



National Pg 3
Pacts worth Ttrn/- issued via e-system

National Pg 4
TPA to establish modern college

National Pg 6
ARU to enroll 13,000 students by 2029



Hanang avalanche: 'Hot mud' claims by villagers 'plausible'

By Correspondent Marc Nkwame, Arusha

WHILE scientists can't speak of a volcanic eruption as linked with the wet landslide disaster on the slopes of Mount Hanang, claims of hot mud from villagers can only be linked with substantial volcanic activity, a scientist has affirmed.

Dr Ben Beeckmans (pictured), a Belgian volcanologist with extensive experience in the East African Rift Valley including eastern DRC Mountains who once lived in Arusha, issued this precaution in an interview on the incident.

"It is probably way too soon to speak about an eruption, even though the word 'hot mud' as described by some villagers, tends to indicate there is some activity underneath.

He pointed at the lack of an active network of seismic monitoring in the country, thus making it impossible to state what kind of activity there was, its magnitude or link

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Treasury unveils tax ombudsman services



Robert Manyama, head of the Tax Ombudsman Service of Tanzania (TOST) delivers his introduction remarks to media editors at a TOST working session in Dar es Salaam yesterday. Photo: Ministry of Finance

TOST will identify tax administrative issues related to customer service, or procedures and behavior which impact negatively on taxpayer interests

By Henry Mwangonde

THE Tax Ombudsman Service of Tanzania (TOST) formed under the Ministry of Finance is expected to relieve businesses from working with internal bodies of the Tanzania Revenue Authority (TRA) on tax complaints, especially its tax appeals board.

Robert Manyama, the ombudsman just appointed by Finance minister Dr Mwigulu Nchemba, briefed the media on its operations yesterday, as basically centred on administrative matters relating to tax objection or appeal.

Complaints relating to non-response of communication or decisions on tax issues of interest to the taxpayer can be reported to the ombudsman, who is not charged with reviewing the tax laws, hear tax objections or appeals on tax objections, he said.

The tax ombudsman joins the Tax Revenue Appeals Board (TRAB) as another tax related unit working under the Treasury, where TRAB is charged with complaints on application of

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Fuel costs: Bulk imports saving 501.13bn/- yearly
Oil tanker traffic at the ports waiting to off-load was cut down by bulk importation, with 425bn/- being saved on an annual basis from demurrage costs

By Francis Kajubi

IMPORTING fuel in bulk has been saving 501.13bn/- (\$200m) annually in import costs, the Petroleum Bulk Procurement Agency (PBPA) has affirmed.

Erasto Simon, the PBPA chief executive officer, told journalists in Dar es Salaam yesterday that the saved money since the inception of bulk importation in 2012 for petrol, diesel, jet fuel and kerosene was used in improving the country's petroleum products storage terminals.

"The funds are being used in improv-

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Samia to assist in Prof Jay's kidney transplant

By Guardian Reporter

PRESIDENT Samia Suluhu Hassan has expressed her readiness to cover medical bills for kidney transplant for former opposition legislator and ex-musician Joseph Haule popularly known as 'Prof Jay'.

Delivering a 50m/- contribution from the president to the Prof Jay Foundation as part of efforts to support what the renowned artist was doing, deputy Health minister Dr Godwin Mollle said the president inquired on the progress of Prof Jay's health.

She has directed the ministry to set the procedure in which the artist will be receiving care at the Muhimbili National Hospital to ensure he is safe.

The remarks came at the launch of the Prof Jay foundation relating to the war

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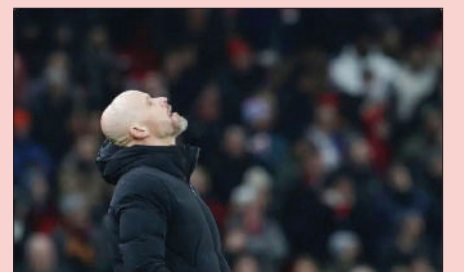
Zanzibar First Vice President Othman Masoud Othman exchanges greetings with Vivid school student Mariyam Hassan Suleiman at Mbusini West, after reciting poems at the 7th international Kiswahili symposium yesterday. Photo: ZVPO

SPORTS



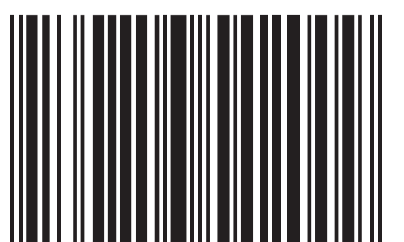
SIMBA SC, YANGA SET FOR HECTIC END TO 2023

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TEN HAG UNDER SCRUTINY AS MAN UTD FIGHT FOR CHAMPIONS LEAGUE SURVIVAL

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Treasury unveils tax ombudsman services

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tax policy and law, while TOST reviews administrative matters relating to tax objections or appeals in revenue administration.

The ombudsman legislation was passed in 2019 but it has taken upwards of four years to complete the regulations, to take up serious administrative complaints with presumed abuses.

This will help to foster fair and just tax collection and assist in ensuring a predictable business environment, where TOST addresses any complaint by a taxpayer regarding service, procedural or administrative matters arising in the course of administering tax laws by the TRA, he stated.

He said TOST operationalisation is a milestone in addressing challenges of doing business, as the entity is tasked with implementation of regulatory reforms to instil administrative checks and balances in tax administration.

Some complaints on tax administration could not be heard in tax revenue appeals procedure, thus in July 2019, the Tax Administration Act, Cap. 438 was amended as part of the Finance Act, 2019 to establish the Office of the Tax Ombudsman Service.

The ombudsman will review complaints and resolve them amicably through mediation or reconciliation, facilitating access by a taxpayer to dispute resolution pro-

cesses at TRA.

TOST will identify tax administrative issues related to customer service, or procedures and behavior which impact negatively on taxpayer interests, he said.

A tax complaint may arise from dissatisfaction or a grievance of the taxpayer resulting from non-compliance of procedures or TRA maladministration in administering tax laws and delay in releasing documents or assets seized during investigation of tax affairs, he asserted.

Other issues relate to delays in responding to a complaint submitted by a taxpayer; or nonresponse of letters or documents sent to TRA, as procedurally, a complaint must be submitted through lodging of a prescribed form.

The necessary information of the taxpayer and the complaint must be provided, where the regulations vest powers on the tax ombudsman to determine the complaint outcome judiciously and amicably through mediation, conciliation, or take further action as he may consider appropriate, he stated.

"Before determining the complaint, the tax ombudsman may require the revenue authority or any other person to provide certified information or documents relating to the subject matter of the complaint," he said.

TOST may require any person to appear before the ombudsman to testify upon any information, he added.



Masons build classrooms foundation at Muhoji secondary school located at Muhoji village in Musoma Rural District, Mara Region which is expected to be opened next year. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

Hanang avalanche: 'Hot mud' claims by villagers 'plausible'

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with the landslide and mudflows.

The volcanologist, a member of the International Association of Volcanology and Chemistry of the Earth's Interior (IAVCEI), when contacted about the mudflow disaster, said he had not heard of the incident, all the same critical of the 'lack of interest' on threats related to volcanic activity.

He directs an independent research outfit, Ecoscience Ltd, where

he recalls that years ago, he gave many lectures to local organizations in Tanzania but nobody seemed to be interested.

"So, what can one do? Only suffer the consequences when they arrive," he lamented, affirming intent to visit the country in the second quarter of next year, and most likely go over current or visible volcanic hazards. Authorities need to arrange the logistics for those interested, he specified.

The expert has in the past ad-

vised that a seismic net on Meru and Kilimanjaro mountains was a necessity for monitoring the still lumbering volcanoes, authoring "An Introduction to the Tectonics and the Volcanic of Northern Tanzania."

With its peak at 3,420 meters above sea level, Mount Hanang is the country's fourth highest mountain after Kilimanjaro, Meru and Loolmalasin, located in Ngorongoro district, Arusha Region, with Mount Hanang protruding above Lake Bal-

angida in Manyara Region.

Meanwhile the number of people who lost their lives from the mudflow disaster had reached 87 by the end of last week.

Dr Beeckmans affirms that the last major volcanic activity occurred upwards of 9000 years ago at Mount Meru, with major debris avalanches (landslides) documented by geological researchers which "remains extremely visible today on its eastern side of the mountain."

Samia to assist in Prof Jay's kidney transplant

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against kidney diseases, where the deputy minister relayed an appeal from the president to the general public to support efforts by the artist, aimed at ensuring that the general public was aware of the kidney disease challenge.

Underlining that Mlongazila and Benjamin Mkapa hospitals can do the transplant operation apart from Muhimbili, he said that if it happens that the technology is not found in the country the president will do what needs to be done to save the situation.

He praised the effort to initiate a public entity to help with treatment of the disease, noting that many people find it difficult to get money for transplant or other services related to the disease.

There is a charity walk with Professor Jay to raise money, while Muhimbili National Hospital executive director Prof Mohammed Janabi raising cash through his writings. He will get a contribution and support the new initiative to help those facing that acute problem, he said.

The minister promised to spare

his time to move with the Prof Jay Foundation to seek support from well-wishers supporting that initiative, affirming that it is important to have insurance cover for such needs.

The government has been offering amnesty peaking at 667bn/- yearly for treating kidney complications, he said, noting that universal health insurance is intended to ensure that we can collectively contribute.

The health insurance fund has spent 789bn/- in a year treating kidney and other non-communicable diseases, he pointed out.

Professor Jay was earlier hospitalised for 462 days at MNH, and yesterday he expressed gratitude to the public for support and solidarity, noting that the president has especially been close to the issue.

The foundation seeks to collect 800m/- and start with 50 patients where a person undergoes dialysis two times a week at a cost of 300,000/-.

Prof Janabi said most people don't take action until the disease reaches higher stages, which makes treatment costly and complicated.

Fuel costs: Bulk imports saving 501.13bn/- yearly

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ing storage facilities across the 22 terminals in all major ports," he said, noting that the terminals have a capacity of storing 1.31bn liters of petroleum products in total.

At the moment there are 11 storage tanks at Kurasini facility in Dar es Salaam with a storage capacity of 570m liters, he said, pointing at eight tanks at the Kigamboni facility storing 522m liters.

Mtwara port has two tanks storing 35m liters and Tanga port features one storage tank taking 182m liters, he stated, asserting that more storage facilities are needed as importation volumes keep increasing.

This calls for more extensive investment and joint ventures to attain sufficient storage capacity as it evolved, he said.

Bulk importation has contributed to slowing down tax evasion by some oil marketing companies, cutting frauds related to importation costs in the world market, he said.

Leakage during off-loading was similarly controlled, with 1100 metric tons of petroleum products prevented from leakage on a monthly basis, which adds to 4.16bn/- on the basis of current prices, implying 49.9bn/- being saved annually, he stated.

Oil tanker traffic at the ports waiting to off-load was cut down by bulk importation, with 425bn/- being saved on an annual basis from demurrage costs, he said.

Importing in bulk has contributed to the growth of on-transit petroleum products importation to 55 percent of total imports, from 33 percent in 2012, with a shift from 250,000 tons of petroleum products imported for transit to neighbouring countries on a monthly basis, to 650,000 tons this year.

At present, daily consumption of petrol countrywide stands at 5m liters, with 7.1m liters of diesel used daily, 610,000 liters of jet fuel and 47,000 liters of kerosene, he added.



CRDB Bank Plc chief operations officer Bruce Mwile receives ISO 20000-1:2018 Certificate of Excellence in IT services management from resident director, and head of business and investment policies at the British High Commission, Anna-Maria Mbwette who on behalf of the British Standard Institution held in Dar es Salaam yesterday. Looking on are CRDB Bank IT acting director Mwanaisa Kejo (L) and Business and Investment consultant from the British High Commission Godfrey Lwakatare. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

Govt happy with trial runs of electric locomotives on SGR

By Correspondent James Kandoya

TRANSPORT Minister Prof Makame Mbarawa has expressed satisfaction with trial runs of the new electric locomotives on the Standard Gauge Railway (SGR).

Speaking yesterday in Dar es Salaam after witnessing the trials of the first new electric engine which arrived from South Korea, Prof Mbarawa said the aim was to see how efficient the new engines were

working before they are officially used.

"We have tested brakes and electric systems by letting the engine go at a speed of 160km/h. I am satisfied that the engines are good and effective," said the minister.

Prof Mbarawa said the locomotives on the drive test is one of the 17 locomotives which were procured by the government from South Korea at 254bn/-. He said three more engines will arrive in the country

this December.

"The next step will be to connect the locomotive with the passenger wagons for trial runs to be conducted between Dar es Salaam and Morogoro," he added, calling upon the public to be calm as experts finalise testing of engines.

He said SGR will provide opportunities to the public and facilitate transportation services by reducing the travelling time whereas it will take only 90minutes from Dar

es Salaam to Morogoro while Dar es Salaam-Dodoma will take three hours.

One month ago, Tanzania received its first electric locomotive for the SGR project, marking an important milestone in the country's railway infrastructure development. The locomotive that arrived included 17 electric locomotives manufactured by the South Korean business-Hyundai Rotem Company (HRC).

Tanzania Railways Corporation (TRC) head of public relations unit, Jamila Mbarouk said the locomotives have an average speed of 160 km/h and can pull and power up to 14 passenger wagons simultaneously.



Flood water at the junction of Bibi Titi Mohamed and Morogoro Road in Dar es Salaam yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Imani Nathaniel

By Polycarp Machira, Dodoma

Annual headline inflation rate for month of November, 2023 stagnated at 3.2 per cent

THE annual headline inflation rate for the month of November, 2023 has stagnated at 3.2 percent as it was recorded for the month of October, 2023, the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) has revealed.

The stagnation of headline inflation, according to the bureau, explains that the speed of price change for commodities for the year ended November, 2023 remains the same as the speed that was recorded for the year ended October, 2023.

In a statement released yesterday, NBS said the overall index went up from 109.16 recorded in November, 2022 to 112.67 in November, 2023.

The statement said that food and on-alcoholic beverages inflation rate for November, 2023 decreased to 3.7 percent from 4.5 percent that was recorded in October, 2023.

At the same time, the annual infla-

tion rate for all items without food and non-alcoholic beverages for November, 2023 has increased to 3.0 percent from 2.6 percent that was recorded in October, 2023.

"NCPI has shown a relatively stable price movement from November, 2022 to November, 2023 ranging between 109.16 and 112.67 respectively," reads the statement.

