 12 percent respectively.

Global startup acquisitions are dynamic and competitive, with various countries emerging as leaders in fostering innovation and entrepreneurial activity. In recent years, the growth of startup ecosystems has been particularly pronounced in nations that combine robust economic frameworks with supportive regulatory environments.

The Tech Startup M&A 2024 report states that the leading sectors for investment have been healthcare/biotech and AI-related companies between 2000 and today.

There is a significant change in

the global large company revenue and countries around the globe are investing heavily in startups to stay competitive. The report sheds light on the countries at the forefront of acquiring startups, with a particular focus on sectors like healthcare, biotech, and artificial intelligence (AI).

According to Tech Startup M&A 2024 report, here are the top 10 countries leading the chart in global startup acquisitions

United States

The U.S. reigns supreme in the world of startup acquisitions, dominating with an impressive 71% of global deals. Silicon Valley is the engine of this growth, with tech giants like Google, Apple, Amazon, and Microsoft driving almost a third of startup acquisitions within the Fortune Global 500. Since 2000, these American companies have invested nearly \$477 billion across 1,785 deals, underscoring the nation's unshakeable influence on the startup scene.

China While China's influence in Fortune 500 rankings has skyrocketed to an astonishing 27% representation, the nation plays a more conservative role in startup acquisitions. Major players like Alibaba and Xiaomi are expanding their reach abroad, with China completing 78 deals worth \$32.2 billion. Although China's global impact faces headwinds due to recent U.S. restrictions, the nation's tech sector continues to make waves globally.

Mobile money trappings dip 14.5pc as govt plans to trace transactions

NAIROBI

The number of mobile money transactions declined by 7 percent in September compared to the start of the year, according to the latest data from the KNBS.

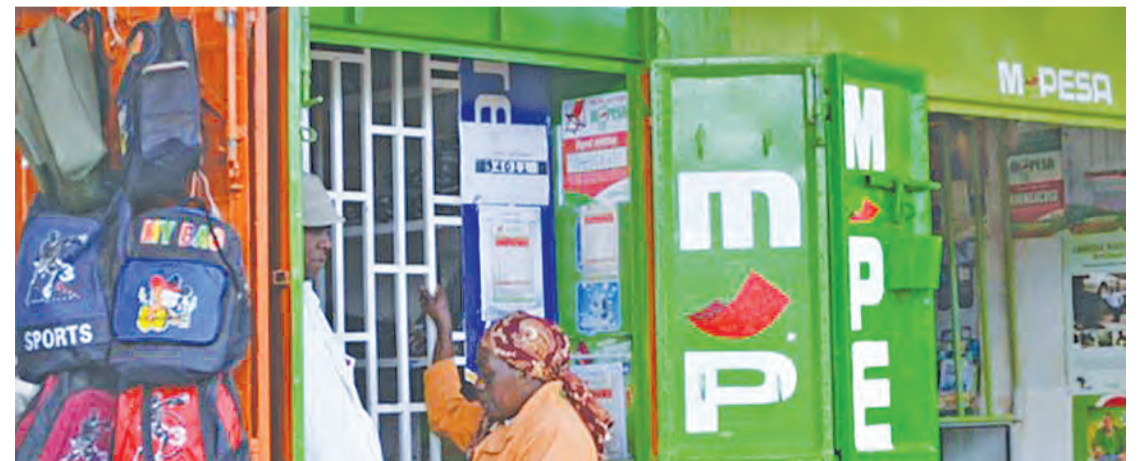
The total value of the transactions between January and September this year was about KSh 6.5 trillion compared to KSh 5.8 trillion in the same period last year. The growth can be attributed to the change in transaction policy by Airtel in August last year - raising its transaction limit to KSh 250,000 from KSh 150,000 after engaging with the Central Bank of Kenya (CBK).

The Telco also maintained the transaction charges for this band, retaining the fees set initially for transactions between KSh 70,001 to KSh 150,000. This was intended to make higher transactions flexible and relatively cheap, allowing intensified use of mobile money services by businesses.

Mobile Money remains an invaluable resource for financial inclusion in Kenya. According to CA data, mobile money subscriptions stood at almost 40 million in the country - translating to a 77.3 percent penetration rate. Safaricom's M-Pesa remains the leading service garnering 93.4 percent of the market.

The prominence of mobile money has drawn interest from lawmakers who want the services to be divested from their respective telco providers.

A bill in parliament codifying this requirement is set to enter the committee stage for clause analy-



sis. Safaricom has expressed dissatisfaction with the bill, realising how invaluable M-Pesa is to their revenue dominance.

The taxman also wants his share from the lucrative spoils, determining mobile money as an avenue for expanding the tax base. KRA has noted its intention to convert mobile Paybill and till numbers into Electronic Tax Registers (ETRs) that will nab tax evaders and ensure informal businesses bear their revenue burden.

KRA has also rallied for the authentication of phone numbers on the iTax system. This is also intended to trace informal traders' money transactions and quantify how much they should pay as taxes.

This has prompted an uproar from Kenyans who believe that the authority's inroads into the mobile money sector will push many into the cash economy as a way of protecting their privacy.

On the other hand, Members of Parliament debated the Kenya Information and Communica-

tions (Amendment) Bill 2022 on Wednesday last week, hastening the intention to split mobile money services from their umbrella telcos.

"The amendment will further aid in control of anti-competitive practices by large industries in the sector," the bill says.

The amendment bill was introduced on October 2022 by Elisha Odhiambo (Gem, ODM). After the second reading, MPs will vote for its approval where it will sail through to the committee stage. In this stage, MPs will analyse each clause and assess which ones will be struck off or remain.

In April this year, Safaricom expressed dissatisfaction with the provision to split up its voice, data, and text services from their mobile money businesses. The proposal to break up telcos and their mobile money services was detailed in the Kenya Kwanza manifesto to the run up of the 2022 elections.

"Effective immediately after forming the government, the ad-

ministration will seek the breakup of Safaricom into two distinct and separate entities with a mobile telecommunications institution under the direct jurisdiction of the Communications Authority and the financial institution under the jurisdiction of the Central Bank," part of the manifesto said.

Safaricom's M-Pesa is the dominating mobile money service in Kenya, owning 95% of the market share. If such a move is taken, M-Pesa will need to adjust many aspects of its operations. If controlled by the CBK, M-Pesa is likely to morph into a digital bank competing against other commercial banks and broaden its transactional limits.

Telcos may also have to lower their transaction costs which they fear would diminish their revenues. Safaricom had lamented earlier this year that it faced a KSh 75 billion tax liability. CBK, which is pushing for the bill, said that Treasury will meet with the telco in order to generate a tax waiver plan.

Satellite images show Russia giving North Korea oil, breaking sanctions

MOSCOW

Russia is estimated to have supplied North Korea with more than a million barrels of oil since March this year, according to satellite imagery analysis from the Open Source Centre, a non-profit research group based in the UK.

The oil is payment for the weapons and troops Pyongyang has sent Moscow to fuel its war in Ukraine, leading experts and UK Foreign Secretary, David Lammy, have told the BBC.

These transfers violate UN sanctions, which ban countries from selling oil to North Korea, except in small quantities, in an attempt to stifle its economy to prevent it from further developing nuclear weapons.

The satellite images, shared exclusively with the BBC, show more than a dozen different North Korean oil tankers arriving at an oil terminal

in Russia's Far East a total of 43 times over the past eight months.

Further pictures, taken of the ships at sea, appear to show the tankers arriving empty, and leaving almost full.

North Korea is the only country in the world not allowed to buy oil on the open market. The number of barrels of refined petroleum it can receive is capped by the United Nations at 500,000 annually, well below the amount it needs.

Russia's foreign ministry did not respond to our request for comment.

The first oil transfer documented by the Open Source Centre in a new report, was on 7 March 2024, seven months after it first emerged Pyongyang was sending Moscow weapons.

The shipments have continued as thousands of North Korean troops are reported to have been sent to Russia to

Tanker on the way to Russia sits high on the water



Tanker leaving Russia sits low in the water



fight, with the last one recorded on 5 November.

"While Kim Jong Un is providing Vladimir Putin with a lifeline to continue his war, Russia is quietly providing North Korea with a lifeline of its own," says Joe Byrne from the Open Source Centre.

"This steady flow of oil gives North Korea a level of stability it hasn't had since these sanctions were introduced."

Four former members of a UN panel responsible for

tracking the sanctions on North Korea have told the BBC the transfers are a consequence of increasing ties between Moscow and Pyongyang.

"These transfers are fueling Putin's war machine - this is oil for missiles, oil for artillery and now oil for soldiers," says Hugh Griffiths, who led the panel from 2014 to 2019.

UK Foreign Secretary David Lammy has told the BBC in a statement: "To keep fighting

in Ukraine, Russia has become increasingly reliant on North Korea for troops and weapons in exchange for oil."

He added that this was "having a direct impact on security in the Korean peninsula, Europe and Indo-Pacific".

While most people in North Korea rely on coal for their daily lives, oil is essential for running the country's military. Diesel and petrol are used to transport missile launchers and troops around the country, run munitions factories and fuel the cars of Pyongyang's elite.

The 500,000 barrels North Korea is allowed to receive fall far short of the nine million it consumes - meaning that since the cap was introduced in 2017, the country has been forced to buy oil illicitly from criminal networks to make up this deficit.

This involves transferring the oil between ships out at sea - a risky, expensive and time-consuming business,

according to Dr Go Myong-hyun, a senior research fellow at South Korea's Institute for National Security Strategy, which is linked to the country's spy agency.

"Now Kim Jong Un is getting oil directly, it's likely better quality, and chances are he's getting it for free, as quid pro quo for supplying munitions. What could be better than that?"

"A million barrels is nothing for a large oil producer like Russia to release, but it is a substantial amount for North Korea to receive," Dr Go adds.

In all 43 of the journeys tracked by the Open Source Centre using satellite images, the North Korean-flagged tankers arrived at Russia's Vostochny Port with their trackers switched off, concealing their movements.

The images show they then made their way back to one of four ports on North Korea's east and west coast.

"The vessels appear silent-

ly, almost every week," says Joe Byrne, the researcher from the Open Source Centre. "Since March there's been a fairly constant flow."

The team, which has been tracking these tankers since the oil sanctions were first introduced, used their knowledge of each ship's capacity to calculate how many oil barrels they could carry.

Then they studied images of the ships entering and leaving Vostochny and, in most instances, could see how low they sat in the water and, therefore, how full they were.