In addition, annual headline inflation rates over the same period have also shown a stable trend that ranges between 3.2 percent and 4.9 percent.

However, the national consumer price index for November, 2023 has increased to 112.67 from 112.18 that were recorded in October 2023.

The increase of the overall index

is mainly attributed to price increase for some food and non-food items.

Some food items that contributed to an increase of the index include wheat grains by 1.4 percent, rice (2.0) sorghum (2.7), finger millet grains (2.1), sardines (1.0), sunflower oil (1.3) and fruits (1.6).

Others are percent, groundnut (0.7), vegetables (2.2), Irish potatoes (0.6), sweet potatoes (0.4), cooking bananas (4.1), spotted beans (0.9), soya beans (2.4), dried lentils (2.0), dry cassava (2.2) and cassava flour (3.0 percent).

On the other hand, some non-food items that contributed to an increase of the index include; alcoholic beverages and tobacco by 0.8

percent, clothing materials (0.1), garments for men (0.4), garments for women (0.6), garments for children (0.6), footwear for men (0.8) and footwear for women (0.4).

Others are products and materials for the maintenance of the dwelling (0.5), kerosene (8.8), firewood (5.7), charcoal (6.2), household furniture (1.0), recreation, sport and culture (0.6) and accommodation services in hotels, lodges, guest house (0.6).

In comparison with other East African countries of Kenya and Uganda, the latter recorded a slight decrease from 6.9 percent recorded in October, 2023 to 6.8 percent while Kenya recorded a slight increase of 2.6 percent in November, 2023 from 2.4 percent in October, 2023.

Contracts firms worth 1trn/- issued through e-procurement system

By Correspondent Marc Nkwame, Arusha

GOOGLE is among the international firms and foreign entities that have so far enlisted with the National e-Procurement System of Tanzania, it was revealed in Arusha.

Said the Chief Executive Officer of the Public Procurement Regulatory Authority (PPRA) Eliakim Maswi who pointed out that despite being new the National e-Procurement System of Tanzania (NeST) has so far enrolled 1046 procuring entities both national and international.

Maswi was speaking during the 3rd Annual General Meeting of the Association of Procurement and Supplies Professionals (APSP) held at the Arusha International Conference Center.

ment of all categories, the system was actually temporarily hired from Greek developers at the time when Tanzania was still working on its own system, which eventually became NeST.

"NeST is our own system built by Tanzanian experts and tailor-made to address all requirements of public purchases, tendering and payments," Maswi maintained.

As of now the system has registered 11,640 tenders, with more than 250 bids opening daily and a total of 356 submissions already on the platform.

Through NeST a total of 2802 contracts valued at nearly 1 trillion/- have been awarded to various firms in the country.

The Chairperson of the Association of Procurement and Supplies Professionals (APSP) Emmanuel Metusela Urembo said the new NeST platform has helped to prune out dubious tenderers.

"When things go wrong in the purchasing lines it was always the procurement and supplies officers who shouldered the blame, but in reality it is the suspicious tendering firms that used to muddle things up," said the APSP leader.

"Already 909 firms have started using the NeST system, but as we continue educating the mass and training other users, this number will gradually increase," explained Maswi, adding that this latest e-Procurement platform is even more transparent, fool-proof and totally shielded from hacks to guarantee safety among users.

The National e-Procurement System of Tanzania (NeST), is the latest electronic system which facilitates e-registration, e-tendering, e-contract management, e-payment, e-catalogue and e-auctioning processes.

According to the PPRA Executive Officer, NeST replaces the former Tanzanian National e-Procurement System TANEPS which was a web-based, collaborative system, developed in accordance with the requirement of public procurement laws, to facilitate public procurement processes in Tanzania.

But while TANEPS also offered a secure, interactive, dynamic environment for carrying out procure-

“
Already 909 firms have started using the NeST system, but as we continue educating the mass and training other users, this number will gradually increase

PUBLIC NOTICE



MR. ZADDOCK OJJO

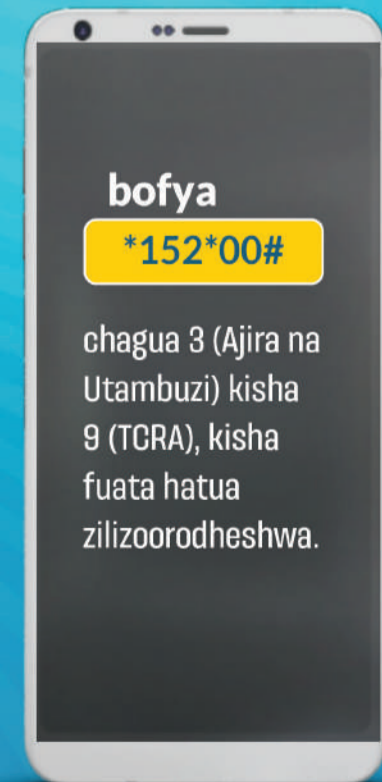
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TFS equips procurement officers with better skills

By Correspondent Marc Nkwame, Arusha

WITH more than 60 percent of the Tanzania Forestry Services (TFS) budgets going into purchases, the agency which manages 55 percent of the country's land, is setting out to periodically train its members of staff on issues of public procurement.

"Many of the scandals facing public institutions involve procurement deals and this has driven the Tanzania Forestry Services to ensure that all its employees involved in the accounting and purchasing department are fully equipped with proper knowledge," pointed out the TFS procurement and distribution manager, Fridolin Matembo.

Matembo conducted the training sessions that took place at the Ngorongoro Tower building in Arusha.

But when it comes to huge budgets streaming into procurement, it is not just within the TFS.

According to the trainer, more than 70 per cent of the National Budgets also goes into procurement, which means the sector usually handles large sums of money reaching trillions in each fiscal year.

"When it comes to purchases. This is a very sensitive department which requires highly qualified, bright, honest and diligent individuals," stated Matembo, adding that the electronic system of procurement is also proving to be effective in ensuring transparency.

He pointed out that TFS has been able to effectively undertake 92 per cent of the agency's procurement needs in the previous fiscal year.

Some of the major purchases that the management of the Tanzania Forestry Services has been able to accomplish include the procurement of 15 motor vehicles, as well as equipment, materials and services involved in the construction of 22 ranger posts, 8 storage warehouses for each of the TFS zones and 2 TFS staff quarters.

TPA plans to establish modern college to boost maritime skills

By Correspondent Theresia Victor

THE Tanzania Ports Authority (TPA) plans to establish a new modern Bandari college that will be a centre for excellence when it comes to issues related to seaport.

Speaking over the weekend during the Tanzania Port Authority Bandari College Dar es Salaam 22nd graduation ceremony, TPA Director General, Plasduce Mbossa said the current college is small and cannot accommodate the best infrastructures that are needed to train students.

"Our goal is to establish a new college in Kigamboni, Dar es Salaam; the new college will be a centre of excellence serving people from East and Central Africa," noted Mbossa, adding the plot will be procured this financial year.

"There are some programmes that are being taught here but the infrastructures are not enough; there is a shortage of buildings and equipment. We need new buildings to install modern equipment that will facilitate the learning process," he added.

He noted that the college's main goal will be to train students in aspects related to seaport such as cargo services. He said there will also be new courses to be introduced which include oil and gas.

"We want to make sure that we train our people on a large scale to ensure they can secure jobs in various sectors including oil and gas. Plans are also to train students from outside the country," said

Speaking during the three-day training in Arusha, Assistant Commissioner of Conservation at TFS, Emmanuel Wilfred, pointed out that there is the need for officials to periodically meet and review the performances of their respective departments as far as issues of purchases and payments are concerned.

According to Wilfred, all heads of Procurement Management Units must be involved in the periodical reviews and that all employees of TFS should be given opportunities to express their views, suggestions and even complaints.

TFS is an executive agency with a mandate for the management of national forest reserves both natural and plantations.

Established on 30th July, 2010 TFS aims at improving the delivery of public services related to sustainable supply of quality forest and bee products

Forest resources cover about 48.1 million hectares, equivalent to 55 percent of Tanzania mainland's total area of 88.3 million.



Many of the scandals facing public institutions involve procurement deals and this has driven the Tanzania Forestry Services to ensure that all its employees involved in the accounting and purchasing department are fully equipped with proper knowledge



Industries and Trade Minister Dr Ashatu Kijaji (2nd L) gives instructions to Saturn Rahmarullah Habib (L) managing director of HOWO vehicles assembling factory in Kigamboni, Dar es Salaam during her visit yesterday. Looking on is the company's co-managing director Chirag Tanna (R). Photo: Correspondent Jumanne Juma

Kijaji to grace a fashion gala for school uniforms

By Henry Mwangonde

MINISTER for Trade and Industries Dr Ashatu Kijaji is set to grace a fashion gala aimed at raising funds for school uniforms, targeting 5,000 underprivileged pupils.

The gala is an idea by renowned local fashion designer Ruth Urio who operates under the brand 'Jadore Couture' and is scheduled for 16th December, for the fifth time in a row.

She said the gala also involves fashion shows and exhibitions whose gatherings will be channeled to purchasing uniforms with the minister's presence expected to add significant value to the fundraising dinner. "The aim is to give back to society, and we believe that this event will have a profound impact on the lives of those we aim to assist. We extend an invitation to all well-wishers to participate in this noble cause," she said.

Ruth Urio, passionate about contributing to society, expressed that the initiative was born out of the observation that, despite government efforts, many school-going pupils still lack essential supplies like uniforms. The media is cordially invited to cover the event, where the presence of the Minister of Trade and Industries is expected to amplify its significance.

On November 27, 2015 the government issued a Circular which

marked the beginning of the Education and Training Policy 2014 and directed public bodies to ensure that secondary education is free for all children. This included the removal of all forms of fees and contributions.

However, whilst most fees are covered, including exam fees, some indirect costs still remain, including school and sports uniforms and learning materials such as exercise books and pens.



Barrick North Mara Mine General Manager Apolinary Lyambiko speaks at the climax of 16 days of activism against gender-based violence held at a national level at Nyamongo secondary school in Tarime District under the Barrick sponsorship. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

By Correspondent James Lanka, Rombo

KILIMANJARO Regional Commissioner (RC) Nurdin Babu has ordered District Commissioners in the region to collaborate with Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and human rights activists in addressing gender based violence (GBV).

The RC gave the order recently during the 16-Days of Activism against gender-based violence in Rombo District, calling for support in creating more awareness and promoting children's rights.

He explained that his office works in collaboration with other key stakeholders including religious leaders, Police Gender Desk officers and various Community-based organizations (CBOs) to create awareness on GBVs and other related cases.

Team up with NGO to curb GBV, RC Babu advises DCs

"As we all know, the government in collaboration with other stakeholders has introduced GBV trainings for different groups so that they can perform their duties well in particularly using police gender desks for reporting gender-violence cases in the country, where the victims could be more comfortable to express their concerns" the RC explained.

He appreciated the role played by the different governmental and non-governmental organizations in protecting human rights.

Kilimanjaro Regional Police Commander (RPC), Simon Maigwa

said 1,118 cases have been reported between January to October 2022, while the cases reported in the same period in 2023 are only 818, the indication that shows the rate of GBVs cases decreased in the region.

He said the police have embarked on providing skills on gender-based violence to the police officers in the region who will work in collaboration with the institutions to curb the problem.

"My appeal to all activists is to provide more education to society on how gender-violence affects their development activities, so

that they can be open to us when their rights are violated..." the law enforcer pointed out.

The 16 Days of Activism against Gender Based Violence commenced on November 25 and climaxed on December 10, every year.

The event that went together with series of activities including creating awareness through different speeches, poetry, songs, and dancing, among others was also attended by some officials from some NGOs including KIWAUKUKI, legal aid awareness led by SIMAUJATA and the Action for Justice in Society (AJISO).



Dar es Salaam resident clears a storm water drain which got clogged with sand, mud and leaves along Udoe/Livingstone Streets in Dar es Salaam yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Miraji Msala

By Guardian Correspondent, Hanang

Ulega hands over assorted items to mudflow victims

LIVESTOCK and Fisheries minister Abdallah Ulega has handed over various donations to the mudflow victims in Hanang District, Manyara Region.

Among the items handed over are 13 cows, 20 goats, 90 egg trays, 5m/- cash, 300 cartons of milk, Sembe flour, beans and salt.

The aid was handed over to the Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office (Policy, Parliament and Coordination), Jenista Mhagama on behalf of the flood victims.

The aid was provided by various stakeholders in the livestock sector and was handed over yesterday by minister Ulega who arrived in Hanang with the aim of offering

a helping hand to the victims of the disaster that destroyed the infrastructure and caused deaths.

Ulega said that they have received with great regret the incident of mud flow that occurred and caused the loss of lives of Tanzanians as well as the destruction of property and livestock.

"My ministry in collaboration with various stakeholders including Asas, Bajuta International, Dalberg International, Karie Kinana, Apoka, Tafma Afma, Tabrofa and TPBA, we

have prepared items and handed them over to the National Disaster Committee which will coordinate the best way to deliver them to the families and beneficiaries.

"We join with President Samia to express our condolences to all the families affected by this disaster that hurt the hearts of all Tanzanians. We will cooperate with the National Disaster Committee and the regional and district leadership to determine the damage to livestock infrastructure and restore it to its normal state,"

he said.

Minister Ulega emphasized that the government under President Samia Suluhu Hassan will continue to stand with all Tanzanians in all situations that befall them to ensure that the great leader of the country to bring them development is fulfilled.

Manyara Regional Commissioner, Queen Sendiga thanked the various stakeholders who continue to come forward to comfort them during this difficult period.

Morogoro RC underscores need for researchers and scientists to conduct studies on biotechnology

Beatrice Philemon

MOROGORO Regional Commissioner Adam Malima has underscored the need for researchers and scientists to conduct studies on biotechnology to facilitate production of pest-and disease-resistant seeds.

Speaking at the annual general meeting of Biotechnology Society of Tanzania (BST) in Morogoro over the weekend, Malima said such seeds are currently imported from Kenya, Malawi and other countries across the world.

The conference brought together experts and students from the University of Dar es Salaam (UDSM), Sokoine University of Agriculture (SUA), Muhimbili University of Health and Allied Sciences (MUHAS) and the Africa Agricultural Technology Foundation (AATF).

He said scientists and researchers from SUA, University of Dodoma, Nelson Mandela African Institution of Science and Technology and UDSM have made great contributions to the country's social and economic development.

"We have researchers with knowledge and skills similar to their counterparts in Kenya, Malawi, South Africa and Nigeria. Let us make use of them to upgrade our agriculture sector," he stated.

The RC advised the

government to open donors and allow local researchers and scientists to use the knowledge and skills they have to carry out research in the livestock and fisheries sub-sectors.

"There are still challenges of illegal fishing in Lake Victoria which are affecting fish stock. The livestock sub-sector can help most farmers to graduate from poverty, hence the need for researchers to also look at how to further develop the sector," he said.

Prof Peter Msola, BST Chairman said the country has developed and achieved sustainable economic development through investment in science and

technology.

He said that BST management is now conducting training to policy makers on biotechnology as well as its benefits to socio-economic development.

Prof Msola said that BST has been able to organize seminars and workshops for lawmakers and regional commissioners in seven zones, regulators, legal experts and media.

He said they continue to disseminate evidence-based information on modern biotechnology to various stakeholders and engage and advise the government in matters related to the safe and sustainable use of biotechnology.

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(UNDER LIQUIDATION)

NOTICE OF CREDITORS MEETING

A: NOTICE is hereby given to the general public that a creditor's meeting will be held on **19th December 2023, 12:00 PM at REX ADVOCATES** offices, called by **Dr. Alexander Thomas Nguluma** the Liquidator for LETSHEGO TANZANIA LIMITED (Trading as "Faidika Microfinance" herein after "the Company").

B: We further notify the general public as follows: -

(a) With effect from the publication of this Notice, no person is allowed to raise any claims against the company to the liquidator after this meeting.

(b) All creditors of the Company, both secured and unsecured, are required to attend the meeting as scheduled on 19th December 2023, 12:00 PM at REX Advocates offices, with full proof of their claims.

(c) All persons, corporate or natural, who hold any property or asset of the Company, are required to attend the meeting as scheduled on 19th December 2023, 12:00 PM at REX Advocates offices.

DR. ALEXANDER THOMAS NGULUMA

LIQUIDATOR,

LETSHEGO TANZANIA LIMITED

C/o REX ADVOCATES

REX HOUSE,

344 GHUBA ROAD/TOURE DRIVE

P.O. BOX 7495

DAR ES SALAAM

TEL: 255 22 221 1180-8

FAX: 255 22 211 1189

MOBILE: 255 784 784 949

Email: a.nguluma@rexattorneys.co.tz

217752801



WWF for a living planet

INVITATION OF BIDS FOR PROVISION OF SECURITY SERVICES TO WWF OFFICES HEADQUARTER DAR ES SALAAM

1. WWF Tanzania Country Office is a Non- Government Organization dealing with environmental protection in Tanzania since 1990, it has supported the Government of Tanzania in implementing various projects on Marine, Forest, Fresh Water, Energy and Wildlife. WWF global mission is to stop the degradation of the planet's natural environment and to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature, by:
 - i. conserving the world's biological diversity;
 - ii. ensuring that the use of renewable natural resources is sustainable and
 - iii. promoting the reduction of pollution and wasteful consumption

2. WWF Tanzania Country Office-Dar Es salaam is looking for a reputable Company to provide SECURITY SERVICES to its Office in Dar Es Salaam. The Company should be ready to start the service immediately in January 2024

3. Eligibility Criteria

- The Applicant security company should have been in the business of recruitment and supply of civilian security guards for minimum three years or more.
- The applicant Security Company Annual Turnover should not be less than TZs 20,000,000 during the time of application.
- The Applicant Security Company should be in possession of necessary license from government authorities for running security agency.
- The Applicant Security Company should have complied with all the legal provisions pertaining to his/ its line of business.
- The Applicant Security Company should have minimum 100 number of guards on monthly roll and should have supplied civilian guards to minimum three Companies or Organizations.
- The Security Company should have insurance of its business, in case of theft the Security Companies can be liable
- The Security Company shall provide dedicated security guards and any change in the personnel supplied should be made only in very exceptional circumstances. Replacement of security guards should be provided in the event of sickness or in any other circumstances, when the guard is absent, guard should be the same person and any change should be communicated to WWF before the change is made
- The expenses on uniforms, other accessories, rainy-wear, torch etc. shall be borne by the Security Company alone.

4. WWF Tanzania Country Office invites applications from competent companies, qualified, reputable, reliable and experienced local service providers who are willing to submit their tender to supply as per the above eligibility criteria

5. All applicants should direct their soft copy bids to the procurement e-mail at procurement@wwftz.org Deadline for submission is 10am, Tuesday 2nd January 2024)

6. Only soft copies will be received and opened and addressed to:

**Secretary,
Procurement Committee,
WWF Tanzania Country Office,
Plot 252 Kiko Street, Off - Mwai Kibaki Rd, Mikocheni
P.O. Box 63117, Dar es Salaam.**

7. WWF TCO reserves the right to accept or reject any or all the applications without assigning any reason thereof.

8. Late bids will not be opened and not read out in the procurement Committee. public at the bid opening ceremony shall not be accepted for evaluation irrespective of the circumstance.

217753001

“We aspire to see the youth complete secondary education and gain skills that prepare them for sustainable employment...”

Enabel launches project to empower girls and vulnerable boys in Kigoma

By Correspondent Valentine Oforo, Kigoma

ENABEL, the Belgian Development Agency, has unveiled a dynamic programme aimed at empowering girls and vulnerable boys in the Kigoma Region.

The project, dubbed "Wezesha Binti," is a comprehensive five-year endeavour, backed by a substantial budget of at least 25,000,000 EUR.

The initiative is the integrated and holistic intervention focuses on nurturing girls and young women in Kigoma districts, encouraging their foray into diverse entrepreneurship sectors with flexibility and innovation.

Enabel's resident representative in Tanzania, Koenraad Goekint, conveyed the agency's vision during the program's launch.

"We aspire to see the youth complete secondary education and gain skills that prepare them for sustainable employment. If they choose entrepreneurship, we want them well-versed in gender-balanced environments," he stated.

According to him, the objectives of Wezesha Binti include empowering young people, particularly young women, to thrive in a protective and gender-equal environment.

Also, the program aims to equip them with education and skills, creating opportunities for decent work in the Kigoma Region.

Goekint highlighted collaboration with relevant stakeholders to provide vocational training aligned with market needs, fostering a group of young entrepreneurs capable of generating employment opportunities.

"The vision behind the program is to reach out to girls and vulnerable boys aged between 14-19 within the targeted districts," Goekint emphasized.

He added that the primary focus is on ensuring these individuals have access to better secondary education and training.

Implemented through bilateral

cooperation between Belgium and Tanzania, the project revolves around secondary education, skills development, and gender equality for girls and young women aged 14-29 in the targeted districts of the Kigoma region.

Kigoma Regional Commissioner Thobias Andengenyne underscored the importance of the program's success in improving the lives of youth, particularly girls and young women aged 14 to 29 in the beneficiary districts. The districts benefiting from the initiative include Kibondo, Kasulu, Buhigwe, Kigoma Rural, and Kigoma Urban.

Furthermore, the launching of this programme was cemented by a special screening of the award-winning movie "Ndoto ya Samira," a captivating documentary that follows the life of a 21-year-old young woman navigating societal pressures on marriage while pursuing education.

Enabel is collaborating with the government of Tanzania, local authorities, the private sector, civil society, and various stakeholders.

Enabel is the Belgian development agency which implements the Belgian governmental cooperation policy and also works for the account of other national and international donors.

Enabel manages about 170 projects in more than twenty countries, in Belgium, Africa and the Middle East.

Local contractors seek govt assured payment scheme to expedite execution of their work

By Beatrice Philemon

LOCAL contractors have appealed to the government to come up with a guaranteed payment scheme to facilitate execution of their work.

Samuel Marwa, Tanzania United Contractors and Allied Services Association (TUCASA) Chairman made the call on Friday at the official launch of the association that took place at the University of Dar es Salaam.

"There is a need to have a specific guaranteed payment system that would be directly dealing with contractors payment issues. We face a lot of challenges in our construction works, and one of them is delayed payment," said Marwa, noting that delays in payments result in some contractors failing to complete their projects on time.

He said a research conducted by TUCASA indicates that 93 percent of local contractors have experienced delayed payments from their clients including the government while more than 92 percent of them claimed to have not been paid interest from their clients.

"We cannot say we are now helping local contractors to grow, if we are not taking serious actions to ensure they get their payments on time," he said, calling upon authorities to learn from Malaysia and the United Kingdom for what has been done to protect contractors.

He said that Malaysia has been able to formulate the Security of Payment Act (SOPA) and the UK has formed the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act (HGCR) that facilitates payments to contractors and services supplied in construction projects.

According to Marwa, the other challenges include tender evaluation criteria, collateral from banks and withholding tax. He said the challenges prevent local contractors from growing and benefiting from construction projects that they carried out within the country.

He said that TUCASA was established to help local contractors

to speak with one voice about challenges they face, supervise and manage all activities conducted by local contractors.

He said the association will also work with the government to ensure laws and policies that affect local contractors are reviewed and enable them to execute their duties efficiently.

He said in the 2022/2023 fiscal year, a total of 4141 construction projects worth 7.62trn/- were registered by the Contractors Registration Board (CRB), among them, 4,022 projects worth 3.1trn/- were under local contractors and 118 projects worth 4.5trn/- were managed by foreign contractors.

Ludovick Nduhiye, Ministry of Works, Deputy Permanent Secretary added that TUCASA will provide proper data on what is needed for their members as well as their requests to the government.

The Deputy PS noted that the government will collaborate with the association in finding solutions to the various challenges facing contractors, including payment delays.

"Through the association it will be easy for the government to know their challenges. The government will continue to come up with strategies that will assist local contractors to conduct their work in a conducive environment and benefit from the projects they implement," he said.

He called upon TUCASA management to come up with a comprehensive strategy that will be a road map for supervision of local contractors to ensure they abide by their work ethics and conduct their work professionally.

“We cannot say we are now helping local contractors to grow, if we are not taking serious actions to ensure they get their payments on time”

University sets to enroll 13,000 students by 2029

By Correspondent James Kandoya

ARDHI University has unveiled its future plan to increase the number of students enrolled from 6,171 students in 2023 to 13,000 students in 2029.

Prof Evaristo Liwa, ARU Vice Chancellor unveiled this recently in Dar es Salaam when speaking at the 17th graduation ceremony, whereby 1,148 students graduated in various programmes—degrees, master degrees and PhD.

He said that in the 2023/2024 academic year, ARU enrolled 2,169 students—911 being female and 1,258 being male.

He said the number for bachelor degree was (2,049) where female were 858 and male 1,191, masters degrees were 105 (female 48 and 57 male) and PhD were 15 (female 5 and male 10) an increase of 0.48 percent compared to the previous years.

Prof Liwa said that an increase in enrolment is not satisfactory compared to the varsity target adding that they collaborate with stakeholders to ensure the short-term and long-term plans are achieved.

He expressed gratitude to the government for allocating funds worth 67.7bn/- through Higher Education and Economic Transformation (HEET), the project funded by the World Bank.

"HEET project will improve infrastructure to extend the campus including establishment of new training programme and enrolment," he said.

According to him, when the project is completed it will enable the transformation and changes in curriculum, increase in

infrastructures such as classrooms, laboratories, studios and workshops and to increase equipment and build the capacity of working staff.

He said through HEET, ARU has built classrooms, equipment, laboratory, studio and the workshop.

The don said further that ARU has also reviewed and established new curricula in order to meet the market demand.

Ambassador Salome Sijaona, ARU governing council chairperson commended the varsity for the outstanding performance that enabled the varsity to be ranked 10th out of 120 in the Sub Saharan countries.

"Policy and guidelines from the government and varsity governing council have been major tools to ensure developmental decisions are made for the benefit of the varsity," she said.

She said the victory has promoted the varsity to promote its professional status among other higher learning institutions.

She said that South Africa has most universities in the top ten zones while Nigeria is most represented with 37 universities led by Covenant University placed in the seventh position.

About two thirds of the participating universities are public institutions and a quarter are private ones.

"The list is led by South African universities of Witwatersrand followed by Johannesburg," the report said.

"The rankings explore the impact of universities in sub-Saharan Africa in addressing some of the toughest challenges faced on the continent, the report added.



Azania Bank workers place their banner at the top of Mount Kilimanjaro to commemorate Tanzania's Independence on December 9. A group of 22 employees of the bank started climbing Mount Kilimanjaro on Tuesday 05 December and succeeded in reaching at the top of the highest mountain in Africa on December 9 December. The climb was aimed bringing Azania Bank services to the top of the tradition and boost tourism industry in the country, Photo: Guardian Correspondent



Land for Life project manager implemented by World Wildlife Fund (WWF), Reguli Marandu plants a tree at the Ketumbeine reserve forest yesterday. Left is Longido District Commissioner in Arusha Region Marko Ng'umbi. Photo: Correspondent Godfrey Mushi

By Correspondent Joseph Mwendapole

NEMC cautions citizenry on sea beaches

THE National Environmental Management Council (NEMC), has cautioned people to avoid the areas of sea beaches, rivers and lakes in order to avoid possible harm that may occur due to the continuous rains.

Menan Jangu, NEMC acting director general, sounded the warning yesterday in Dar es Salaam when speaking to journalists about the ongoing rains.

He said that people living on the side of the mountains should

also take great care as there is a possibility of landslides that can cause an impact on people's lives.

He asked the drivers of motor vehicles to take great care on the roads considering that the roads may not be safe.

Jangu also appealed to the owners of mining and mineral extraction sites in sewage ponds with toxic sludge and toxic rock storage areas to ensure that these areas do not cause harm to the community surrounding area.

Jangu said that for the past two months, various areas have been

affected by rains that have had a major impact, including the disaster that occurred in Katesh, Hanang District in Manyara Region.

In addition, he said information from the Meteorological Authority (TMA) shows that rains of different levels will continue in different areas of the country.

He said that the rains have caused flooding in various areas which has caused damage such as houses being destroyed and people losing their lives.

"Water infrastructure and roads in some areas have been affected

and have led to transport services being stalled, water safety has been affected due to the interaction of unsafe water resulting from floods and water for domestic use, thus causing infectious diseases including epidemic diseases," he said.

He said that another area to be considered is the infrastructure that stores sewage in mines adding that the ongoing rains have led to the relevant infrastructure being filled and others leaking toxic water and affecting the environment and even livestock.