The tankers, they assess, were loaded to 90% of their capacity.

"We can see from some of the images that if the ships were any fuller they would sink," Mr Byrne says.

Based on this, they calculate that, since March, Russia has given North Korea more than a million barrels of oil - more than double the annual cap, and around ten times the amount Moscow officially gave Pyongyang in 2023.

This follows an assessment by the US government in May that Moscow had already supplied more than 500,000 barrels' worth of oil.

Temu owner's shares slump as China slowdown hit sales



NEW YORK

PDD Holdings, the Chinese owner of online shopping platforms Temu and Pinduoduo, has reported disappointing sales and profit as Chinese consumers continued to hold back amid an economic slowdown.

US-listed shares of the e-commerce giant fell nearly 11 percent on Thursday following the announcement.

It comes after PDD's main rivals in its home market, Alibaba and JD.com, also posted underwhelming results in the September quarter.

Consumer confidence in China has taken a hit from a crisis in the country's property sector and high levels of youth unemployment.

In the quarter that ended in September, PDD's revenue reached 99.35bn yuan (\$13.7bn, £10.9bn), below analyst forecasts of around 102.8bn yuan.

It is the second quarter in a row that PDD misses analyst estimates, after years of fast growth.

"Our topline growth further moderated quarter-on-quarter amid intensified competition and ongoing external challenges," said Jun Liu, VP of Finance of PDD Holdings.

While PDD's Chinese e-commerce platform, Pinduoduo, has become popular because of its focus on low-cost and heavily discounted products, a growing number of rivals have been adopting similar strategies, triggering a price war.

"China's retail sector is grappling with headwinds from the broader economic slowdown, with consumer confidence yet to fully recover," said James Yang, a partner in retail and consumer products at management consulting firm, Bain & Company.

"Looking ahead, e-commerce growth is expected to continue... albeit at a slower

pace."

"There's uncertainty on potential tariff change and increasing pushback from more countries related to its 'cheap prices,'" said Alicia Yap, an equity research analyst at Citi, before the results were announced.

Last week, Vietnamese authorities said Temu and Shein needed to register with the government before the end of the month or face a ban.

In October, Indonesia ordered Google and Apple to remove Temu from their app stores in a bid to protect the country's own retailers.

The EU has also launched an investigation into whether the Chinese e-commerce platform facilitated the sale of illegal products that could lead to steep fines.

But as well as getting the nation's biggest sporting event, a blockbuster halftime performance and several camera cutaways of Taylor Swift in the crowd, they also got six 30-second commercials for Temu - a Chinese-owned e-commerce company.

The shopping giant has been criticised by politicians in the UK and US - a US government investigation finding an "extremely high risk" that products sold on Temu could have been made with forced labour.

Temu says it "strictly prohibits" the use of forced, penal, or child labour by all its merchants.

The company, which sells everything from clothes to electronics and furniture, first launched in the US in 2022 and later in the UK and the rest of the world.

Since then, it has consistently topped global app download charts, with just under 152 million Americans using it every month, according to data gathered by analyst SimilarWeb.

It's "Amazon on steroids,"

says retail analyst Neil Saunders, and with the tagline "shop like a billionaire" it has exploded in popularity, shipping to around 50 countries worldwide.

A typical 30-second Super Bowl commercial costs around \$7m (£5.5m), during this year's event Temu had six of them.

"It's a lot of money for a very, short commercial," Mr Saunders says.

"But it is seen by an enormous number of people and we know that after that commercial Temu's downloads spiked," he adds.

SimilarWeb data suggests individual visitors to the platform worldwide were up by nearly a quarter on the day of the Super Bowl compared with the previous Sunday, with 8.2 million people browsing the website and app. In the same period, Amazon and Ebay's visitors were down by 5 percent and 2 percent respectively.

"They've also spent a lot of money on micro-marketing, persuading influencers to push products and to suggest buying things on the platform via social channels like TikTok and YouTube," says Mr Saunders.

These influencers typically have fewer than 10,000 followers according to Ines Durand, an e-commerce expert at SimilarWeb.

"Micro-influencers have strong communities, so their endorsement means a strong trust towards these products," she explains.

Temu is owned by Chinese giant PDD Holdings - "a monster in Chinese e-commerce," according to Shaun Rein, founder of the China Market Research Group.

"Throughout China, everyone buys products on Pinduoduo, from speakers to t-shirts or socks," he says.

The company consistently trades places with rival Alibaba

for the top spot of most valuable Chinese firm listed on a US stock exchange. Its current worth sits at just under \$150bn (£117bn).

With the Chinese consumer market under its spell, PDD Holdings expanded overseas with Temu, using the same model that had ensured its previous success. According to Mr Rein, who is based in Shanghai, the firm has become a great source of pride and patriotism.

"They're proud that Chinese companies can slay the e-commerce dragons from the United States like Amazon," he adds.

A quick scroll through the Temu app or website will bring up anything from steel-toecap trainers to a device designed to help the elderly and pregnant women put on socks. A menagerie of manufactured goods, almost entirely produced in factories in China, Mr Rein explains.

"Temu use an amazing, system that relies on, heavy data collection at scale," says Ines Durand.

"They collect data on consumer trends, the most searched and clicked products, which they give to individual manufacturers."

Ms Durand says that while Amazon sells this data to manufacturers at a premium, Temu gives it to producers free of charge - information they use to "test the market" with a relatively small number of products.

A third of parcels that came into the US last year under a shipping loophole known as the de minimis threshold were from Temu and competitor Shein, according to a report from US Congress.

Many countries - including the UK and USA have a de minimis threshold, designed to help citizens to import goods.

So as Temu's goods are shipped directly from the factory floors, cutting out the middlemen, they become essentially duty-free.

More regulation may be on the horizon to close up shipping loopholes, however, according to Mickey Diaz, chief operating officer at global freight company Unique Logistics.

"The UK has already started to look at Temu with some scrutiny, including the sale of weapons that are otherwise not allowed into the UK, which were being imported because of these loopholes," she explains.

Temu has been criticised for its supply chains too, with UK and US politicians accusing the e-commerce giant of allowing goods produced with forced labour to be sold on its site.

Self-made Indian billionaire faces biggest test after US fraud charges

WASHINGTON

Just weeks ago, Gautam Adani, one of the world's richest men, celebrated Donald Trump's election victory and announced plans to invest \$10bn (£7.9bn) in energy and infrastructure projects in the US.

Now, the 62-year-old Indian billionaire and a close ally of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, whose sprawling \$169bn empire spans ports and renewable energy, faces US fraud charges that could potentially jeopardise his ambitions at home and abroad.

Federal prosecutors have accused him of orchestrating a \$250m bribery scheme and concealing it to raise money in the US. They allege Adani and his executives paid bribes to Indian officials to secure contracts worth \$2bn in profits over 20 years.

Adani Group has denied the allegations, calling them "baseless."

But this is already hurting the group and the Indian economy.

Adani Group firms lost \$34bn in market value on Thursday, reducing the combined market capitalisation of its 10 companies to \$147bn. Adani Green Energy, which is the firm at the centre of the allegations, also said it wouldn't proceed with a \$600m bond offering.

Then there are questions

about the impact of the charges on India's business and politics.

India's economy is deeply intertwined with Adani, the country's leading infrastructure tycoon. He operates 13 ports (30 percent market share), seven airports (23 percent of passenger traffic), and India's second-largest cement business (20 percent of the market).

With six coal-fired power plants, Adani is India's largest private player in power. At the same time, he has pledged to invest \$50bn in green hydrogen and runs a 8,000km (4,970 miles)-long natural gas pipeline.

He's also building India's longest expressway and redeveloping India's largest slum. He employs over 45,000 people, but his businesses impact millions nationwide.

His global ambitions span coal mines in Indonesia and Australia, and infrastructure projects in Africa.

Adani's portfolio closely mirrors Modi's policy priorities, beginning with infrastructure and more recently expanding into clean energy. He has thrived despite critics labeling his business empire as crony capitalism, pointing to his close ties with Modi, both as Gujarat's chief minister - where they both hail from - and as India's prime minister. (Like any successful businessman, Adani has also forged ties with many op-

position leaders, investing in their states.)

"This [the bribery allegations] is big. Adani and Modi have been inseparable for a long time. This is going to influence the political economy of India," says Paranjay Guha Thakurta, an Indian journalist who has written extensively on the business group.

This crisis also comes as Mr Adani has spent nearly two years trying to rebuild his image after US short-seller Hindenburg Research's 2023 report accused his conglomerate of decades of stock manipulation and fraud.

Though Adani denied the claims, the allegations triggered a market sell-off and an ongoing investigation by India's market regulator, SEBI.

"Adani has been trying to rehabilitate his image, and try to show that those earlier fraud allegations leveled by the Hindenburg group were not true, and his company and his businesses had actually been doing quite well. There'd been a number of new deals and investments made over the last year or so, and so this is just a body blow coming to this billionaire who had done a very good job of shaking off the potential damage of those earlier allegations," Michael Kugelman of the Wilson Center, an American think-tank, told the BBC.

For now, raising capital at home may prove challenging for Adani's cash-guzzling projects.

"The market reaction shows how serious this is," Ambareesh Baliga, an independent market analyst, told the BBC. "Adanis will still secure funding for their major projects, but with delays."

The latest charges could also throw a spanner in Adani's global expansion plans. He has been already challenged in Kenya and Bangladesh over a planned takeover of an international airport and a controversial energy deal. "This [bribery charges] stops international expansion plans linked to the US," Nirmalya Kumar, Lee Kong Chian Professor at Singapore Management University, told the BBC.



China makes bold moves in digital culture

WUZHEN

With a focus on emerging digital opportunities around the world, the latest internet development reports highlight China's global leadership in the digital industry, with the country showing rapid growth and expanding international influence in the digital culture sector.

According to the World Internet Development Report released on Thursday at the ongoing 2024 World Internet Conference Wuzhen Summit in Wuzhen, Zhejiang province, China ranks second among the 52 involved economies worldwide in internet development, with a score of 69 – just behind the United States.

This year marks the 30th anniversary of China's fully functional access to the global internet, during which time the country has witnessed a steadily improved cyber ecosystem, rapidly advanced core technologies, comprehensively enhanced cybersecurity capabilities, deepened legal governance and expanded international cooperation, said Wang Jiang, head of the Chinese Academy of Cybersecurity Studies, the reports' publisher.

Based on six indicators – information infrastructure, digital technology and innovation

capability, digital economy, digital government, cybersecurity and international governance in cyberspace, it said the global digital economy is experiencing a new wave of growth, with more development potential rapidly unfolding.

With a specific focus on China's performance in terms of digital development, another report by the academy highlighted the impressive performance of the country's digital culture industry in recent years.

According to the China Internet Development Report 2024, the country's online audiovisual market – including long videos, short videos, livestreaming and audio sectors – had reached a market size of 1.15 trillion yuan (\$159 billion) by end-2023. Meanwhile, the domestic gaming industry's actual sales revenue stood at about 303 billion yuan during the same period.

"In recent years, China's digital culture has flourished, producing high-quality works across fields such as mini-dramas, online literature, video games and digital animation," Wang said.

The country's digital culture vitality is not merely limited to its domestic market. According to the report, China's online literature sector has also seen remarkable success overseas,



A visitor tries an intelligent medical imaging system under the guidance of a staff member at the Light of Internet Expo in Wuzhen, Zhejiang province, on Thursday.

with export sales of over 4 billion yuan, attracting 230 million overseas readers last year. Additionally, domestically developed games generated overseas sales of \$16.37 billion in 2023, marking the fourth consecutive year of surpassing the 100 billion-yuan threshold, it said.

"Our digital cultural products are now more diverse and globally accessible. A large number of high-quality creations have transcended cultural boundaries and gained recognition from audiences worldwide," said Qian Xianliang, deputy director of the Chinese Academy of Cyber-space Studies.

For instance, the Chinese mythology-inspired video game Black Myth: Wukong has captivated domestic and international audiences, driving widespread discussions and sales of over \$1 billion on online gaming platform Steam by October, Qian added.

In addition, Chinese science fiction television series Three-Body has spearheaded Chinese cultural productions' globalization, reaching audiences in over 190 countries and regions, he said, adding that many Chinese online literature works have also been translated into English, French, Spanish, Arabic and many other languages, further extending their global reach.

represented by video games, short videos and livestreaming, has now become a cornerstone of China's cultural sector. It plays a pioneering role in driving the deep integration of culture and technology, embedding China's rich traditional culture into the fabric of modern civilization through digitalization," said Sun Jishan, associate researcher at the Central Academy of Culture and Tourism Administration.

Sun also emphasized the key role of emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence and large language models in driving digital culture growth.

"Cutting-edge technologies are reshaping the international dissemination of Chinese culture. For example, AI-powered translation has significantly reduced the cost of translating Chinese online literature into multiple languages, enabling broader global accessibility in a way more efficient than ever," Sun said.

"The achievements in digital technology and infrastructure are not only fueling localized production and dissemination of cultural works, but also promoting the values of cultural diversity and fostering dialogue and mutual respect among different cultures on a global scale," he added.

Chinese carmaker BYD revs up Brazil's enthusiasm for EVs

SALVADOR

A 40-minute drive west of Rio de Janeiro's city center – past elevated highways – leads to the expansive Atlantic coastline of Barra da Tijuca, an upper middle-class neighborhood known for its stunning beaches.

Here, BYD opened its first dealership in Rio, marking a milestone for the city's electric vehicle market.

Marcus Vinicius, 47, is the director of BYD Itavema, located in the heart of Barra da Tijuca. Three years ago, BYD approached him to head the dealership, and that's when he decided to buy a Chinese EV for himself.

"I absolutely love it. I'm very passionate about electric vehicles," he said, adding that some of the 35 employees of the store – all Brazilians – also drive BYD vehicles.

The dynamics of Chinese companies are quite different, Vinicius said. "Chinese companies have a different culture from Brazilian companies. The reaction of BYD to the market is much faster and more dynamic compared to other brands in Brazil."

In January, BYD invited Vinicius to visit Shenzhen in South China's Guangdong province for a training program in trade marketing. "It was amazing. I loved the city and the people. The Chinese reception was very welcoming. It was a great cultural experience. The experience of visiting BYD was very memorable."

Vinicius said his son, who will turn 8 this year, has already shown a knack for cars, adding that he believes that one day, his son will also own a Chinese EV.

As of May, BYD had about 100 dealerships in Brazil, and it plans to bring that number to 250 by the end of the year, according to a news release.

At BYD Itavema on Monday morning, newlywed couples browsed cars hand in hand, young parents with their baby checked out the latest models, and business professionals relaxed on a couch as they waited for service. The dealership, which sees about 200 visitors each week, mostly attracts affluent residents from nearby neighborhoods.

Victor Satiro first heard about BYD in April and decided to immediately buy one of its EVs. He previously owned an Audi, which is considered a hallmark of German engineering. "I used to spend a lot of money on gasoline. Now I spend nothing on fuel," he said.

Satiro said his decision was influenced by a recommendation from a friend who bought the Chinese EV in February. "My friend is a mechanical engineer, so I trust his opinion. I'm happy with this purchase," he added.

BYD now ranks 10th in sales among all automotive brands in Brazil. From January to October, the company sold 58,690 units, a 227 percent increase over the 17,937 units sold during the same period last year.

Agenor Medrado, 68, said he had been a loyal customer of South Korean automaker Kia until last week. Medrado and his wife initially planned to upgrade to a fifth-generation Kia, but they were open to exploring other brands, especially hybrids.

The Kia hybrid was priced at around 250,000 reais (\$43,000), Medrado said. "Since we live nearby, we decided to come here and test-drive the BYD hybrid, which was under 200,000 reais," he added.

Medrado recalled that they decided to switch loyalties and go for the Chinese EV as soon as they got inside the car.



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WORLD

ICC issues arrest warrants for Israel's Netanyahu, Gallant and Hamas leader



This combination of pictures created on May 21, 2024 shows then Israeli Defense Minister Yoav Gallant (left) during a press conference in Tel Aviv on Dec 18, 2023 and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu addressing a cabinet meeting at the Israeli Ministry of Defence in Tel Aviv on Dec 31, 2023. AFP

THE HAGUE

THE International Criminal Court issued arrest warrants on Thursday for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his former defense chief, as well as a Hamas leader, Ibrahim Al-Masri, for alleged war crimes and crimes against humanity in the Gaza conflict.

In their decision, the ICC judges said there were reasonable grounds to believe Netanyahu and Yoav Gallant were criminally responsible for acts including murder, persecution and starvation as a weapon of war as part of a "widespread and systematic attack against the civilian population of Gaza".

Judges said there were also reasonable grounds to believe the blockade on Gaza and lack of food, water, electricity, fuel and medical supplies "created conditions of life calculated to bring about the destruction of part of the civilian population in Gaza, which resulted in the death of civilians, including children, due to malnutrition and dehydration".

The decision was met with outrage in Israel, which called it shameful and absurd. Gaza residents expressed hope it would help end the violence and bring those responsible for war crimes to justice. Hamas welcomed the warrants against the Israelis, and a senior official told Reuters it was a first step towards justice.

The warrant for Masri lists charges of mass killings during the Oct 7, 2023, attacks on Israel that triggered the Gaza war, and also charges of rape and the taking of hostages.

Israel has said it killed Masri, also known as Mohammed Deif, in an airstrike in July

but Hamas has neither confirmed nor denied this. The prosecution indicated it would continue to gather information with respect to his reported death.

Israel has rejected the jurisdiction of the Hague-based court and denies war crimes in Gaza.

The United States, Israel's main diplomatic supporter, is also not a member of the ICC. It said it "fundamentally rejects" the move.

"We remain deeply concerned by the prosecutor's rush to seek arrest warrants and the troubling process errors that led to this decision," a White House National Security Council spokesperson said, adding that the US is discussing next steps with its partners.

ICC prosecutor Karim Khan had announced on May 20 that he was seeking arrest warrants for alleged crimes connected to the Hamas-led attacks on Israel and the Israeli military response in Gaza. Israeli and Hamas leaders have dismissed allegations that they committed war crimes.

The court does not have its own police force to carry out arrests and relies on its 124 member states for that, with only limited diplomatic means to force them if they do not want to.

Khan called on signatories of the court's founding treaty "to live up to their commitment to the Rome Statute by respecting and complying with these judicial orders."

In a statement he said "we count on their cooperation in this situation, as with all other situations... We also welcome collaboration with non-states parties in working towards accountability and upholding international law."

Global reaction

"Netanyahu and Gallant now are war criminals and sooner or later some country will bring them to justice, no matter how long it takes," said Shaban Abed, 47, a technical engineer and a resident of Gaza City, now displaced in the Khan Younis area. He said the court's move was "late, but never too late".

Rabeeha, a mother of five and a resident of Gaza City who only gave her first name, said she hoped it would help bring an end to the war.

"I hope we can soon see Netanyahu and the criminal Gallant in jail," she said. "Now they can't travel, now they are being hunted."

Netanyahu's office said the ICC decision was "antisemitic" and he will "not yield to pressure, will not be deterred" until Israel's war objectives are met.

The ICC has "lost all legitimacy" after issuing the arrest warrants for Netanyahu and Gallant, Israel's Foreign Minister Gideon Saar said.

"A dark moment for the International Criminal Court," Saar said on X, adding that it had issued "absurd orders without authority".

There was no immediate comment from Gallant.

In a statement, Hamas welcomed the warrants against Gallant and Netanyahu and urged the court to expand accountability to all Israeli leaders.

Senior Hamas official Basem

Naim told Reuters the warrants against the Israelis were an important step towards bringing justice for the victims and that all countries should back them.

The EU's foreign policy chief, Josep Borrell, said the decision was not political but made by a court and thus should be respected and implemented.

"The tragedy in Gaza has to stop," he said.

Jordan's foreign minister Ayman Safadi also said the ICC's decision must be implemented, adding that Palestinians deserved justice after what he termed Israel's "war crimes" in Gaza.

The Netherlands' foreign minister Caspar Veldkamp said his country acts on arrest warrants for people on its territory and will not engage in "non-essential" contacts.

Republican Senator Lindsey Graham, a close ally of President-elect Donald Trump, said: "The court is a dangerous joke. It is now time for the US Senate to act and sanction this irresponsible body."

Israel's 13-month campaign in Gaza has killed about 44,000 Palestinians and displaced nearly all the enclave's population while creating a humanitarian crisis, Gaza officials say.

It launched the campaign in response to the October 2023, Hamas-led attack which killed 1,200 people in southern Israel, with more than 250 others taken hostage, Israel has said.