JKT graduates through BBT urged to be honest

By Polycarp Machira, Dodoma

THE National Service (JKT) fresh graduates through the Building Better Tomorrow (BBT) have been urged to be honest, faithful, and hardworking, so as to foster social development activities.

Chief of JKT Major General, Rajab Mabele made the call during the closing of two months special training for some 533 youth beneficiaries of the BBT's first phase at Makutupora camp.

He said the first group of 533 trainees had received enough skills that will enable them to implement the government's efforts to empower youths in the country.

The group will join their colleagues in a total of 688 youths in the BBT-YIA who will start receiving their title deeds for their plots as well as being allocated to their new residential areas, ready to kick off the programme in mid-January next year.

He noted that there are a lot of opportunities in the agricultural sector, saying, "You have been trained, gained skills and now it is your turn to use tap opportunities in the agriculture sector".

According to Major Gen Mabele, the grandaunts got a rare opportunity to be trained by experienced trainers, calling on other institutions too to see the importance of such training.

Minister for Agriculture, Hussein Bashe while officiating at the colourful passing out ceremony, noted that after phase I, any young person aspiring to join the BBT-YIA programmes will be required to attend the national service compulsory training.

"The government would like to have a group of serious persons and I have already directed the Permanent Secretary in the ministry to ensure that the JKT training is made a compulsory requirement for anybody wishing to join the programme," he noted. The training was named: Operesheni Miaka 60 ya JKT (60 Years Operation of the National Service).

In January this year, the Ministry of Agriculture announced a call for grant and soft loan applications for youths and women in agriculture.

According to the BBT-YIA booklet, in the course of eight years, the programme aims to achieve 12,000 profitable enterprises across 12,000 villages in Tanzania. This is done by training 200,000 youths and engaging 20,000 young people in internship programmes, as well as mentoring and coaching 15,000 youth-led agribusinesses through incubation programmes.

Speaking at the passing out event of the 533 youths who attended a two-month military training, the Minister for Agriculture said the group has opened doors for others in the Agriculture sector.

According to him, the first phase of the programme which will kick off in mid-January next year will begin with 688 youths, among them 653 who have already received JKT training.

He said 155 others had asked for permission because of various reasons.

Paradigm initiative unveils its 4th short film-undersight

By Guardian Reporter

AS countries across the world commemorate Human Rights Day, Paradigm Initiative (PIN), a leading organisation advocating for digital rights and inclusion, has unveiled its 4th short film- 'Undersight.'

The unveiling of the film by PIN marks a pivotal moment in this year's global rights awareness, boosting collaborative efforts towards upholding fundamental rights and freedoms globally. This year's commemoration, under the theme Freedom, Equality and Justice for All, marks the 75th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR).

The movie is inspired by Paradigm Initiative's annual 2022 Londa report, which spotlights the state of digital rights and inclusion across 24 African countries. 'Undersight' follows the journey

of Oma, a brilliant computer programmer who creates revolutionary data collation software, which is in high demand.

The other short films the organisation has released are Training, Focus and Finding Diana.

Training Day, the first of the short films, is based on the organisation's 2019 Digital Rights in Africa report. It features the story of Jude, whose quest for work takes an unexpected turn. His first day at a tech firm takes an unprecedented turn, leaving him in a deep moral dilemma.

Focus tells the story of Mark, a budding young man who works for an enterprise facilitating financial pay across Africa. Caught up in his world and nonchalant about happenings around him, he soon experiences first-hand the dark side of internet shutdowns, censorship, surveillance, and cyber-attacks. He learns the benefit

of advocating for others, regardless of personal interest in their cause. The short film is inspired by the 2020 Londa report.

Based on the findings of the Londa 2021 report, Finding Diana is about Aisha Cooker, a 28-year-old journalist who stumbled upon a collection of personal data belonging to millions of citizens, including a governor she is investigating. In her quest for a better society, Aisha exposes the official, a move that puts her life in danger.

Screened at various events and platforms, PIN's short films have received extensive feedback from viewers who have cited the creativity, relevance, and impact they possess. The short films have also received multiple accolades and awards, with the latest being a Bronze recognition for Finding Diana at the 2023 Summit Creative Awards.



Tanzania National Parks acting Commissioner Mussa Kuji (R) speaks with Tanapa auxiliary soldiers participating in the mudslide rescue operation in Katesh, Hanang District. The institution donated 10m/- to the victims over the weekend. Photo: Correspondent Gift Thadey

DAWASA reminds customers of importance of paying water bills

By Correspondent Joseph Mwendapole

THE Water and Sanitation Authority (DAWASA) has reminded customers of the importance of paying water bills to facilitate more connection of the precious liquid.

DAWASA Communications Officer, Jamal Chuma, while speaking to residents of Vikawe Ward in Bagamoyo District, Coast region.

"Vikawe ward has been facing water challenges for a long time but now the service has arrived so I ask all customers to pay for water services on time," he said.

He urged the residents of Vikawe

located in Bondeni in Pangani ward to send their request to be connected with water services after the completion of the Makongo-Bagamoyo water project which was completed in April this year.

DAWASA Engineer, Jelson Charles called on the people in the area to continue sending their requests for water service connections as the service has now been improved after the completion of the project.

"The project has been completed and many streets in our ward are getting water services, we are still continuing with the exercise of connecting customers and the authority wants people who have not received service to come to our service offices to get service," said

Jelson.

Fikiri Saidi, a resident of Vikawe hailed DAWASA for bringing the water service in their area because they had experienced water woes for a long period.

"Those of us who lived here in Vikawe before this service know where we came from because water service was a myth, today water is available everywhere," he said.

The water distribution project from Makongo to Bagamoyo serves approximately 450,000 residents of Makongo, Goba, Salasala, Madale, Mivumoni, Wazo, Tegeta A, Mabwepande, Bunju, Mbweni, Mbopo, Vikawe, Mapinga, Kerege, as well as some areas in council of Bagamoyo Town.

Primary education officials urged to monitor their schools

By Correspondent Valentine Oforo, Dodoma

DODOMA Regional Education Officer Vicent Kayombo has called upon education officers to closely monitor their schools to ensure pupils are given exercises and home works in accordance with the relevant guidelines issued by the government.

In his remarks during the opening of a four-day special working session which attracted education officers, teachers and other relevant stakeholders to brainstorm how to advance and solve numerous challenges facing dispensation of education in primary schools within the region.

The timely meeting, which convened under the slogan of 'My Responsibility Is The Basis For Raising The Quality Of Education And Success In Dodoma' aimed to sensitize education officers and the public leaders to fulfil their responsibilities of tracing the whole teaching process in primary schools.

Participants also discussed whether teaching procedures were in line with the set regulations.

"Among the key areas that education officers must monitor in the schools include rolling out of exercises, which according to the guideline, there are at least 20 exercises. Teachers are required to correct them properly," he

expressed. Kayombo added that other tasks includes ensuring that pupils are given home works daily, at least for one lesson to motivate them to study while at home.

He underscored the need for teachers to ensure they do the best to strengthen student's physical health through sports exercises which include running.

During the vital forum, various topics were discussed including leadership and management of education activities, strategy for returning students to school, management of school projects, evaluation of education development as well as the draft education strategy for Dodoma Region.

TRAFFIC

TRAFFIC INTERNATIONAL EAST AFRICA

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP) TO ENGAGE A CONSULTANT TO EVALUATE THE IMPACT OF THE BEHAVIOR CHANGE ACTIVITIES AND DISSEMINATED MATERIALS IN KWAKUCHINJA WILDLIFE CORRIDOR AND NEARBY COMMUNITIES/DISTRICTS.

TERMS OF REFERENCE (TOR)

1. PROJECT OVERVIEW

USAID Tuhifadhi Maliasili Project, a five-year (2021 - 2026) conservation project aimed at addressing threats to animal movement corridors and biodiversity in Tanzania has subcontracted TRAFFIC to implement various activities under the project. TRAFFIC is a leading non-governmental organization working globally to ensure that trade in wild species is legal and sustainable, for the benefit of the planet and people. From year 2021 to 2023, TRAFFIC has undertaken a variety of activities including the social and behaviour change (SBC) intervention in Kwakuchinja Wildlife Corridor to reduce the demand for and consumption of illegal wild meat (i.e., bushmeat).

This Request for Proposals (RFP) invites expressions of interest from an individual or individuals interested to undertake the impact assessment of the social and behavior change intervention and disseminated materials aimed at reducing the demand for and consumption of illegal wild meat in Kwakuchinja Wildlife Corridor and nearby communities/districts.

2. OBJECTIVE

The overall purpose of this work is to evaluate impact of the social and behaviour change intervention and disseminated materials aimed at reducing the demand for and consumption of illegal wild meat in Kwakuchinja Wildlife Corridor and nearby communities/districts.

The objectives of the assessment are:

1. To assess relevant changes in awareness, attitude and behaviour attributed by the SBC intervention including disseminated materials and radio programs, and,
2. To evaluate the impact of the SBC intervention in communities living in the 15 villages within and adjacent to the Kwakuchinja Wildlife Corridor.

3. DELIVERABLES

- i. Data collection tools (include both qualitative and quantitative methods),
- ii. Pilot the data collection tools before actual data collection exercise (consider the sample size),
- iii. Participate in a feedback session to discuss results from the pilot session,
- iv. Conduct actual field data collection as per the workplan,
- v. Produce brief highlight report from the preliminary analysis and findings from the assessment.
 - i. Submit to TRAFFIC's contact person all the filled in questionnaires, data sheets and summary data from the interviews, and,
 - ii. Final comprehensive narrative report with not less than 15 pages, including one page summary of key findings and recommendations, and with graphics and pictures. The report should be accompanied by a PowerPoint presentation detailing summary of the main findings.
 - iii. Capture two success stories as part of the annex to the report.

4. SOCIAL AND BEHAVIOUR CHANGE INTERVENTION IN THE KWAKUCHINJA WILDLIFE CORRIDOR TO REDUCE THE DEMAND FOR AND CONSUMPTION OF ILLEGAL WILD MEAT

From January to August 2023, TRAFFIC collaborated with a Community Based Organization named COSITA (Community Support Initiatives Tanzania) and a Creative Agency named ABC Bros Company Limited, to enhance awareness and sensitization to communities living in Kwakuchinja Wildlife Corridor to reduce the demand for and consumption of illegal wild meat. The project conducted sensitization workshops to women in VICOPA and houses of worships; community mobilization meetings in 15 villages to 'divert demand' from the undesirable behaviour (i.e., illegal and/or unsustainable wild meat consumption) towards the desired behaviour (i.e., safe, sustainable, and legal consumption of wild meat). Further to that, sessions on alternative livelihood options instead of wildmeat, and food cooking competition, showcasing other food alternatives instead of wild meat, were provided to women groups.

To continue with awareness raising, radio talk shows and radio spots were aired through Radio Manyara FM and Orkonerei FM targeting communities living within and adjacent to the Kwakuchinja Wildlife Corridor to refrain from illegal hunting of wild animals (poaching) and consumption of illegally sourced wild meat.

5. TARGET AUDIENCE

5.1 The main target audience for this project were women through community groups such as Village Community Banking (Vicoba), houses of worship (Churches and Mosques), households and other women associations/platforms situated in 15 villages within and adjacent to the Kwakuchinja Wildlife Corridor. Through the groups, women were sensitized on the importance of consuming legally sourced wild meat, which is safe and sustainable for the ecosystem. The sensitization workshops encouraged the target audiences to spread the SBC messages within the Vicoba groups, at the household level, and to the entire community living in the Kwakuchinja Wildlife Corridor to speak up against the consumption of illegally harvested wild meat. The number of women reached through community groups were 180 direct and 360 indirect, religious institutions were 387 direct and 720 indirect, village assembly meetings were 643 women and through creative design workshop were 20. In total 1230 women have been reached directly throughout the project implementation period.

5.2 Other audience include village leaders, traditional leaders, faith-based leaders and other influential people situated in 15 villages within and surrounding the Kwakuchinja Wildlife Corridor. During community sensitization meetings, the leaders encouraged community members to spread the SBC messages and to 'divert demand' from the undesirable behaviour (i.e., illegal and/or unsustainable wild meat consumption) towards the desired behaviour (i.e., safe, sustainable, and legal consumption of wild meat).

5.3 The project also engaged 30 Training of Trainers (ToTs) to broaden their understanding on the importance of consuming legally sourced wild meat, which is safe and sustainable for the ecosystem conservation. The ToTs training highlighted important issues such as the legal consequence of illegally harvested wild meat and/or trophies. Illegal harvesting of wild animals is unsafe to human health, not friendly to the ecosystem, may cause disappearances of endangered animal species, and results in biodiversity loss. The ToTs capacity building emphasized on the associated risks of consuming illegally harvested wild meat such as zoonotic diseases; for example, rift valley, anthrax, rabies, ebola and legal consequences on illegal wild meat consumptions. After the capacity building workshop, the ToTs reached out to their fellow community members for wider awareness raising on reducing the demands for and consumption of illegal wild meat.

5.4 TRAFFIC engaged two reformed poachers (male and female) as messengers to encourage community members to reduce the demand for and consumption of illegal wild meat in Kwakuchinja Wildlife Corridor. Before reform, the two were involved in poaching and in custody of illegal wildlife products which led to legal charges. Messengers participated in all community sensitization workshops by sharing their testimonies to create broader and wider awareness of reducing the demand for and consumption of illegal wild meat.

5.5 The SBC intervention also engaged licenced wild meat traders in Babati town as the important link to the consumption of wild meat as traders' source and supply meat to the end consumers. The aim of involving licenced wild meat traders is to encourage consumers to obtain wild meat from reliable/approved sources and discourage the illegal/ unlicenced wild meat traders.

6. PROJECT GEOGRAPHIC COVERAGE

Kwakuchinja Wildlife Corridor (KWC) is located in northern Tanzania. The corridor connects Lake Manyara National Park to Tarangire National Park and facilitates wildlife movements between these two protected areas. It is an essential corridor for the movement of a variety of wildlife species such as antelopes, buffaloes, elephants, lions, giraffes, warthogs, and zebras.

It comprises of 15 villages that cut across two districts namely Babati district council in the Manyara region and Monduli district council in the Arusha region. The villages are: Vilima Vitatu, Minjingu, Olasiti, Kakoi, Sangaawe, Mwada, Ngoye, Maweni, Magara, Manyara and Mayoka (under Babati district council) and Oltukai, Mswakini Juu, Mswakini Chini and Naitolia (under Monduli district council). The target area for this work was restricted to all 15 villages.

Major tribes: Major tribes in these two districts include the Barbaig, Iraqw, Mbugwe, and Maasai who live within and near the Corridor.

Major economic activities: Livestock keeping and small-scale agriculture.

Other small activities: Retail business and services, tourism activities, fisheries and beekeeping.

7. SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

1. Must be an individual or individuals operating in Tanzania. For a registered company, a proof of incorporation must be included,
2. Must be fluent in oral and written English and Kiswahili,
3. Must have at least 7-10 years of experience in social science research and assessment,
4. Work experience in the environment and the wildlife-related sector is an advantage,
5. Must include information on suitability for the work, including examples of relevant past work,
6. Must have personnel with relevant experience and qualifications to implement the proposed work,
7. Must have experience in working with local government agencies and other community-based stakeholders,
8. Must be deadline-oriented, with high standards for quality,
9. Must be able to coordinate/collaborate with beneficiaries of the project,
10. Must attach two CVs of Key Personnel belonging to the Company or Organization,
11. The indicative budget for the initiative is USD 10,000.00,
12. The application must include the following documents:
 - i. Proposal on how you would undertake the assessment,
 - ii. Work Plan - giving the estimated number of days for the assessment,
 - iii. Gantt Chart showing the proposed timeline, and,
 - iv. Budget detailing the professional fees, transport and daily subsistence allowance/Per diem for the personnel involved.

Note: TRAFFIC will assess the eligibility and capacity of the shortlisted applicants in compliance with donor regulations.

Please submit your application by 15 January 2023 at 5:00PM via traffictz@traffic.org

For more information about TRAFFIC visit www.traffic.org or call +255 745 067 566

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The Guardian Limited Key Contacts

Managing Editor: WALLACE MAUGGO
Circulation Manager: DENNIS NTAITA

Newsdesk

News Editor: LUSEKELO PHILEMON
0757154767
General line: 0745700710
E-mail: guardian@guardian.co.tz

Advertising

Mobile: 0677020701
E-mails: advertise@guardian.co.tz
Website: www.ippmedia.com
epaper.ippmedia.com

Regulating fares: Fairness, market forces clash as operators push hikes

ENFORCEMENT agencies are putting the brakes on upcountry bus operators trying to charge the fares they want instead of what is permitted, with the regulatory agency talking about holding 37 buses whose crew were in the process of overcharging and issuing no tickets. For one thing, the situation around the cost of transport or rather commuting and upcountry buses has been rather timid, with muted disappointment on the fare hikes in social media. The hikes aren't disruptive to commuters, and in the city it has added a burden to conductors to find coins, etc.

Using the 1,000/- bank note as an indicator of the rising cost of living, it is evident that the gaps of the well to do and the poor are intensifying, with a rock bottom stratum increasingly finding life to be overly difficult. Up to 2013 where the basic fare was 300/-, one would climb buses three times and remain with a small change, then it shifted to 400/- basic fare, where the three trips were cut to two, with a sort of bigger change. Then last year the fares rose to 500/- and the change was drawn into the two buses fare, and now 1,000/- is fare for one trip and yes, bigger change.

Since the competition is higher in commuter buses, people have seen conductors skipping to demand forcefully the 100/- increase so long as one gives a 500/- coin as earlier, or returning 500/- to a passenger as roadside coin changers aren't always available.

Upcountry buses are different as they are at any rate of varying quality and more so, departure times or booking feasibility. The regulator was complaining that electronic ticketing was not being used; it is a fiat rather than technical

need.

Electronic billing is best when the operator himself needs that sort of instrument to control sales or flow of goods, for instance in a supermarket. When the sales are easy to control manually, the use of additional instruments starts to be seen as a burden, as it impacts, marginally in the least, on sales operations. Using electronic ticketing narrows options for bus operators, and when it comes to verifying tickets in the bus, a handwritten receipt is far more reliable than an electronic slip, as if some intruder duplicates or issues unrecognized slips, the argument could be long.

Demanding indicative cap fares on a route looks ideal for purposes of fairness to the customer, the regional travel client but that demands buses lining up on a queue and passengers enter, as with commuter buses. That way no discrepancy in fares charged comes up, but when would be travelers seek out a particular bus company, it implies they know its services and seek it out. Paying an extra 5,000/- or even 10,000/- depending on the booking situation is not an issue; regulators think it is.

One feature of the way bus operators issue tickets, on the basis of remarks by regulatory agency officials, is that they verify their handwritten tickets first and then transfer the numbers or details to electronic data conveyor. Obviously the latter effort is meant to comply with the regulation while their own verification is manual, in which case the regulator prefers just one entry. But admittedly the market has its rules, and if it is up to an investor to purchase quality buses or render good services to attract regular clients, excess regulation spoils the 'broth.'

Restoring varsity debates positive, even as return has taken too long

DEBATES at the University of Dar es Salaam have traditionally been noticeable public events, showing as in a barometric context the temperature, feelings at a section of society which, for good or for worse, has a special role in society. With the number of universities rising by the day, the UDSM environment and taking note of what the camps feels remains important to gauge the public mood, and sentiments among the youth. But is not as strategically important as in the past.

The discussion that brought back the tradition was the 62 years of independence, where veteran debater Prof Issa Shivji singularly regretted the collapse of debates earlier. Part of the problem is that the university as a community was thrown into fragmentation, where its elite, academic dons basically consulting for public agencies and the government, and some with civic organisations. They often are appointed to top public offices, thus they scarcely share community or student feelings in particular, characterized by class despair, holding top officials to book.

This way the main campus has for years been characterized by campus activism that is wholly aligned to one part of the political theatre, and the return to debating culture attracted the don (a bridge builder in the debate on constitution making) and some opposition party officials. How far the new political situation will play out in university debates is unclear, but there are chances it could be more balanced rather than all or nothing rhetoric of die-hard critics. It is has taken

long to restart but it may pick up as generations have changed; the student generation is different.

The veteran don well into his retirement years, airing a view resonating with his younger days, asking the community there, and predominantly its staff as it were, to take an affirmative stand as well as being courageous, "not every time to surrender." Those knowing the Hill realise that what the don says is surrender is a form of apathy, not seeing the use of debates which no longer resonate with reality, that is, of a competitive, 'debating' political system. The community ought to have heard the 4Rs of President Samia, cautioning that freedom be used rather wisely.

An opposition member of its party secretariat said holding debates needs to be protected in law so that 'someone else doesn't come around and removes it.' This is quite in tune with traditional campus sentiments tied with human rights activism, as it excels in stating its legal demands and never addresses the socioeconomic conditions of its feasibility. Many UDSM intellectuals have never realised a basic maxim in democracy in that the private sector ought to be much larger than the state sector, and employment being largely assured, for democracy to work.

The state sector is far too big and controlling it too high a political prize to nurture a real democracy, so if they won't seek economic reform they will be surrendering. When an economy is inefficient, keeping order demands a high dose of patriotism than human rights activists are ready to believe, taking democracy for granted. Democracy has to be 'built,' not just 'given.'



Global civil society launches manifesto for ethical AI

By Bibbi Abruzzini and Nina Sangma

WE, a global coalition of over 50 civil society and human rights organisations from over 30 countries have co-developed the "Civil Society Manifesto for Ethical AI", a groundbreaking initiative aiming to steer AI policies towards safeguarding rights and decolonising AI discourse. We question, and we are not the only ones: whose voices, ideas and values matter in AI?

"If Silicon Valley was a country it would probably be the richest in the world. So how genuinely committed is Big Tech and AI to funding and fostering human rights over profits? The barebones truth is that if democracy was profitable, human rights lawyers and defenders including techivists from civil society organizations wouldn't be sitting around multistakeholder engagement tables demanding accountability from Big Tech and AI. How invested are they in real social impact centred on rights despite glaring evidence to the contrary?," asks Nina Sangma, of the Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact, a regional organization founded in 1992 by Indigenous Peoples' movements

with over 40 members across 14 countries in the Asia-Pacific region.

We are currently at a critical juncture where most countries lack a comprehensive AI policy or regulatory framework. The sudden reliance on AI and other digital technologies has introduced new - and often "invisible" - vulnerabilities, and we have just seen the tip of the iceberg, literally melting from the effects of climate change.

Some things we have already seen though: AI is still a product of historical data representing inequities and inequalities. A study analyzing 100+ AI-generated images using Midjourney's diffusion models revealed consistent biases, including depicting older men for specialised jobs, binary gender representations, featuring urban settings regardless of location, and generating images predominantly reinforcing "ageism, sexism and classism", with a bias toward a Western perspective.

Data sources continue to be "toxic". AI tools learn from vast amounts of training data, often consisting of billions of inputs scraped from the internet. This data risks to perpetuate harmful stereotypes and often contains toxic content like pornography, misogyny, violence, and bigotry. Furthermore,

researchers found bias in up to 38.6% of 'facts' used by AI.

Despite increased awareness, the discourse surrounding AI, like the technology itself, has predominantly been shaped by "Western, whiteness, and wealth". The discrimination that we see today is the result of a cocktail of "things gone wrong" - ranging from discriminatory hiring practices based on gender and race, to the prevalence of algorithms biases.

"Biases are not a coincidence. Artificial intelligence is a machine that draws conclusions from data based on statistical models, therefore, the first thing it eliminates is variations. And in the social sphere that means not giving visibility to the margins," declares Judith Membrives i Llorens, head of digital policies at Lafedec.cat - Organitzacions per la Justícia Global.

"AI development isn't the sole concern here. The real issue stems from keeping citizens in the dark, restricting civic freedoms and the prevalence of polarisation and prejudice on several dimensions of our societies. This results in unequal access, prevalent discrimination, and a lack of transparency in technological processes and beyond. Despite acknowledging the potential and

power of these technologies, it is clear that many are still excluded and left at the margins due to systemic flaws. Without addressing this, the global development of AI and other emerging technologies won't be inclusive. Failure to act now and to create spaces of discussion for new visions to emerge, will mean these technologies continue to reflect and exacerbate these disparities," says Mavalow Christelle Kalhoule, civil society leader in Burkina Faso and across the Sahel region, and Chair of the global civil society network Forus.

The Civil Society Manifesto for Ethical AI asks, what are the potential pitfalls of using current AI systems to inform future decisions, particularly in terms of reinforcing prevailing disparities?

Today, as EU policymakers are expected to close a political agreement for the AI Act, we ask, do international standards for regulating machine learning include the voice of the people? With the Manifesto we explore, challenge, disrupt, and reimagine the underlying assumptions within this discourse but also to broaden the discussion to incorporate communities beyond the traditional "experts." Nothing about us, without us.

Combating corruption to address the triple planetary crises

By Marcos Athias Neto

THE triple planetary crisis of climate crisis, biodiversity loss, and pollution is a threat to the well-being and survival of millions of people around the world. Corruption, in its many forms, worsens these multiple crises.

From illegal logging and wildlife trafficking to bribery in environmental permits, to lax enforcement of regulations, corruption inflicts severe damage on our already affected fragile ecosystems.

In the forestry sector alone, close to 420 million hectares of forest have been lost between 1990 and 2020 as a result of deforestation enabled by corruption.

Climate change interventions are currently worth US\$546 billion and, although difficult to measure accurately, Transparency International estimates suggest anywhere between 14 and 35 per cent of climate action funds have been lost to corruption, and only in 2021, over 350 land and environmental defenders were murdered.

UNDP has been recognizing and championing Indigenous Forest Defenders like Nemonte Nenquimo, the Indigenous Waorani activist from Ecuador, co-founder of the Alianza Ceibo - UNDP Equator Prize winner of 2014, named among the 100 most influential people of 2020 by the Time Magazine. There are 275 Equator Prize winners many of whom are defending land rights.

Anti-corruption is a development

financing issue. Corruption siphons off funds from urgently needed climate financing and the green energy transition. Effective, transparent, and inclusive governance mechanisms and institutions are prerequisites for combating corruption and will help not only ensure that financing achieves its maximum impact, but also contributes to the trust required for the releasing of additional funds.

If we can tackle corruption, we can improve our efforts to successfully protect our environment. However, we must act now, and we must work together. Anti-corruption tools, including those powered by digital advancements, have the potential to help countries reach their climate goals.

Resources lost in illicit financial flows and to corruption each year can be used in targeted investments in governance, social protection, green economy, and digitalization. This is the 'SDG Push' scenario which would prevent as many as 169 million people from being driven into extreme poverty by 2030.

Governance mechanisms must be in place
The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is working to promote the investment of over \$1 trillion of public expenditure and private capital in the SDGs. A portion of these investments are likely to be directed towards climate finance.

In Sri Lanka and Uganda, UNDP is using data and digital monitoring tools to tackle illegal environmental practices and promote integrity

and transparency in environmental resource management.

UNDP has also recently launched its Energy Governance Framework for a Just Energy Transition to contribute to achieving more inclusive and accountable energy transitions. In Eswatini, UNDP is supporting inclusive national dialogues to identify mini-grid delivery models and clarify priority interventions for an inclusive and integrated approach to off-grid electrification.

A mini-grid delivery model, determined by the national government with active multi-stakeholder engagement, is the cornerstone of a country's over-arching mini-grid regulatory framework. It defines who finances, builds, owns and who operates and maintains the mini-grids.

Technology must be promoted

To ensure that crucial financial resources are used for their intended purposes and are not manipulated by corruption, we must ensure that transparency mechanisms exist. With appropriate safeguards in place, technology can be a game-changer for addressing corruption. Big data analytics, mobile applications and e-governance systems are valuable tools in the prevention, detection and investigation of corruption.

In Ukraine, a new e-platform supported by UNDP is increasing transparency in procurement. UNDP in partnership with the EU and the National Agency on Corruption Prevention has also developed a new basic online course to train anti-

corruption officers.

Partnerships against corruption must galvanize global efforts

UNDP and the Oversight and Anti-Corruption Authority of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (Nazaha) are jointly launching a new global initiative for measuring corruption at the 10th Session of the Conference of the States Parties to UN Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC), hosted by the United States in Atlanta from 11 - 15 December 2023.

The objective of this new partnership is to strengthen international cooperation to fight corruption and enable countries to track and monitor progress on tackling corruption. This new initiative will develop evidenced-based indicators to evaluate progress and efforts of countries to end multiple forms of corruption.