UNSC cease-fire resolution veto 'shows US powerless' to stop Israel

HONG KONG

THE United States' decision to veto a United Nations Security Council resolution calling for an immediate cease-fire in Gaza exposes Washington as "even more powerless" to stop the Israeli carnage, analysts said.

They also said it was a direct assault on the UN Charter, international laws, and an erosion of human rights on a global scale.

The Organization of Islamic Cooperation said in a statement that "repeated use of the veto in cases of genocide confirms the urgent need to reform the UN Security Council, which has become unable to carry out its responsibilities and has lost its credibility in maintaining international peace and security".

The US on Nov 20 vetoed a UN Security Council draft resolution that called for a halt to fighting in Gaza, drawing criticism from far and wide and from most of the UN members.

Despite having secured 14 votes in favor, the draft resolution put forward by the 10 elected members of the Security Council failed to pass owing to the negative vote by a permanent member, the US, according to a UN press release.

"For a resolution to be adopted, it must secure at least nine votes in favor, and no negative votes - or vetoes - by any of the five permanent members. Under the UN Charter, the Security Council has the primary responsibility to uphold international peace and security," the UN said.

Speaking after the vote, Robert Wood, deputy US ambassador to the UN, said Washington had made clear it would only support a resolution that explicitly called for the immediate release of hostages as part of a cease-fire.

A Hamas official reiterated there would be no prisoner exchange without the Gaza cease-fire, according to a report by Xinhua News Agency.

Mehran Kamrava, a professor of government at Georgetown University in Qatar, noted this was the fourth time the administration of US President Joe Biden had vetoed a cease-fire resolution, and "the only country to do so repeatedly".

"(Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin) Netanyahu has been trying to expand the war beyond Gaza. Although the US claims to support containing the war, its veto of the latest UN resolution makes the American government even more powerless in stopping the carnage," Kamrava told China Daily.

"Netanyahu is likely to now feel as if he has no barriers, given that we are in the final weeks of the Biden administration and president-elect Donald Trump will be taking the helm in the United States soon," said Kamrava, who is also director of the Iranian Studies Unit at the Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies, a research institution in Doha.

In a statement published by Wafa news agency, the Palestinian presidency accused the US of emboldening Israel to "continue its crimes against innocent civilians in Palestine and Lebanon".

It also criticized the US for disregarding international law and UN resolutions, including the ruling by the International Court of Justice, which earlier called for an end to the Israeli occupation, withdrawal from Gaza, and a cessation of hostilities.

After the vote, reports of civilians being killed by Israeli attacks in Gaza and Lebanon continued unabated.

In an interview with Al Jazeera, Hussam Abu Safia, director of the Kamal Adwan Hospital in Beit Lahiyah, said most victims were asleep when they were killed in an attack, with "bodies hanging on the walls and ceilings" and mostly women and children.

There had also been a report of three children from the same family killed in an Israeli attack on the so-called safe zone in the al-Mawasi area of Khan Younis. Israel and Hamas have been locked in a deadly battle in the Gaza Strip, with Israel retaliating for a Hamas rampage through the southern Israeli border on Oct 7 last year when about 1,200 people were killed and some 250 taken hostage.

The Palestinian death toll, meanwhile, had risen to almost 44,000 on Nov 20.

With the latest UN Security Council inaction, Nebal Farsakh, spokesperson for the Palestine Red Crescent Society, told China Daily the people of Gaza "have lost hope and feel abandoned by the world".

She reiterated that the suffering of people in the Gaza Strip "has reached unbearable and indescribable levels".

"A permanent cease-fire must be reached urgently, as the situation cannot endure any further delays. The entire population of Gaza faces an imminent threat of famine, coupled with the spread of diseases and epidemics. "The arrival of winter is expected to exacerbate the already dire conditions, intensifying the hardships faced by the people," Farsakh said.

Putin: Attacks on Russian land taking Ukraine conflict to global level

MOSCOW/WASHINGTON

THE Ukraine conflict has obtained features of a global conflict after attacks by Western missiles on Russia's Kursk and Bryansk regions, Russian President Vladimir Putin said in a televised address on Thursday.

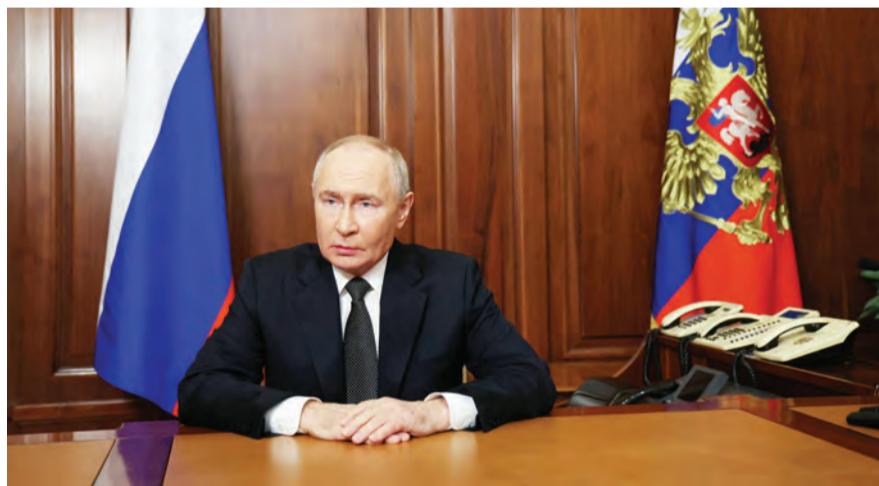
"Since this moment, as we have underscored repeatedly, the conflict in Ukraine, provoked by the West, has obtained elements of global nature," he said.

The Russian president vowed that Russia will respond decisively in case of escalation in Ukraine.

He stressed that Russia has the right to use weapons against the military facilities of the countries that use their weapons against Russia.

"I would like to stress once again that it is not Russia that is destroying the international security system, but the United States," Putin stressed in the speech.

He also confirmed that Russia has successfully tested a new medium-



range ballistic missile Oreshnik in response to enemy actions.

Meanwhile, the United States imposed sanctions Thursday on more than 100 Russian financial entities and finance officials, among them Gazprombank, Russia's largest remaining bank yet to be blocked by Washington.

According to a statement by the

Department of the Treasury, in addition to Gazprombank, which is partially owned by Russia's state-controlled gas company Gazprom, the newly announced sanctions also hit more than 50 internationally connected Russian banks, more than 40 Russian securities registrars, and 15 Russian finance officials.

As a result of the sanction, Gaz-

prombank, one of Russia's largest banks, is effectively blocked in the US banking system, as transactions with US customers will be banned and the bank's assets in the United States will be frozen.

Additionally, the Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control is issuing an alert describing sanctions risks related to Russia's System for Transfer of Financial Messages, which the United States said was created and used by the Russian government "to evade sanctions".

"Today's sanctions targeting Russia's largest remaining non-designated bank, as well as dozens of other financial institutions and officials in Russia, will further diminish and degrade Russia's war machine," Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen said.

Yellen added that the United States "will continue to take decisive steps against any financial channels" that support Russia in its conflict with Ukraine.

Asia-Pacific remains locomotive of economic globalisation

ON Nov. 15, Chinese President Xi Jinping gave a written speech at the APEC CEO Summit in Lima, Peru.

Focusing on the question of where the Asia-Pacific economy will be going, Xi profoundly summarized the successful experience of the Asia-Pacific development, proposed a universally beneficial and inclusive economic globalization, and expounded on the significance of China further deepening reform across the board to advance Chinese modernization. His remarks has drawn a new blueprint for the common development of Asia-Pacific.

Asia-Pacific economies are deeply woven into the fabric of economic globalization. They are now an interdependent community with

common interests and a shared future.

Despite the unbridled unilateralism and protectionism, and the increasingly fragmented world economy, the overall trend of economic globalization remains unchanged.

New technological revolution and industrial transformation are getting more profound, and the world is moving faster to embrace a digital, green and smart economy. All this is building up powerful energy for further expedition of economic globalization down the road.

APEC should steer economic globalization in the right direction. It should see to it that economic globalization generates more positive outcomes and is taken to a new phase that is more dynamic, inclu-

sive and sustainable.

To promote a universally beneficial and inclusive economic globalization to the benefit of various countries and communities, Xi said APEC should take innovation as the driving force for stronger growth of the world economy, keep pace with the times and reform the system of global economic governance, and always take the people-centered approach and seek to settle imbalances in development. This offers important guidance for building consensus for Asia-Pacific development and creating a prosperous future.

Under new circumstances, sci-tech innovation is the source of productivity. It is important to make full use of artificial intelligence and oth-

er emerging technologies to help developing countries with their capacity building in science and technology and promote global flow of knowledge and technologies.

It is important to follow the principles of "plan together, build together and benefit together" to ensure that the global economic governance system better reflects the new reality of the world economic map. The representation and voice of the Global South should be enhanced continuously, and all countries should be ensured of equal rights, equal opportunities and equal rules in conducting international economic cooperation.

True development means common development of all countries. APEC should ensure people's well-

being while seeking economic growth, and foster a development environment that is inclusive and beneficial for all. It should help expedite the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and promote balanced and full development of all countries.

Over the past decades, Asia-Pacific economies have maintained robust growth and created the remarkable Asia-Pacific miracle. The success of the Asia-Pacific is due to regional countries' firm commitment to peace and stability in the region, to their continuous practices of true multilateralism and open regionalism, and to their deep faith in the trend toward economic globalization as well as mutual benefit and mutual success.

The Asia-Pacific should remain the locomotive of economic globalization in the future. While further burnishing the Asia-Pacific hallmark of openness and inclusiveness, it should make new brand-building efforts to foster a green and digital Asia-Pacific, and build an Asia-Pacific community with a shared future.

China's development is inseparable from the Asia-Pacific, and it will in turn further benefit the region. China is an engine and propeller for regional cooperation in the Asia-Pacific. It is the largest trading partner of the 13 APEC economies, contributes 64.2 percent of the region's economic growth, 37.6 percent of the growth in goods trade and 44.6 percent of the growth in services trade.

People's Daily

US missile defence base in Poland long among Russian army's targets – Foreign Ministry

MOSCOW

THE US missile defense base in Poland has long been considered a priority target for potential neutralization by the Russian Armed Forces, Foreign Ministry Spokeswoman Maria Zakharova stated during a briefing.