It will identify policy recommendations and reforms to enable countries to achieve national anti-corruption objectives, as well as address the SDG6 targets for reducing corruption and illicit financial flows.

UNDP remains committed to being united against corruption and to advance the spirit and letter of the United Nations Convention Against Corruption by driving new efforts to measure corruption, with our partners from the UN and beyond.

The Anti-corruption Day is commemorated on 9 December, along with the 20th Anniversary of UNCAC.

Marcos Athias Neto is UN Assistant Secretary General and Director of UNDP's Bureau for Policy and Programme Support.

Africa's negotiators urged to leverage on African science at COP28 high table

DUBAI

AFRICAN scientists and researchers are concerned that the data shows that the continent is being cornered by the spiraling effects of climate change, that the real impact of climate devastation is yet to unfold, and that the region is on the cusp of more severe and catastrophic consequences.

Given Africa's high exposure and fragility to extreme and drastic changes in weather patterns, coupled with a low adaptive capacity, fears and concerns are rife that a failure to capture the full devastating picture on the ground could compromise Africa's negotiating position at COP28 currently underway in Dubai.

In a session titled 'African Science for the African Position,' delegates heard about the mismatch between existing data and the needs on the ground and why it is critical to highlight climate change research from the continent.

"The focus of this conversation is really about data needs; the role of science from Africa but also across the global South to feed into the negotiating positions is overlooked. There is a need to improve our data and our social science in a way that provides accurate and comprehensive evidence for decision-making. Across climates—and of course here we are focusing on the UN-FCCC—we are starting to look at critical inter-linkages around biodiversity, the ocean, livelihoods, justice, and equity," said Laura Pereira, associate professor at the Global Change Institute at Wits University in Johannesburg and researcher at the Stockholm Resilience Centre at Stockholm University.

Dr Odirilwe Selomane, from the Department of Agriculture Economics, Extension, and Rural Development at the University of Pretoria, reflected on progress at COP28.

"Some of the issues that stood out are that there is a lack of nature-based solutions for funding on the one hand, and on the other hand, listening to those with nature-based solutions speak about a lack of funding, especially biodiversity financing. This disconnect can be bridged through scientific baselines that show what is happening on the ground to inform decision-making while designing responsive or climate action projects for Africa."

Further emphasizing the need to "design data collection tools that can accurately capture the continent and all its ecosystems. When we look at the global soil degradation map, for instance, is it reflective of our continent and ecosystems, and how do we then improve these maps so that they give us an accurate reading of our contexts? One of the most effective and efficient approaches is to lean on African-centered science and research to give us the data needed to make decisions that match the needs on the ground."

An open letter by 50 African scientists to African Heads of State and Government in light of COP28 reads,



African researchers want African issues to be front and center as the continent comes to grips with climate change-induced impacts. Credit: COP28/Neville Hopwood

in part: "African citizens are feeling the heat and experiencing the drought, the instability in food supply and prices, the boiling oceans, and the impact of dwindling forests. The world is on fire, quite literally. Climate floods, cyclones, and wildfire events are becoming less predictable and more intense, destroying lives and displacing tens of thousands as the climate crisis deepens. We are in the midst of a human-made climate crisis, one that will get much more catastrophic if we fail to act."

The letter further spoke about how

alarming levels of gas emissions are increasing temperatures on the continent, compounding the multiple challenges facing the continent. Between 1900 and 2000, the continent warmed by 2 °C in some regions. Stressing that Africa's ten hottest years since records began have all been since 2005.

At the current pace of greenhouse gas emissions, the projected annual mean temperature increase for Africa is approximately 6 °C by the end of the 21st century, the scientists warned. In the coming years,

climate heat waves will occur more often, at higher intensities, and last longer as greenhouse gas emissions increase.

Climate change is already multiplying threats to life on the African continent with record-breaking food insecurity and water stress levels. Poor health indicators and economic insecurities are of particular concern.

As the end beckons for the COP28 summit, these scientists are urging African leaders and negotiators to keep their eyes firmly on the African agenda and particu-

larly focus their attentions on key areas: phase out fossil fuels, enforce the polluter's pay principal, protect and conserve Africa's biodiversity, and not be distracted by fraudulent carbon markets and biodiversity credit markets.

Against this backdrop, more than USD 186 million of new financing for nature and climate towards forests, mangroves, and the ocean has already been announced during Nature, Land Use, and Ocean Day. This funding builds on the USD 2.5 billion mobilized to protect and restore nature during COP28's World Climate Action Summit.

For African leaders, this is a step in the right direction. Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, President of the Republic of Ghana, said, "The COP28 Presidency, the UAE, has demonstrated real action for nature, one that is backed by significant financial commitments. The journey to 1.5°C, as we all know, is not possible without nature, and this level of action must be expedited to achieve real progress by COP30."

From a scientific point of view, the move is similarly welcome; reversing nature loss can provide upwards of 30 percent of the mitigation action needed to keep 1.5°C within reach by 2030. Nature has a crucial role to play in reducing climate-related hazards, such as floods and fires currently ravaging poor and vulnerable countries in Africa.

Nature preservation can also provide Africa with the answer to unemployment, as it can contribute a potential USD 10 trillion worth of new business opportunities and provide almost 400 million new jobs.

IPS UN Bureau Report

HIV and forced sterilisations: How four Kenyan women found justice

By Dorcas Wangira

FOUR women living with HIV in Kenya have each been awarded \$20,000 (£16,000) in damages for being sterilised without their informed consent. They have spoken to the BBC about their experiences.

The women fought a nine-year legal battle - and their names have been changed to protect their identities, which were not revealed during the case at the High Court.

"It has ruined my life," Penda told the BBC about the surgery she underwent shortly after having twins at the state-owned Pumwani Maternity Hospital in the capital, Nairobi.

The procedure is called a bilateral tubal ligation (BTL) - when a woman's fallopian tubes are cut, tied, burned, clipped or partly removed, closing them and preventing future pregnancies.

The father of her twins left before they were born. Her husband had died a few years earlier of HIV-related complications. She is distressed that she will never find another partner: "Who will marry me if they know I can't give birth?"

Penda knew she was HIV-positive when she became pregnant so had sought medical advice. At the time, pregnant women with HIV were encouraged to give birth by caesarean section and to not breastfeed their babies to prevent mother-to-child transmission of the virus.

These are expensive routes to go down for many from poorer backgrounds. Nowadays most maternity care in Kenya is free. But it has not always been the case.

After giving birth, Penda says she was told to exclusively use formula milk. She says she was assured she was entitled to get free food for herself and the babies, but only if she showed proof that she was using family planning.

"As a single mother, that shocked me. I was already struggling with stigma. I didn't know what else to do," she says.

To help Penda obtain this proof, the hospital nutritionist referred her to a community health worker who told her to report to a clinic where personnel from Marie Stopes, Kenya's largest and most-specialised sexual reproductive health organisation, ran a family planning programme.

Here Penda was given a form, which she signed, to have a BTL. As she cannot read, she says she did not know she had given her consent to be sterilised.

Neema related a similar experience at the Pumwani, which is Kenya's largest public maternity hospital.

She already knew her positive HIV status by the time she was expecting her fourth child. She was worried about infecting her unborn baby.

She says she was told by a nutritionist there that if she did not agree to undergo a BTL after giving birth, she would not qualify to receive portions of cooking oil porridge and maize-meal flour, and that her maternity



health bill would not be paid.

On the day of her delivery, before being taken to theatre, Neema said the nurse on duty advised her of the need to plan her family since she already had three children.

The nurse told her to undergo a BTL and she was given a piece of paper to sign agreeing to both a caesarean and the tubal ligation.

"I didn't know what it meant. I thought it was ordinary family planning," Neema told the BBC.

"If they had explained the procedure properly to me, I wouldn't have signed that paper."

In Furaha's case she remembers no discussion about family planning before she had her third child at the Pumwani Maternity Hospital.

She only recalls consenting to a caesarean section to prevent her from infecting her newborn with HIV - and then waking up in unbearable pain.

A nurse explained that she had also undergone the sterilisation procedure.

"I was too afraid to tell my husband what happened. I kept it to myself," she told the BBC.

"When he found out, he became a total

drunkard. He died after he was hit by a moving vehicle. These organisations destroyed my home."

A fourth woman, Faraja, told the BBC she caved into pressure to undergo the BTL two months after delivering her third child.

As she was HIV-positive, she had been cautioned against breastfeeding her newborn. But without proof that she was using family planning - in particular a BTL - she was not able to receive free baby formula milk.

"I was desperate. My husband had left. My rent was due. What could I have done?" she asks.

Faraja told the Kenyan High Court that she attended a clinic where she underwent the procedure.

She was given a form to sign, but says that because she cannot read, she did not understand what she was signing. No-one explained to her that she had agreed to be sterilised, and she says she was not offered alternative family planning.

It is because health professionals did not explicitly explain what these women had agreed to that they won their case.

The High Court of Kenya ruled in September that this use of BTL without in-

formed consent was a violation of the women's fundamental rights, including the right to establish a family.

The damages they are to receive will be paid jointly by Marie Stopes International and the Pumwani Maternity Hospital as well as the medical charity Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), which gave family planning advice.

Allan Maleche, executive director of Kelin Kenya, an HIV-rights group that represented them, says the judgement is very significant for HIV-positive women in Africa who have experienced pressure to undergo sterilisation.

"For a very long time, cases that were filed in South Africa, in Namibia, had the difficulty making the link between the tubal ligation and the HIV status. The significance of this case is that it reaffirmed the fact that it is wrong," he told the BBC.

A Marie Stopes spokesperson in Kenya told the BBC by email that the case had been a long and difficult ordeal for all those involved.

"We welcome a resolution after nearly a decade. Informed consent has always been integral to everything we do.

"As a member of the global reproductive rights community, we understand the

stigma that people living with HIV continue to face. We will continue to undertake rigorous training and monitoring to ensure that the highest standards are adhered to, and we will never be complacent about the care we deliver."

MSF France maintains that it never performed, nor is it currently performing, medical sterilisations in Kenya. It says if the patient opts to undergo a BTL, its role is to counsel, to inform and refer them to selected facilities.

"We acknowledge the part of the responsibility for what happened to the women and restate as a medical organisation, our commitment to the patient informed consent process," Dr Hajir Elyas, MSF's country director in Kenya, told the BBC.

The Pumwani Maternity Hospital did not respond to the BBC's invitation to comment.

There is no accurate data about how many women living with HIV in Kenya have been sterilised without their informed consent.

However, a 2012 study carried out by the African Gender and Media Initiative - Robbed of Choice - documented the experiences of 40 women who had been coerced into sterilisation. Of these, only five successfully filed a constitutional petition.

Mr Maleche says the women chose to file constitutional petitions, rather than criminal cases, because this type of litigation has a bigger impact.

"A criminal case would only either lead to imprisonment, a payment of fines. There would be no benefits that would go to the women in terms of monetary compensation," he says.

But the women say their case was not just about compensation. They say the High Court judgment has validated their demand for justice.

Their lawyer, Nyokabi Njogu, agrees: "How do you compensate for a compounding violation?"

"They just wanted an acknowledgement that this happened. They don't want women who have suffered like them to continue in that suffering."

DR Congo election 2023: What you need to know

By Ousmane Badiane

NEARLY 40 million Congolese voters go to the polls for the next presidential election on 20 December with President Félix Tshisekedi seeking a second, and final, five-year term in office.

The Democratic Republic of Congo is the largest country in sub-Saharan Africa. Spanning an area the size of Western Europe with an estimated population of over 100 million people, the country is rich in natural resources.

Despite some calls for the election to be postponed, the head of the electoral commission is confident that everything will be ready in time.

Why does this election matter?

It holds 70% of the world's reserves of coltan, a highly-prized mineral used to make mobile phones, plus 30% of the world's diamonds and large quantities of cobalt, copper and bauxite.

Although its vast mineral wealth and huge population represent huge economic assets, life in DR Congo is not improving for most people for a number of reasons, such as conflict, corruption and many decades of poor governance dating back to the colonial era.

Eastern DR Congo, where most of the mineral wealth lies, has been ravaged by conflict for three decades.

It is impossible to know how many lives have been lost - a 2008 study by the International Rescue Committee estimated that about 5.4 million people may have died, mostly from hunger and disease, making it the deadliest since World War Two. However, other studies have cast doubt on the accuracy of this figure.

After years of political instability and coups d'état, DR Congo is organising elections for the first time since the peaceful transfer of power between former President Joseph Kabila and Mr Tshisekedi in 2019.

Who are the candidates?

Following the withdrawal of four candidates, including former Prime Minister Augustin Matata Ponyo, there are now 22 presidential candidates, including Mr Tshisekedi.

His main challengers are:

Martin Fayulu, the man believed by many observers to have been the rightful winner of the 2018 presidential election, even though he came second according to official results.

Moïse Katumbi, a wealthy businessman and former governor of Katanga province, as well as the owner of the TP Mazembe football team

Dr Denis Mukwege, the winner of the 2018 Nobel Peace Prize for his work with rape survivors.

The four candidates who have withdrawn have all thrown their support behind Mr Katumbi and his "Together for the Republic" party.

Still in the running are another former Prime Minister, Adolphe Muzito, MP Delly Sesanga, activist Floribert Anzuluni and Constant Mutamba.

There are only two women in the race: Marie-Josée Ifoku Mputa, a presidential candidate in December 2018, and Joëlle Bile. The latter describes herself as the candidate representing hope for women and young people.

Running for election is not cheap.

All candidates had to pay 160 million Congolese francs to participate (\$60,000; £47,000) in non-refundable application fees.

However, this is less than the previous election, when the fee was \$100,000.

The voting system

Whichever candidate gains the most votes in the first round becomes the next president, whether or not they have more than 50%. So there is no second round run-off.

The winner is then in post for a five-year term, renewable once only.

Voting takes place 90 days before the expiry of the current president's term.

This year, the presidential election will be combined with the election of members of both national and provincial parliaments and local councillors.

What is at stake?

This year's elections take place against a backdrop



Moïse Katumbi is known as the owner of the massive TP Mazembe football team

of conflict in the east, an economic and social crisis and a lack of trust between the government and opposition.

Opposition parties suspect the government of orchestrating electoral fraud, accusing it of restricting freedoms and democratic space. The government rejects these accusations.

The many assurances given by the Independent National Electoral Commission (Ceni) have failed to alleviate the opposition's concerns.

The bishops of DR Congo's influential Catholic Church, and the leaders of the Church of Christ in Congo (ECC) recently said they shared the opposition's worries.

There is also a cost-of-living crisis. The effects of the Cov-

id-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine are still hitting ordinary Congolese people in the pocket.

Inflation has reduced the purchasing power of ordinary citizens, who now have to pay more for their basic necessities, like food.

The value of the Congolese franc has fallen by 15-20% against the US dollar since the start of the year, according to official figures.

Two-thirds of DR Congo's population now live below the poverty line, earning \$2.15 a day or less.

President Tshisekedi has launched a number of initiatives to try to tackle these issues including free primary school education and free healthcare for women giving

birth at public medical facilities.

However, opinion remains divided over how effective these measures have been across the country.

Conflict in the east

The government has imposed a state of siege across the provinces of North Kivu and Ituri for almost a year but conflict continues to rage.

Rebel groups such as the M23, the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) and Codeco continue to carry out attacks against both ordinary people and military targets.

As a result of the violence, DR Congo has among the highest number of internally displaced people in the world. Almost 6.9 million people are

thought to have been forced to flee their homes since March 2022. The UN estimates that 28% of the population has been forcibly displaced in North Kivu and 39% in Ituri respectively.

Other hotspots have emerged as a result of inter-community conflicts, notably in the province of Tshopo, in the north-east, and in Maï-Ndombe, in the south-west of the country.

Insecurity is likely to disrupt voting in some parts of the country. In November, the electoral commission said it had lost around 30 agents to drowning and attacks by armed groups during the registration of voters.

The Congolese government recently demanded the de-

parture of troops from East African countries by the end of the year, accusing them of failing to stop attacks from armed groups less than a year after their deployment.

Watching the vote

The electoral commission is supposed to be an autonomous, permanent and neutral body governed by public law, and endowed with legal power.

Composed of 15 members, its mission is to "guarantee free and democratic elections".

However, it has come under fire from critics who accuse its president, Denis Kadima, of being too close to the government. They fear the fact he comes from the same ethnic group as the president could affect the integrity of the result.

For his part, Mr Kadima has repeatedly stated that his institution is committed to transparent elections that respect democratic principles.

The European Union observer mission has pulled out of the election, after failing to reach an agreement with the Congolese government over the importation of communication devices they needed to use. They will be deploying eight experts but only in the capital, Kinshasa.

In the past, the African Union, religious denominations and civil society organisations have deployed observers to closely monitor voting.

When will we get the results?

According to the electoral calendar, the provisional results are expected on 31 December.

If the results are ready before that, they could be released sooner. But in previous elections, Ceni has not announced any partial results - it has waited until all the votes have been counted across this vast country before declaring the winner.

The next president will be sworn into office on 20 January.



President Félix Tshisekedi launched his campaign in Kinshasa's main football stadium

CAPITAL RADIO

RATIBA YA VIPINDI JUMATATU - JUMAPILI

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

Tembelea mitandao ya kijamii ya CAPITAL RADIO



CAPITAL RADIO

A breakthrough for the African vaccine manufacturing

ACCRA

THE Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC) has welcomed the announcement from The Global Vaccine Alliance (GAVI) Board for the establishment of the African Vaccine Manufacturing Accelerator (AVMA), a financing mechanism aimed at creating a sustainable vaccine manufacturing industry in Africa.

The AVMA is a financing mechanism aimed at creating a sustainable vaccine manufacturing industry in Africa and will make up to US\$ 1 billion available to support vaccine manufacturing in Africa.

In 2021, the African Union Heads of States and Governments established The Partnerships for African Vaccine Manufacturing (PAVM) under the Africa CDC. The goal of the PAVM is to enable the African vaccine manufacturing industry to develop, produce, and supply over 60 per cent of the total vaccine doses required on the continent by 2040. This is up from less than 1 per cent today, with interim goals of 10 per cent by 2025 and 30 per cent by 2030. The collaboration has seen several vaccine manufacturing projects taking shape, and others are in the works to guarantee self-reliance in

Africa should any health emergency or outbreak hit the continent.

Speaking after the announcement in Accra, Dr. Jean Kaseya, Africa CDC Director General, said, "Today is a significant moment for Africa. The targeted USD 1 Billion from GAVI to African Manufacturers is a game changer for the continent and advances our efforts towards vaccine self-reliance. Africa CDC remains determined that Africa should produce its vaccine and protect the lives of all Africans. The African Union has set a target for the continent to produce 60% of the vaccines needed by 2040; AVMA is indeed an accelerator towards that ambition. Among the COVID-19 lessons, working together is a way forward. GAVI has been an incredible partner in this; we will continue to advance together on this journey of self-reliance. Together, we are united with a mission for vaccine equity."

During the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, Africa had difficulty accessing life-saving vaccines due to its reliance on supplies from other countries. This demonstrated the general issue of limited access to various health products that can only be addressed through investments in self-sufficiency on the continent.



Africa's New Public Health Order emphasises the need to expand the manufacturing of vaccines, diagnostics, and therapeutics.

"We are grateful for the incredible close collaboration with the African Union and Africa CDC over the last 18 months to support our shared vision of a thriving, sustainable African vaccine ecosystem," said David Marlow, Interim CEO of Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance. "AVMA is an important step forward, sending a powerful signal to global markets that GAVI is serious about its efforts to support this vital initiative. We are committed to continued partnership as we work together towards the official launch of this mechanism in 2024."

The launch of AVMA is an important message from our partners that Africa will no longer be solely a recipient of vaccines but an active member and contributor to the global vaccine ecosystem. It also signifies support for the historic Addis Declaration on Immunization (ADI), which aimed to ensure that everyone in Africa receives the full benefits of immunisation regardless of their background or location.

The historical and concrete action will support the African vaccine manufacturing industry and improve the continent's resilience to pandemics, outbreaks, and other health emergencies. AVMA will further accelerate the race

to achieve the PAVM goal of producing 60% of vaccines in Africa by 2040. In addition, Africa CDC remains committed to collaborating with all partners and stakeholders in the vaccine ecosystem to facilitate the full operationalisation of AVMA and expedite the attainment of health security as envisaged in Agenda 2063.

The Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC) is a continental autonomous Public Health agency of the African Union which supports Member States in their efforts to strengthen health systems and improve surveillance, emergency response, prevention, and control of diseases.

Why carbon credits could manage Africa's debt burden, spur growth

DUBAI

AS public debt in Africa continues to rise steadily to levels not seen in decades, many African leaders spend sleepless nights with their economic advisors, trying to craft a lasting solution to the runaway debt.

According to global financial experts at the International Monetary Fund, the average debt ratio in sub-Saharan Africa has almost doubled in the last 10 years from 30 per cent of GDP at the end of 2013 to almost 60 per cent by the end of 2022.

This has presented a massive burden to the poor nations as repaying this debt has also become much costlier, disrupting the region's development goals as the ratio of interest payments to revenue, a key metric to assess debt servicing capacity and predict the risk of a fiscal crisis, has more than doubled since the early 2010s.

According to financial experts, this is now close to four times the ratio in advanced economies.

As of 2022, more than half of the low-income countries in sub-Saharan Africa were

assessed by the IMF to be at high risk or already in debt distress.

Many countries increasingly face a mounting debt crisis and are pleading with lenders such as the World Bank and IMF to restructure their debts.

Against this background, most African countries are eyeing the carbon offsets market as a source of capital to overcome the credibility crisis.

President William Ruto sees carbon credits as Kenya's "next significant export."

"We are finalising the regulations, and they are on their way to parliament because we want to bring integrity into the whole carbon space of carbon credit and market," said President Ruto at COP28 in Dubai, United Arab Emirates.

Climate change experts estimate that Africa's forests can absorb 600 million tonnes of carbon dioxide each year, more than any forest ecosystem on Earth.

At least 11 per cent of carbon credits issued globally came from African projects. The African Carbon Mar-

kets Initiative hopes to produce 300 million carbon credits annually by 2030, but some countries need more support due to bad governance.

During the September African Climate Summit in Nairobi, a coalition of major UAE energy and financial companies indicated its intention to buy \$450 million of carbon credits generated in Africa by 2030.

According to the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), Claver Gatete, Africa can generate \$82

billion from carbon credits.

Speaking at the COP28 in Dubai, Gatete said the financial disparity is more than one and a half times the amount the continent gets from donor funding.

Gatete said the UN Commission for Africa is working with member countries to develop carbon credit frameworks.

"The market has not been fair. In some countries, it goes up to over \$100 per tonne. But in the African countries, it goes up to below \$10 per tonne. The market is not fair. We are now helping

the countries to do it properly, to have registries, to have the protocols that conform to the international standards so that they can get the better price for your mineral," said Mr Gatete.

Powering Africa's push for carbon credits is the African Carbon Markets Initiative (ACMI), which was launched at COP27 in Sharm el Sheikh in Egypt last year.

The group brings together nations including Kenya, Nigeria, Gabon, and Western philanthropies like the Rockefeller Foundation and Bezos Earth Fund.

World Bank to provide electricity for 100 million Africans by 2030

By Special Correspondent, Nairobi

THE World Bank has announced plans to allocate \$5 billion to provide electricity to 100 million people in Africa by the end of the decade.

Access to electricity remains a pressing issue in several African nations, posing significant challenges to their development.

The disclosure came from Ajay Banga, the President of the World Bank, during his speech at the mid-term review of the International Development Association (IDA)'s \$93 billion replenishment package.

Banga (pictured) highlighted that ambition as an example of how he plans to wield funds from the bank's International Development Association, which provides zero- or low-interest loans to low-income countries, and why donor countries need to provide support, Bloomberg reported.

In his remarks, he noted that some 1.1 billion young people in the Global South are expected to reach working age over the next decade.

What the president said: "But how can we hope to make even adequate progress while 600 million people in Africa - 36 million of whom live here in Tanzania - still don't have access to reliable electricity? Put simply: We can't."

Banga addressed the bank's ongoing review of its latest replenishment round for the IDA, amounting to \$93 billion. He expressed his desire for donors to set another record in the upcoming round scheduled for December 2024.

"We are pushing the limits of this important concessional resource and no amount of creative financial engineering will compensate for the fact that we need more funding," he said.

Banga, the former chief executive of Mastercard Inc., landed in Zanzibar after participating in the COP28 climate summit in Dubai.



Reflecting on the experience in an interview on Sunday in Dubai, he remarked, "There is a lot of energy. There

seems to be political alignment. I'm going to take all the tailwind I can get." Across the continent, a substantial

portion of the population grapples with the absence of reliable electricity. The lack of electricity accessibility in

many regions can be attributed to various factors, including the high cost of electricity and infrastructure deficit.

Mar-a-Lago: The billion-dollar question at heart of Trump fraud trial

By Brandon Livesey

Donald Trump calls Mar-a-Lago the "Mona Lisa" of properties, but how much is it actually worth? The question is at the centre of the civil fraud trial which threatens his family business.

It's the magic number no-one can agree on, from a tax assessment of \$18m (£14.3m) to a courtroom witness saying it would sell for more than \$1bn (£797m).

Throughout the 10-week trial in New York, the prosecution and defence have contested the value of Mr Trump's private club in Florida - as well as the line between legitimate real estate valuations and fraud.

Trump, his two adult sons and the Trump Organization are accused of bloating the value of assets - which also include properties such as Trump Tower and various golf resorts - to the tune of \$2bn so they could get better deals on interest rates for loans.

These friendly rates saved Trump's businesses more than \$150m over the course of a decade, according to New York Attorney General Letitia James. She is seeking to ban him from conducting business in the state.



Donald Trump announced his candidacy for president at an event held inside Mar-a-Lago in 2022

The trial is now coming to a close, but before it even started, Judge Arthur Engoron, a Democrat, ruled the financial documents at the core of these allegations "clearly contain fraudulent valuations that defendants used in business".

"That is a fantasy world, not the real world," he concluded, finding them liable for fraud.

Trump has already appealed that pre-trial ruling on one count. Now the judge - there is no jury in this trial - must decide on six more counts of fraud, all of which require evidence of intent.

The former president had been expected to return to the witness stand on Monday, but announced in a social media post on Sunday evening that he had nothing more to say in a case he describes as politically motivated.

Once again, it was the specific allegation he inflated the worth of Mar-a-Lago that seemed to offend him most. "They claimed that Mar-a-Lago was worth only \$18,000,000, when it was worth 50 to 100 times that amount".

The White Elephant that was impossible to sell

The reality of Mar-a-Lago's value is not straightforward. The historic Palm Beach property has deed restrictions which mean it can only be used as a private club.

The land cannot be subdivided, and it requires considerable preservation expenses for the estate, which was built in 1927 for businesswoman and socialite Marjorie Merriweather Post.

This deed came about in the 1990s when Trump said Mar-a-Lago was too expensive to be preserved as a private residence, calling it a "white elephant" that was "almost impossible to sell".

Changing it to a private club meant he could use hefty membership fees to help pay for preservation and upkeep.

Rosalind Clarke, a Palm Beach real estate agent since the 1980s and a former president of the Palm Beach Board of Realtors, told BBC News the problem with valuing Mar-a-Lago came down to these restrictions.

Ms Clarke explained that the value is based on profits of the club and "not the value of the land". She said if the deed restrictions did not exist, "the value of the property would be significantly higher".

Between 2011 and 2021, Trump is accused of valuing Mar-a-Lago as if it had no deed restrictions.

What did Trump say it was worth on financial documents?

In his pre-trial ruling, Judge Engoron noted that the Palm Beach County Assessor appraised the market value of Mar-a-Lago at between \$18 million and \$27.6 million for tax purposes.

In contrast, Mr Trump valued Mar-a-Lago at between \$426.5 million and \$612 million over the same decade, "an overvaluation of at least 2,300%, compared to the assessor's appraisal," the judge wrote.

Real estate experts point out that the tax assessor value is typically lower than what a property could be sold for, so it's not a like-for-like comparison.

The New York attorney general alleges the Trump business came up with the higher numbers by the price-per-acre of "comparable" properties - but those were for lands without deed restrictions.

The attorney general's case claims this is fraud, that the Trump Organization knew about Mar-a-Lago's deed restrictions and ignored them to come up with values as if it were purely a private residence.

A home fit for a 'king or emperor'

Among all of these numbers is the heart of the lawsuit. While it involves numerous Trump properties, Mar-a-Lago is where Mr Trump rubs shoulders with the rich and powerful.