"Given the level of threats posed by such Western military facilities, the missile defense base in Poland has long been included among the priority targets for potential neutralization. If necessary, this can be achieved using a wide range of advanced weaponry," the diplomat said.

Zakharova stated that the US-NATO construction project, ongoing for nearly a decade with complete disregard to Russian security concerns, has consistently been a focus of Russia's attention. She emphasized that Russia has spent these years preparing countermeasures in response.

Zakharova described the establishment of such a base as yet another blatantly provocative move, calling it part of "a series of deeply destabilizing actions by the Americans and their North Atlantic allies in the strategic sphere."

"This move aligns with the longstanding and destructive practice of advancing NATO's military infrastructure closer to Russia's borders," the spokeswoman stated. "Such actions undermine strategic stability. Coupled with other harmful military-political and military-technical measures aimed at projecting US power thousands of kilometers from its own territory to exert pressure on Russia and other nuclear powers, this



inevitably heightens strategic risks and, consequently, raises the overall level of nuclear danger," Zakharova added.

The missile defense complex in Poland

Construction of the missile defense facility in Redzikow began in 2016, with costs reportedly amounting to \$850 million for the United States, according to open sources. The facility became operational in December 2023 and was subsequently handed over to NATO. Following the summit in Washington in July 2024, the alliance announced the full operational readiness of the Aegis Ashore complex in Poland.

The Aegis Ashore facility in Redzikow is part of the EPAA (European Phased Adaptive Approach) program for the phased deployment of missile defense systems in Europe. The framework also includes Aegis radar-equipped ships based in Rota, Spain, an AN/TPY-2 radar station in Turkey (on alert since 2011), and another Aegis Ashore facility at the Deveslu base in Romania.

Xi's call for fair governance hailed

HONG KONG

CHINESE President Xi Jinping's remarks at the 19th G20 Summit in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, have outlined how to work together for a just and equitable global governance system for the benefit of all, observers said.

Xi's speech was "comprehensive, compact and a clear guide for reform of the prevailing governance system", said Irfan Shahzad Takalvi, founder of the Eurasian Century Institute, a think tank in Islamabad, Pakistan.

It is a resounding message that the "business as usual" approach to global governance serves the purposes and interests of only a few leading nations and ignores the aspirations and genuine rights of the majority of the world's nations and their people, he said.

According to Takalvi, Xi has rightly highlighted that global security governance is part and parcel of global governance, and institutional bodies such as the United Nations Security Council must play their role and take up the responsibility expected of them.

Takalvi said that Xi represented the entire developing world in voicing that it is imperative to reform shareholding and decision-making in leading international financial institutions such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.

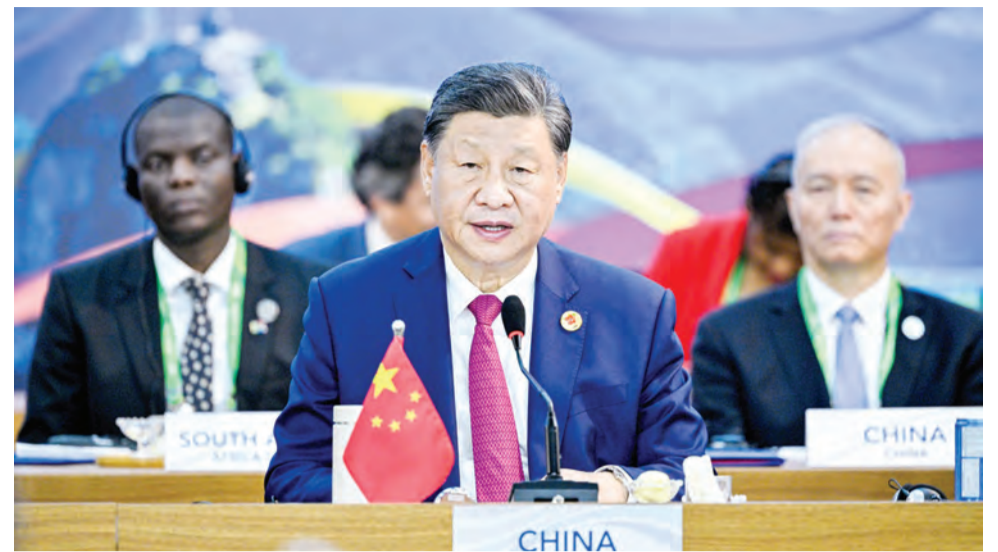
"That is how the emerging developing economies of the world can reclaim their lost space in global financial and economic decision-making," Takalvi said.

He noted that Xi once again urged countries to see one another's development as opportunities, not challenges, and to view one another as partners, not rivals.

This spirit can take the world on the way toward the goal of win-win cooperation and shared prosperity, Takalvi said.

Karori Singh, former director and an emeritus fellow of the South Asia Studies Centre at the University of Rajasthan, India, said the G20 Summit sessions focused on pressing global problems such as poverty eradication and the path to global prosperity and stability – central issues of global significance in which technology and climate justice play roles.

"The Chinese president spoke eloquently in both sessions, with clarity and purposefulness," Singh said, noting that Xi outlined China's eight major actions to shore up global de-



Chinese President Xi Jinping delivers his speech during the Session II of the 19th G20 Summit on Reform of the Institutions of Global Governance, in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, Nov 18, 2024. (PHOTO / XINHUA)

velopment, from high-quality Belt and Road cooperation to high standard opening-up.

Xi's remarks therefore aligned with the message of the United Nations on the eradication of poverty, as people must come together in solidarity of purpose, Singh added.

Sujoko Effendi, a professor on the faculty of business and economics at Universitas Surabaya in Indonesia, said that Xi took a holistic approach to empower nations economically, with a strong focus on the development of digital technologies, science, entrepreneurship, innovation and barrier-free international trade.

"He underscored the necessity of abandoning the Cold War mentality, which perpetuates an 'us versus them' worldview," he said.

"His arguments are supported by empirical evidence drawn from China's direct experiences in combating poverty," the professor said, adding that the Chinese president "envisioned a future economic system centered on green technology and sustainable development. To achieve this vision, he emphasizes the importance of enhanced coordination among G20 nations".

Maarj Farooq, deputy editor-in-chief at Pakistan Economic Net and Daily Ittehad Media Group, said that Xi's remarks at the G20 Summit presented a bold and compre-

hensive vision for reforming global governance.

Xi underscored China's "steadfast commitment to fostering a fair, inclusive and sustainable international system that addresses the pressing challenges of our time", Farooq said.

"By emphasizing multilateral cooperation, economic inclusivity and sustainable development, President Xi positions China as a key driver of positive change in global governance," he added.

Central to Xi's message is the need for a governance system that reflects the realities of a multipolar world, prioritizing equality, collaboration and mutual respect, he said.

Xi's remarks also reaffirmed China's role as a champion of true multilateralism, a builder of partnerships, and a steadfast advocate for the shared future of humanity, according to Farooq.

Michael Ricafort, chief economist of Rizal Commercial Banking Corp, one of the Philippines' biggest commercial banks, said that China, as the world's second-largest economy, is asserting an increased global role and influence.

He noted that China is contributing to more inclusive economic growth and development, such as helping to alleviate poverty in least-developed countries. *Xinhua*

No Western sanctions to limit Russia's foreign trade – minister

MOSCOW

NO Western sanctions will limit Russia's foreign trade, Russian Finance Minister Anton Siluanov said in an interview with Nailiya Asker-Zade broadcast on the Rossiya-24 TV channel, adding that the country's imports are on the rise, while trade turnover is improving.

"Russia's trade turnover has been increasing, improving recently. Imports have grown in recent months," he said, adding that "despite all restrictions the participants of foreign trade transactions, foreign trade activities will still find possibilities to pay for supplied or acquired goods." "So, no restrictions being imposed will limit foreign trade," the minister noted.

All restrictions that Western countries impose affect themselves in the first place, Siluanov said. "The Russian economy, which has seen more than 2,000 various restrictions imposed against it, is on the rise. This year the economic growth dynamics will be around 4%, whereas the dynamics in the West is around zero, 0.1% at best," he said.

Active work is underway within BRICS on establishing alternative ways of payments, the minister said, adding that the issue was discussed at a recent summit in Kazan.

"We spoke about modernization of financial infrastructure in general. The issue is both about payments and the cre-



ation of depository links, the issue is both about creating insurance and reinsurance in foreign trade.

This is why the creation of such a trans-border mechanism with the use of digital financial assets is only one of the elements. I think that our partners increasingly understand the reasonability of creating such an alternative to ordinary payments using the currencies of Western countries now as all those payments may be exposed to certain risks not only for the Russian Federation but also for other partners," Siluanov explained.

Moscow's initiative will be considered as one of the most important issues on the BRICS agenda, the minister added.

Mexican president says ready to protect migrants under US deportation

MEXICO CITY

Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum on Thursday voiced readiness for the potential US mass deportations of migrants, which US President-elect Donald Trump has indicated will happen once he is in office.

"In the event that there are deportations, we will receive the Mexicans, and we have a plan for that," Sheinbaum told reporters at a daily morning press conference.

Expressing her disapproval of "migrants being treated like criminals," she said, "that is why institutions of justice exist everywhere around the world" to protect basic rights.

The government is strengthening the network of Mexican consulates in the United States to better protect migrants at the risk of deportation, she said.

In the coming days, Sheinbaum will meet with her cabinet to review the bilateral issues that need to be addressed with Trump's team, including immigration, security, trade, and the free trade agreement between Mexico, the United



States and Canada.

Trump, who is to be sworn in on Jan. 20, 2025, has threatened to stiffen measures to stop the flow of undocumented migrants across the US-Mexico border.

China-Brazil green cooperation sends clean energy to numerous Brazilian households

PANATI photovoltaic power station is located in the northeastern Brazilian state of Ceara, housing 446,000 solar panels. Covering a total area of 840 hectares, the photovoltaic power station was invested and constructed by the Brazilian branch of China's State Power Investment Corporation (SPIC). It was put into operation in June this year, providing clean energy to over 350,000 local households annually.

In recent years, the Brazilian government has actively promoted green energy transition, with clean energy cooperation becoming a hot area of collaboration between China and Brazil.

The first and second phases of the Belo Monte ultra-high-voltage transmission project, contracted by the State Grid Corporation of China, were completed and put into operation in 2017 and 2019 respectively. The project transmits the abundant hydroelectric resources from northern Brazil to the densely populated southeast region.

In December 2023, the State Grid Corporation of China won the franchise rights for another ultra-high-voltage direct current transmission project in Brazil, which will transport clean energy sources such as wind and solar power from the northeast of the country to the capital Brasilia and other areas.

Green power plants are rising one after another, and electric "highways" stretch across the vast lands of Brazil. Brazilian scholar Felipe Camargo Gaiotto noted that Brazil has rich experience in hydropower development, while China leads in areas like solar power, wind power, and electricity transmission. Collaboration between the two countries holds significant importance for advancing global sustainable development, he added.

As green energy is lighting up countless homes, green transportation is also flourishing. In cities like Sao Paulo and Rio de Janeiro, an increasing number of electric buses and cars from Chinese brands are hitting the streets.

According to recent data from the ABVE, or Brazilian Electric Vehicle Association, over 120,000 light electric vehicles were sold in Brazil in the first nine months of this year, mark-

ing a 113 percent increase year on year. Among the top ten best-selling models, eight came from China.

Chinese new energy vehicle manufacturer BYD has a battery production facility in Manaus, the capital of Brazil's Amazonas state. It is the first assembling base for lithium iron phosphate battery products in Brazil and the third factory of BYD in the country.

It officially began operations

in 2020, with a designed annual capacity of producing battery modules for 1,000 electric buses.

With this factory, Brazil is able to assemble and produce batteries locally, which helps promote the adoption and application of green technologies, accelerates the electrification of public transportation in Brazil, and drives the development of local new energy technologies, said an engineer at the factory.

People's Daily



A Brazilian journalist learns about battery assembling techniques at a battery factory of Chinese new energy vehicle manufacturer BYD in Manaus, Brazil. (People's Daily/Zhang Zhiwen)Daily Online/Deng Guohui

From fame to financial stability: Musicians urged to invest wisely

By Guardian Correspondent

MUSIC industry stakeholders in Tanzania have underscored the need for investment education to help musicians manage their earnings and secure financial stability, especially as their careers mature or decline.

The call was made during an event in Dar es Salaam, organized by Mdundo.Com, to educate musicians on leveraging digital platforms for content distribution.

Emmanuel Kiondo, head of communications and relations at CRDB Bank, highlighted the challenges many musicians face due to a lack of financial literacy.

"There are countless examples of musicians who earned significant sums but later fell into poverty due to poor financial management," Kiondo said. "Many fail to invest their earnings, spending recklessly during their prime, only to struggle when their careers slow down."

Kiondo emphasized the need for musicians to adopt sound financial practices. "At CRDB, we aim to educate them on wise investments to avoid financial instability and to eliminate outdated practices that hinder their financial growth," he added.

Aman Martin, another music industry stakeholder, stressed the importance of educating musicians and their managers about utilizing digital platforms effectively.

"Many musicians are unfamiliar with how to distribute their work through digital systems, leading to missed op-

portunities," Martin said. "We must empower them with the knowledge needed to avoid unfavourable contracts and maximize the benefits of their content."

Martin noted that fame alone is insufficient for success in the digital age.

"Musicians who understand and use digital platforms properly have a greater chance of sustaining their careers and earning consistently," he explained.

Maureen Njeri, managing director of Mdundo.Com, outlined how the platform connects musicians with audiences while ensuring they earn from their content.

"Mdundo.Com simplifies the process for artists to share and distribute their music, ensuring they receive the financial rewards they deserve," Njeri said.

She added that the platform prioritizes local music, particularly songs in Swahili, offering artists a chance to reach broader audiences while retaining cultural relevance.

"We provide a platform that gives artists full control over their content, ensuring they can benefit fully from their hard work," she concluded.

The event highlighted the need for a shift in the music industry, where musicians are equipped with both financial literacy and technical skills to navigate the digital landscape.

By investing in education and embracing digital tools, Tanzania's musicians can build sustainable careers and avoid the pitfalls of financial mismanagement.

Tanzania's senior female cricketers travel to South Africa for special preps



Cricketers forming senior national women's squad are pictured with instructors at the Sports School of Excellence in South Africa early this week. They are participating in a high-performance session to shape up for future assignments. PHOTO: COURTESY OF TANZANIA CRICKET ASSOCIATION

By Correspondent Japheth Kazenga

TANZANIA'S senior national women's cricket team has embarked on a trip to Pretoria, South Africa for a high-performance training program.

One of Tanzania Cricket Association (TCA) officials noted that the female cricketers will be training at the prestigious Sports School of Excellence.

According to the official, the program runs from November 19-30, aiming to enhance their skills and prepare them for the challenges ahead.

Cricketers forming the senior national women's team are Swaumu Godfrey, Fatuma

Kibusu, Neema Justine, Nasra Hamza, Perice Zakayo, Tabu Saidi, and Nasra Nassoro.

Hudaa Mrisho, Gertrude Mushi, Shufaa Hamza, Linda Justine, Sophia Frank, Mwanamvua Hamisi, and Adolphina Jeremiah also make the list.

Accompanied by head coach Arun Yadav and team manager Irene Mambosasa, the female cricketers have already started their sessions at the renowned Irene Country Club.

The TCA official pointed out that the sessions are focusing on intensive training and skill development.

This, the TCA official added, is a significant step for women's cricket in Tanzania, as its players continue to work hard and showcase their dedication

to the game.

The official called on cricket stakeholders in Tanzania to wish the senior national women's team success and show them all the support they deserve.

There is, of late, tremendous progress in women's cricket in Tanzania, with TCA stepping up efforts to boost women's participation in the sport from the grassroots.

The national cricket governing body recently hosted a program termed Women's Criio Festival in Dar es Salaam and Morogoro.

Three festivals, bringing together school girls, university students, and women with no background in cricket, were held at the Dar es Salaam Gym-

khana Club venue.

The concluding festival, which had youthful female cricketers battling it out, was hosted at the Sokoine University of Agriculture (SUA) ground in Morogoro.

One of the tangible achievements in the country's women's cricket is the senior women's cricket squad's victory in this season's Nigeria Invitational Women's T20I Tournament in Lagos early this year.

The four-team tournament, which brought together Rwanda, Tanzania, Sierra Leone, and Nigeria, took place from February 35- March 3.

Tanzania walloped Sierra Leone by 92 runs to lift the silverware, whereas Nigeria ended as runners-up.

Rupia urges Singida Black Stars to regain momentum

By Correspondent Nassir Nchimbi

SINGIDA Black Stars striker Elvis Rupia has called on his teammates to demonstrate their quality and resilience as they aim to bounce back in the NBC Premier League after a string of underwhelming results.

The team is determined to return to winning ways following a 1-0 loss to Young Africans and a goalless draw against Coastal Union in their last two matches. Their next test comes tomorrow against Tabora United at the Ali Hassan Mwinyi Stadium.

Rupia acknowledged the challenges the team has faced but expressed optimism about their ability to turn things around after the international break.

"We've had a good two-week break, and we've used the time to rest, recover, and analyze our previous performances," Rupia said. "We've focused on improving through intensive training sessions and reviewing game footage. It's a positive step, and I believe we'll do well in the upcoming matches."

The striker emphasized the competitive nature of the league and the importance of staying disciplined and focused.

"It won't be easy because the level of competition is very high, but we need to give it our all. We cannot afford to drop points, especially against teams lower in the table. Every point matters, and we need to fight for them to climb back to the top," Rupia added.



The team currently sits third on the league table with 23 points from 10 matches. However, their defense remains a concern, having conceded 10 goals so far this season.

Rupia, who joined Singida Black Stars in the 2023/24 season from Police FC in Kenya, has already made a significant impact.

In Kenya, he shattered a 47-year-old league record by scoring 27 goals in a single season, surpassing Moris Aloo Sony's 1976 record with the Barrack Boys.

In his first season in Tanzania, Rupia played for Singida Fountain Gate and Ihefu (now Singida Black Stars), scoring six goals. He has already netted three goals in this campaign and remains a crucial player for the team.

The team faces a challenging schedule with three matches in a week. After playing Tabora United tomorrow, Singida Black Stars will travel to face Azam FC on November 27 before returning home to CCM Liti Stadium to host Simba SC on December 1.

Rupia is confident the team is ready for the demanding fixtures, emphasizing the importance of maintaining focus and performing consistently.

"We need to work harder and stay disciplined, especially in defense. With determination, I'm sure we can overcome these challenges and return to form," he said.

As the team prepares for their upcoming matches, fans and players alike are hopeful that Rupia's leadership and goal-scoring prowess will help propel Singida Black Stars back to the top of the Premier League standings.

Stakeholders stress need to embrace traditional games

By Correspondent Rose Ngunangwa, Bagamoyo

STAKEHOLDERS charged with promotion of intangible cultural heritage have called upon the public to embrace traditional games in a bid to create a society of responsible people.

Traditional games of 'Baba and Mama' (Dad and Mom), where girls played the role of the mother outside while the boy played the role of a dad, are reported to have groomed most people to know their roles during adulthood.

The call to that end was made in Bagamoyo mid this week at a youth dialogue to raise awareness about the importance of safeguarding intangible cultural heritage in an era of globalization.

Contributing during the discussion, Anthony Tiluganilwa from the Bagamoyo Arts and Cultural Institute said traditional sports and games were instrumental as they taught children to be self-independent due to the latter playing outside without their parents.

He said playing outside made children embrace love with others unlike now where most of the children are locked in the gates, a situation that has seen some become selfish.

"When we played dad and mom, girls played the role of a mother while boys played that of the father. This helped us to grow knowing our responsibilities, something which has been instrumental even as we speak. Currently, that is no longer the case no wonder we have some people who are irresponsible and selfish in our society," said Tiluganilwa.

Contributing to the discussion a traditional elder in Bagamoyo, Hashimu Akida called upon the need to impart

the traditional customs and culture to youngsters to enable them to know the past.

For her part, Angela Kidwanga, a student from the Bagamoyo Arts and Cultural Institute, stressed upon the need to train their children to be independent to restrain young men from chasing older women, popularly known as Mashangazi (Aunts), in search of free meals.

"We also need to train our girls to be independent so that they don't run for sponsors (older men) as a means of livelihood. I also call upon parents to send their children to their native homes as well as to teach them their local languages. These efforts will help to preserve the intangible cultural heritage," said Kidwanga.

According to the UNESCO Conventions of 2003, Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) includes practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, and skills that communities, groups, and, occasionally, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage.

Organized by the government and UNESCO, the dialogue brought together traditional leaders and prominent people, Nyakangas, traditional dances, cultural officers, commissioners of culture from Mainland and Zanzibar, students from the Bagamoyo Arts and Cultural Institute, lecturers as well as CSOs whose work is to promote the ICH.

Tanzania is a signatory to the UNESCO Convention of 2003 whose goal is to safeguard the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge and skills that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage.

AFCON 2025 in Morocco: Everything you need to know

CAF Online

THE countdown to the 2025 TotalEnergies Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON) has officially begun as the North African nation of Morocco prepares to host the continent's premier football tournament for the second time in its history.

With the qualifiers over and the 24 teams to play in the competition known, here's a comprehensive guide to what fans can expect from the 35th edition of this iconic competition.

*A Return to Morocco

Morocco last hosted the Africa Cup of Nations in 1988, a tournament that saw just eight teams compete, with Cameroon emerging victorious after a hard-fought final against Nigeria.

Fast forward to 2025, and the tournament has expanded significantly, with 24 teams set to compete, highlighting the growth and development of African football over the past three decades.

Morocco was confirmed as the host nation on September 27, 2023, a decision that has been met with widespread enthusiasm.

The Atlas Lions, who automatically qualify as the host nation, are eager to showcase their country's readiness to host a competition of this magnitude, especially after their historic performance in the 2022 FIFA World Cup, where they became the first African nation to reach the semi-finals.

*Stadiums and Host Cities

While the Royal Moroccan Football Federation has yet to officially announce the venues, several iconic stadiums are expected to play a central role in the tournament. These include:

- Mohammed V Stadium, Casablanca: A likely centerpiece of the tournament, this historic venue hosted the 1988 AFCON final and is expected to be a major venue once again.
- Moulay Abdellah Stadium, Rabat: Another key venue, currently undergoing expansion to increase its capacity.
- Ibn Batouta Stadium, Tangier: Set to host some of the tournament's biggest matches, with an expanded capacity to accommodate more fans.
- Adrar Stadium, Agadir: Known for its stunning location and modern facilities, also being expanded ahead of the tournament.
- Marrakesh Stadium, Marrakesh: A popular venue with fans and likely to see significant action during the tournament.
- Fez Stadium, Fez: A more traditional setting that will add to the diverse experiences offered to fans.

*Qualifiers and Teams

While Morocco was the only team currently assured of a place in the

tournament as the host nation, the remaining 23 spots was decided through a rigorous qualifying process.

The qualifiers, which kicked off in September 2024 and ending in November 2024, saw 48 nations divided into 12 groups, with the top two teams from each group securing their place in Morocco.

The qualification process was intense, with teams like reigning champions Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, Nigeria, Senegal, and Algeria all vying for a spot.

Most of the giants secured their places while others like Ghana and Guinea could not qualify for the competition.

*The 24 countries qualified for TotalEnergies CAF AFCON 2025

- Morocco (Hosts)
- Burkina Faso
- Cameroon
- Algeria
- DR Congo
- Senegal
- Egypt
- Angola
- Equatorial Guinea
- Cote d'Ivoire
- Uganda
- South Africa
- Gabon
- Tunisia
- Nigeria
- Zambia
- Mali
- Zimbabwe
- Comoros
- Sudan
- Benin
- Tanzania
- Botswana
- Mozambique

*Key Dates

The 2025 AFCON is scheduled to begin on December 21, 2025, and will culminate with the final on January 18, 2026.

These dates are crucial for fans and teams alike as they prepare for the most prestigious football tournament on the African continent.

*Morocco's Growing Football Reputation

Morocco's selection as the host for AFCON 2025 is no surprise given the country's recent track record in successfully hosting major international football events.

From the 2018 African Nations Championship (CHAN) to the 2022 Women's Africa Cup of Nations and the FIFA Club World Cup in 2023, Morocco has consistently demonstrated its capacity to organize and deliver world-class football tournaments.

This track record, combined with the country's passionate football culture and state-of-the-art infrastructure, sets the stage for what could be one of the most memorable editions of the Africa Cup of Nations.

*Looking Ahead

As the road to Morocco 2025 begins, anticipation is high not just for the tournament itself but for what it symbolizes - a celebration of African football and a showcase of Morocco's commitment to the sport.

With world-class facilities, a football-mad population, and recent experience in hosting major tournaments, Morocco is poised to deliver an AFCON that will set new benchmarks for the competition.

All eyes on Amorim as new Manchester United era begins at Ipswich

By Reuters

MANCHESTER United begin what they hope will be a journey back towards their former glory as new head coach Ruben Amorim (pictured) takes charge for the first time away at Ipswich Town tomorrow.

As the Premier League returns after the international stoppage, United's trip to Portman Road offers the most intriguing storyline of a packed weekend of action.

While United's fans will travel to Suffolk with fresh hope after years of decline, Manchester City's are perhaps still in a state of mild shock at a four-match losing streak. Champions City,



boosted by the news that manager Pep Guardiola has signed a contract extension, have fallen five points behind leaders Liverpool, but will aim to return to business as usual at home to Tottenham Hotspur today.

Liverpool, whose own new era under Arne Slot has begun in sensational style with 15 wins from 17

in all competitions, go to bottom club Southampton tomorrow.

Arsenal, like City, also need an urgent re-boot after a haul of only two points from the last 12 on offer in the league has left them in fourth spot, nine points behind Liverpool.

Amorim, whose Sporting side demolished Manchester City in the Champions League in what was his final home game in charge for the Lisbon club, will need to

hit the ground running.

United are languishing down in 13th place with only four wins from their first 11 games, although in a tightly-packed table they are only four points off the top four.

Amorim is the sixth full-time occupant of the Old Trafford hot seat since Alex Ferguson left 11 years ago and he knows the scrutiny will be far more intense than anything he has experienced so far in his coaching career.

"You feel the history and I'm really proud to be Manchester United's coach," Amorim told MUTV. "I think I am where I'm supposed to be. That's the feeling."

United will travel to an Ipswich side buoyed by a 2-1 victory at Tottenham before the international break -- their first win since promotion back to the top flight.

City's run of poor form coincided with the loss of several players because of injuries but they could be boosted by the return of Kevin De Bruyne for the visit of Tottenham.

The Belgian playmaker has started only four of City's 11 league games this season, with City winning all of them. The other seven garnered only 11 points.

Tottenham have taken inconsistency to new levels this season, beating the likes of Manchester United and Aston Villa, but also losing to Crystal Palace and Ipswich.

The north London club have a track record of causing problems for City, although they will be without midfielder Rodrigo Bentancur who is serving a seven-match ban for using a racial slur against team mate Son Heung-min.

Third-placed Chelsea begin the weekend's fixtures on Saturday with manager Enzo Maresca returning to Leicester City who he guided back to the top flight last season.

"I'm excited and thankful (to return), it was a fantastic season," Maresca said.

Five challenges ahead for Guardiola and Man City

By Simon Stone

IT was the news all Manchester City fans had been hoping for.

After months of speculation about his future, their manager Pep Guardiola has decided to extend his stay with the club to the summer of 2027.

The 53-year-old Spaniard joined City in 2016 and has won 18 trophies so far, including six Premier League titles, two FA Cups and a Champions League.

The decision will come as a welcome relief to City fans and the club's hierarchy at a time when they are coming head on with a number of challenges both on the pitch and off it.

A bad run of form, doubt over some senior players' futures, changes behind the scenes and facing the Premier League's 115 charges for alleged breaches of financial rules, mean Guardiola and Manchester City have a huge few months ahead.

*A catalyst to regain form?

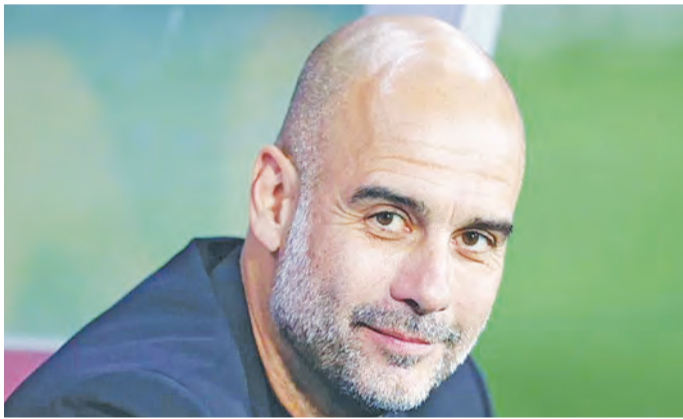
Man City may still be second in the Premier League but they are going through a slump in form that hasn't been seen since Guardiola took the reins.

A defeat by Brighton last time out was the first time Guardiola has suffered four successive defeats at the club and was the first time since 2006 that City have lost four in a row.

The run certainly isn't terminal in terms of their bid to win a record-extending fifth straight Premier League title, given they are only five points behind leaders Liverpool and four points clear of third-placed Chelsea.

They also remain in a decent position in the Champions League group stage - despite being thrashed by Sporting - but know they must regain their form quickly to stay realistic contenders on all fronts.

It has been suggested in some quarters the uncertainty over Guardiola's future was a significant factor in City's current run, and there



Pep Guardiola has stayed at Manchester City longer than he has at any other club as manager [Getty Images]

will now be the hope his decision can provide that clarity and certainty to propel the team forward.

A bigger issue though remains the injuries within his squad, with the absence of defenders Kyle Walker, Nathan Ake, Manuel Akanji, Ruben Dias and John Stones undoubtedly a key issue.

In addition, Phil Foden has struggled to find his form and Ilkay Gundogan is yet to reach the level of performance he was at before he left Barcelona after helping City win the Treble in 2023.

Kevin de Bruyne and Jack Grealish have been injured, while Balon D'Or winner Rodri is out for the season.

City will get no sympathy because of their success and the money they have spent to achieve it, but that number of issues, to any squad in the Premier League, would have a negative impact.

*An evolution of the squad?

Where Guardiola staying will have a major impact is on City's plans for the future.

It has to be regarded as a positive for the club that Guardiola is not leaving at the same time as his long-time friend and director of football Txiki Begiristain.

Manchester United are yet to recover from the double blow of manager Sir Alex Ferguson and chief executive David Gill leaving in the summer of 2013.

Begiristain's replacement, Hugo Viana, will need time to adjust after his move from Sporting. The combination of Guardiola, chairman Khaldoon al-Mubarak and chief executive Ferran Soriano provides that breathing space.

ent about his attachment to City.

He still talks about Barcelona as "his club" but he found the pressure suffocating and quit after four seasons.

At Bayern, he stayed for the length of an initial three-year contract and nothing more. At City, he admits, he has everything he needs.

He likes living in England, has no intention of moving to Italy, so what were the alternatives. The big question, post Treble triumph, is where does the motivation come from?

This season, there is a feeling he is responding to a double challenge. He has brought up City's 115 Premier League charges on at least two occasions, suggesting the negativity attaching itself to the club is on his mind.

In addition, his side's form would concern any manager. His reaction has been telling. In the aftermath of the 4-1 defeat at Sporting earlier this month, when asked about the challenge in front of him, Guardiola replied: "I like it, I love it, I want to face it."

It almost feels as if, having achieved so much, he is relishing the prospect of having to prove doubters wrong.

There is certainly no doubt in the mind of City chairman Khaldoon Al Mubarak.

"His hunger for improvement and success remains insatiable," he said, as Guardiola's new deal was confirmed by the club.

Navigating next stage of Premier League case

It is significant Guardiola has committed his future to the club when the Premier League case is still to be decided.

It seems unlikely he will know how that will go but he has been consistent in cautioning against a rush to judgement before the full facts are known and also in his view that what he is being told about the club's conduct backs up their view they have done nothing wrong.

Regardless, it is 12 months since

he said pointedly he would stick around even if City were "relegated to League One".

That buys into the theory Guardiola's ties to the City ownership are so strong he would not walk away if the worst was to become reality. While there is so much uncertainty around the case itself, Guardiola has guaranteed one thing.

He will not only continue to be the public face of the club and have to deal with questions as they arise over the next few weeks but also will remain in post for months afterwards as the aftermath is debated.

The reality now - and it would probably have been the case anyway - is that Guardiola's reputation will forever be tied to City's, good or bad.

*What next for Guardiola?

It is the way of football that even before City had confirmed the news, questions were being asked what it could mean in relation to the England job.

There couldn't be seamless transition anyway, given Guardiola has signed a two-year deal and Thomas Tuchel's contract with the Football Association expires 12 months earlier.

In any case, Tuchel has not taken charge for a single game yet. If he fulfils his remit and wins the 2026 World Cup, would he walk away?

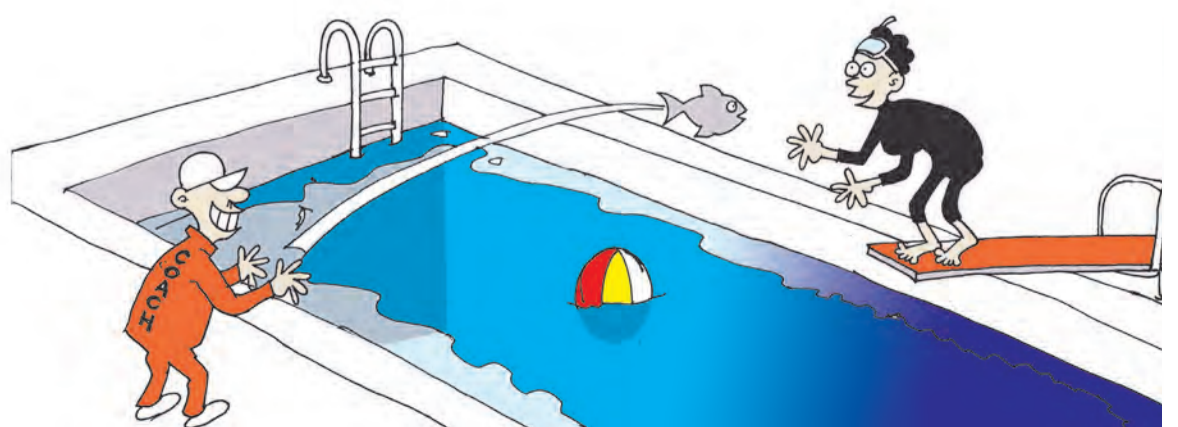
It does seem inevitable Guardiola will manage at international level one day - and if Spain is not an obvious move because of his stance on Catalan independence, England is an option.

He has also been linked to the Brazil job over the past few weeks and it is known Guardiola's ambition is to one day manage a national side.

But given we are talking about nearly three years down the line - and six months ago, it seemed certain Guardiola would be leaving City - it is probably wise to hold back from looking too far ahead.

BBC

Gwiji by David Chikoko



SPORT

All eyes on Amorim as new Man United era begins at Ipswich

PAGE 19

Simba secure top spot with narrow victory over Pamba Jiji FC

By Guardian Correspondent

SIMBA Sports Club solidified their lead in the NBC Premier League standings with a hard-fought 1-0 win against Pamba Jiji at Mwanza's Kirumba Stadium yesterday.

The match's only goal came in the 23rd minute, when Simba's Leonel Ateba successfully converted a penalty after being fouled inside the six-yard box by Pamba Jiji captain Christopher Oruchumu.

Goalkeeper Yona Amos was unable to stop Ateba's

well-placed shot.

Shortly after, Ateba was briefly sidelined following another foul by Oruchumu but returned to the game after receiving treatment.

Simba defender Shomari Kapombe received a yellow card in first-half stoppage time for a foul on Pamba Jiji striker George Mpole.

Despite their struggles this season, Pamba Jiji's goalkeeper, Yona Amos, delivered a commendable performance, denying multiple attempts by Simba. His notable saves included:

A powerful free kick from Kibe Denis and a follow-up

shot by Omary Omary in the 73rd minute and a close-range attempt by Kibu in the 82nd minute, following a precise cross from Ateba.

Simba's goalkeeper Mousa Camara also showcased his skill, making a critical save in the 60th minute against a strike by Pamba Jiji midfielder Mwashinga.

The victory places Simba firmly at the top of the table with 28 points from 11 matches, including nine wins, one draw, and one loss.

Pamba Jiji, recently promoted to the Premier League, continue to struggle. They sit near the bot-

tom with only one win, five draws, and six losses from 12 matches.

Their lone victory this season was a surprising 3-1 win over Fountain Gate FC at Tanzanite Stadium.

The match also served as a crucial warm-up for Simba ahead of their upcoming CAF Confederation Cup group stage clash against Angola's Bravos do Maquis on November 27.

Simba will be aiming to carry their league momentum into continental competition, with hopes of advancing beyond the group stage.



Mwambusi optimistic about Coastal Union's progress after international break

By Correspondent Nassir Nchimbi

COASTAL Union head coach Juma Mwambusi has expressed confidence in his team's improvement following the recent international break, which provided a crucial opportunity to refine tactics and address key performance issues.

Mwambusi (pictured) noted that the break offered an extended period to work with his players, likening it to a mini pre-season.

"I think I can now talk about anything because I've had significant time with the players," Mwambusi said. "The individual progress is encouraging, and the team has shown great morale and commitment to improvement."

The Tanga-based team has struggled in the NBC Premier League, with a -1 goal difference after conceding 10 goals and scoring just nine in their 11 matches.

Mwambusi identified both defense and attack as key areas requiring improvement.

"We've been inconsistent in balancing attack and defense. Scoring nine goals while conceding ten is not good enough. We're focused on addressing these weaknesses, though it will take hard work," he added.

Mwambusi took charge of Coastal Union on October 23, succeeding David Ouma, who was dismissed in August. His return to coaching came after an eight-month hiatus following his departure from Ihefu (now Singida Black Stars) earlier this year.

His tenure began with a narrow 1-0 loss to Young Africans on October 26. However, Coastal Union rebounded with a 1-0 victory over Kagera Sugar on October 29 and a goalless draw against Singida Black Stars on November 2.

Coastal Union, currently 10th on the league table with 12 points from 11 matches, face KenGold in their next league match at Sokoine Stadium in Mbeya.

Mwambusi is determined to build on the team's recent performances and climb the league standings.

Mwambusi is also focused on replicating Coastal Union's achievements from last season when they finished fourth in the league, earning a spot in the CAF Confederations Cup.

However, their continental campaign ended in disappointment after a 3-0 aggregate loss to Angola's Bravos do Maquis in the first round of group qualifications.

With renewed focus and tactical adjustments, Mwambusi is optimistic that Coastal Union can regain their form and push for a stronger position in the league.

"It's not going to be easy, but with the commitment I've seen from the players, I believe we're on the right path," he concluded.

Pamba Jiji goalkeeper Yona Amos fails to stop a penalty shot from Simba striker Leonel Ateba during their Premier League match held at Kirumba Stadium yesterday. Photo: Courtesy of SSC



Azam have top two in their sights as they host Kagera

By Correspondent Michael Mwebe

AZAM have shaken off their slow start to the season with an impressive turnaround. Rachid Taoussi's side are on a four-game winning streak, showing the grit and quality that propelled them into the CAF Champions League last term.

As they prepare to host Kagera Sugar at Chamazi Complex this evening, they have a chance to move on level points with second placed Young Africans.

Confidence will be flowing as they come into the game on the back of an excellent 1-0 win over Young Africans prior to the international break.

The win over Young Africans means Azam have won four of their last five fixtures



in the league. The other wins have come over Ken Gold, Namungo and Prisons.

It is also worth noting that

Azam have won three of their recent four Premier League meetings with Kagera Sugar, outscoring them by 9-1 for

good measure.

They have also won each of their last three home matches with Kagera Sugar since being held to a goalless stalemate in 2021.

When you look at the bigger picture, Azam have lost just one of their ten league encounters this season, picking up six wins and three draws in the process.

Azam's recent form and home advantage make them clear favourites. Kagera Sugar's struggles on the road and lack of cutting-edge attack suggest another pleasant evening for the hosts.

On the flip side, Kagera Sugar will be looking to climb out of the relegation zone when they make the trip to Chamazi.

They are languishing in the bottom three, two points away from safety.

They recorded a crucial 2-1 home win over Dodoma Jiji prior to the international break. It was the first win for coach Melis Medo, who took over from Paul Nkata.

The away side are now looking to win successive league games for the first time this season.

However, statistics show Kagera Sugar have failed to win any of their five league games on the road this season.

And so, with just two wins from their first ten league fixtures recording two draws and six defeats along the way, Medo's side faces another pivotal moment against Azam.

Peter Lwasa leads Kagera Sugar in scoring with four goals. Lwasa has only appeared in eight matches. No other Kagera Sugar player has scored more than one goal.

Flexibles by David Chikoko