It's his home. It's where the former president would spend his time when not at the White House.

And in one of the marble bathrooms is where federal special counsel Jack Smith alleges Mr Trump stashed classified documents.

Hearing low valuations for Mar-a-Lago has been a major sticking point for him, and he frequently brings it up in press conferences and on social media.

Trump's legal team called luxury Florida real estate broker Lawrence Moens as a witness, and he told the court Mar-a-Lago was worth more than \$1bn.

Moens said the richest of the rich would line up to

buy the property, from "Elon Musk to Bill Gates" and "kings, emperors, heads of state".

And if the deed restrictions did not exist, he might be right.

Clarke, the Palm Beach agent, described Mar-a-Lago as a 17.5 acre estate with a "significant historic landmarked structure, an ocean-front parcel and the possibility of seven 3/4 acre buildable lots in a highly sought-after location".

Without the deed restrictions, she said, "a property such as this should bring a sales price in the range of \$500m, although the provenance and location could raise the amount, depending on the number of interested parties."

What the prosecution needs to prove

When Trump was on the witness stand earlier in the trial, he told the court he was not legally bound by the Mar-a-Lago deed restrictions. He also said the valuations would have been higher if they had taken account of the Trump brand.

His lawyers have also argued that it doesn't really matter what the values of assets were, because banks do their own research and do not rely purely on financial statements to make loan decisions.

The defence's final expert witness, accounting expert and New York University professor Eli Bartov, told the court there were errors in the financial documents, but they did not conceal fraud or show intent.

He said these "statements of financial condition" were merely the "starting point" that banks and lenders use for valuations, and "valuations are subjective".

That theme flows into a common argument raised by Mr Trump: the banks don't care because they made money. "No bank was affected. No bank was hurt," he said at the start of the trial.

But the prosecution does not need to prove there were victims, they must prove there was intentional fraud. When the lawsuit was first filed, the New York attorney general said "there aren't two sets of laws for people in this nation: former presidents must be held to the same standards as everyday Americans".

After this week's final testimony, and a long break before closing arguments in January, Judge Engoron will deliver his ruling on the remaining fraud charges as well as any penalties.

One problem for Mr Trump, according to Mitchell Epner, an attorney who handles commercial litigation, is that "the judge has already found that the most important documents in this case were all false".

The worst-case scenario for Mr Trump and his fellow defendants would see them barred from doing business in New York, and hit with fines of at least \$250m.

The Trump Organization could be forced to hand over control to a court-appointed receiver, or ultimately have to sell some of its most iconic landmarks - potentially even Mar-a-Lago.

THE GUARDIAN CROSSWORDS AND WORD FIT - 43 -

Crossword grid with numbers 1-26. Includes a vertical watermark: 'By Felix Magezin: 0787009794 // felixmagezi@gmail.com'

- 14. the final part of something
- 16. a large number of quantity
- 18. a hot drink
- 19. Populous country
- 22. a measure 24. T-shirt
- 25. appointed by election
- 26. bundle of fibres in the nerve

DOWN:

- 1. produce a picture
- 2. a snake-like fish
- 3. move to a new home
- 4. fever marked by severe internal bleeding
- 5. solemnly promised
- 6. also know as
- 7. plural form of louse
- 8. not closed
- 9. Western Australia
- 15. a small silver ball for decorating a cake
- 16. a device used to join two things together
- 17. a form of protest in which demonstrators occupy a place until their demands are met
- 18. a gibbet 20. glacier

ACROSS:

- 1. Driver in kiswahili
- 7. of less than average weight
- 10. rhebok
- 11. International Phonetic Alphabet
- 12. the amount of something allowed
- 13. bravo in Spanish

Word search grid with letters S, I, G, N, etc. and a note: 'In this Puzzle you have no clues, only a list of words that all fit into the grid. The Guardian have given you a head start.'

- STI: ADS
- HEED : LO
- SHAM
- BOND
- SIEGED
- GIRLIES
- NOAH
- ALHAJI
- ALHAJI
- MIAO : EG
- SLJ: EON
- SID: LOE
- ALHAJI
- IDEATED
- IDIOMS
- DERAILS

Yesterday's solution

Completed crossword grid from the previous day with words like MODEL, ADD, PALESTRA, etc.

RADIO One advertisement for 'RATIBA YA VIPINDI JUMATATU - JUMAPILI'. Includes a weekly programme schedule for Monday through Sunday with various time slots and program titles.



C'wealth, AGRA join forces to drive digital transformation in African agriculture

Page 14



New partnership to bring solar powered broadband to Africa

Page 14



Cross-border payment offers African trade lifeline

Page 15

AfDB approves \$66m loan for equity enhancement of TADB

By Guardian Reporter

AFRICAN Development Bank support will give to agricultural sector and value chain entrepreneurs' greater access to the financial and non-financial services of the Tanzanian Agricultural Development Bank (TADB).

The AfDB's Board of Directors has approved a \$66 million loan to the government of Tanzania for additional equity in Tanzania Agricultural Development Bank (TADB). The financing will enable TADB to strengthen its capital and enhance the structure and effectiveness of financial and non-financial services it offers to entrepreneurs in the agriculture and related value chains.

The TADB Phase II project will also receive \$950,000 in technical assistance from the Affirmative Finance Action for Women in Africa (AFAWA) initiative to boost access to finance and related support to women in identified agriculture value chains. Additional technical assistance of \$250,000 will come from the Africa Adaptation Acceleration Program (AAAP), a joint initiative of the African Development Bank and the Global Centre on Adaptation (GCA). This will go toward climate risk management support and to assist TADB in assessing the climate risk profile of its portfolio and developing the tools, methodologies, and capacity to mainstream climate resilient lending practices.

The project, approved on 5 December, is expected to enhance inclusive access to finance in the agriculture sector, improve yields and productivity and raise household



AfDB support will give to agricultural sector and value chain entrepreneurs greater access to the financial and non-financial services of the Tanzanian Agricultural Development Bank (TADB).

income and create jobs, contributing to broad-based economic growth in Tanzania. The Bank Group's Acting Director for Financial Sector Development, Ahmed Rashad Attout said: "We are excited to fi-

nalize this second intervention with the Government of Tanzania to support the consolidation and expansion of TADB's operations and in supporting the transformation of Tanzania's agricultural sector."

Bank Group Director General for East Africa, Nnenna Nwabufu, added: "Through this intervention, the African Development Bank reiterates its commitment to support efficiencies and competitiveness

of agricultural enterprises, expansion of agricultural value chains and bolster the financing of the agriculture sector, with enhanced support to women entrepreneurs in this sector."

Low use of data cripples budget execution in Z'bar, says minister

By Guardian Reporter, Zanzibar

ZANZIBAR Minister for Finance and Planning Dr. Saada Mkuya has said that there is still a challenge in the use of statistics in government institutions, which affects effective implementation of government budgets.

Dr. Saada (pictured) made the statement during a special budget monitoring meeting organized by the United Nations Children's Fund (Unicef).

"Statistics are important in planning, they exist but the directors do not use them, saying this raises challenges in budget implementation.

"When you report something, you must see what you have found," said Minister Saada.

She said that many of the challenges are that executives have been thinking more about incoming money contrary to thinking of plans which is required of them.

"We have been planning budgets every year, but we have found that the budgets are planned normally and imple-



mented maybe by 10 percent, next year we should increase five percent, but we do not go deeper to see what we planned in the last budgets and how we have been able to achieve it and set a strategy to achieve it for the next budget period," she said.

Dr Saada said they have identified the problem is not money but management and that often the ministries are waiting for money but sometimes the money is not used as required due to planning problems.

He said that they have done an evaluation in the provision of services, but they have found that there is a long time to get the results of the services provided while giving the example of people who are paid for by insurance to get health services.

"There should be a check, for example 300 patients have been insured and 100/- has been given, there must be a plan which shows that the service provided really went to the people involved," she said

According to Dr. Saada, this was happening because the directors of planning and policy of the ministry were doing work that

they have not studied, even that, he said now they are expecting change because they have made changes to various leadership levels.

Budget commissioner of the Office of the President, Finance and Planning, Zena Mahmoud Hassan said that many institutions were looking at money without looking at the results.

"The changes we are making are to look at the results and not to look at the incoming funds and the results we are looking for are in accordance with development plans," he said.

Unicef Representative, Elke Wisch said the budget should be implemented based on national priorities and development plans.

He said that the organization will continue to build the capacity of institutions to monitor and estimate the funds provided to ensure that the amount provided implements the plans.

She said that the organization will continue to build the capacity of institutions to monitor and estimate the funds provided to ensure that the amount provided implements the plans.

NMB Bank rolls out financing solutions for MSMEs to tap intra-trade potentials

By Guardian Reporter

NMB Bank Plc. has announced its commitment to provide robust and comprehensive financing solutions to Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (MSMEs) to grab opportunities in the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

Linda Teggsa, bank's head of transaction banking made the revelation yesterday when speaking during a panel discussion under the theme: "Addressing the gender gap in trade financing" held in Dar es Salaam on the sidelines of the AfCFTA Conference on Women in Trade.

Teggsa said the financing by the bank will be in the form of working capital loans and asset finance loans, with the aim of positioning the businesses for growth and success in the evolving African business landscape.

She said her bank riding on its strong performance and balance sheet will provide financing to eligible MSMEs as part of its commitment to facilitate intra-trade on the African continent.

"We've delivered very strong financials this year that has elevated us to be the third most profitable bank in East Africa this year and the number one bank with regard to market capitalization. Our services are geared towards a cross section of client segments both retail and wholesale," Teggsa said.

Commenting on the topic 'Women In Trade', Teggsa said most women in Africa are trading within the MSMEs who have to build and establish the foundation of their

businesses.

"As a result, they require partners like NMB Bank to essentially support them through the journey. As a bank, we have focused on a women's proposition dubbed 'Jasiri' as part of our efforts to ensure sustainability of women-owned businesses," she added.

Teggsa noted that has also leveraged on technology to deliver digital payment solutions to its customers across the country as part of its ambitious strategy to accelerate financial inclusion.

"We have a digital solution which is accessible through our mobile app and Unstructured Supplementary Service Data (USSD). We also have a micro lending solution called 'Mshiko Fasta' that provided instant loans of up to 500,000/- . Further up the scale, we provide solutions for supply chain financing for SMEs," she stressed.

"These can come in the shape of discounting of invoices, LPO financing and short-term loans to distributors so that they can essentially scale-up their sales and this is usually paid to the anchors they deal with," she added. Teggsa during the event urged women to collaborate and form partnerships that will give them upper hand in the AfCFTA, adding that women entrepreneurs can move up the value chain to higher-value sectors.

"This will help to pass on the risk factor," she added.

The AfCFTA is the world's largest free trade area bringing together the 55 countries of the African Union (AU) and eight (8) Regional Economic Communities (RECs).

The overall mandate of the AfCFTA is to create a single continental market with a



Minister of Culture, Arts, and Sports, Dr. Damas Ndumbaro (3rd L) presenting an appreciation award to the NMB Bank's Head of Bancassurance, Martin Massawe (3rd R) at the launching event of the Insurance Market Performance Report for the Year 2022 held in Dar es Salaam. From the right: Tanzania Insurance Regulatory Authority Commissioner, Dr. Baghoyo Saqware, Chief Secretary of the Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar (SMZ) and Insurance Ambassador, Zena Saidi, and from the left: Deputy Insurance Commissioner, Khadija Said, and Chairman of the Insurance Board, CPA Moremi Marwa. Photo: Guardian Correspondent.

population of about 1.3 billion people and a combined GDP of approximately \$ 3.4 trillion.

The AfCFTA entered into force on May 30, 2019,

after 24 Member States deposited their Instruments of Ratification following a series of continuous continental engagements spanning since 2012.

Firm launches startup programme to empower African entrepreneurs

By Sola Babarinsa

HUX Ventures, a leading Africa-focused venture capital firm, has announced the launch of Hux Fast, a revolutionary startup studio programme designed to support and nurture aspiring entrepreneurs across the African continent.

Led by Sam Ojei, Hux Ventures' visionary General Partner, the programme aims to address the challenges faced by many African entrepreneurs - limited access to capital, mentorship, and resources. Hux Fast seeks to bridge this gap by providing a comprehensive support system that empowers founders to transform their innovative ideas into thriving startups.

Through Hux Fast, selected startups will receive: Crucial financial support to kick start their ventures and scale operations; access to guidance, insights, and industry expertise from seasoned professionals; as well as opportunities for collaboration and growth through connections with industry experts, investors, and strategic partners.

Speaking of the programme, Sam Ojei said, "We are thrilled to launch our startup studio program in Africa.

"Africa is a continent brimming with untapped potential and incredible founders. Through Hux Fast, we aim to empower these entrepreneurs and provide them with the necessary support to turn their ideas into reality.

Hux Ventures is a venture capital firm that supports African founders by delivering innovative programs and technology investments.



Commonwealth Secretary-General, Patricia Scotland KC (L) and President of AGRA Dr Agnes Kalibata

Commonwealth, AGRA join forces to drive digital transformation in African agriculture

By Special Correspondent

THE Commonwealth Secretariat and AGRA yesterday signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) that will leverage digital innovations to help transform smallholder agriculture across Africa.

The MoU aims to bolster agricultural production and trade through the harmonisation of agricultural data systems at national level using a Digital Public Infrastructure model (DPI).

During the recent Commonwealth Trade Ministers Meeting, a unanimous agreement centred on the development of resilient DPIs as a backbone for intra-Commonwealth trade and investment.

Under the MoU, the Commonwealth will help facilitate multi-stakeholder dialogues on 'National Agricultural Data Infrastructure (NAGDI)' and capacity building on 'National Digital Agriculture Strategies' in selected countries in Africa, as part of a suite of strategic initiatives.

The NAGDI is a model of DPI being designed to support member countries to better manage their agricultural data.

The MoU was signed by Commonwealth Secretary-General, Patricia Scotland

KC and Dr Agnes Kalibata, the President of AGRA at COP28, the UN climate change summit taking place in Dubai.

In her address, the Secretary-General expressed admiration for AGRA's longstanding achievements in Africa.

The organisation focuses on scaling up agricultural innovations that help smallholder farmers increase their incomes and livelihoods and improve food security.

The Commonwealth Secretary-General said: "The long-standing spirit of cooperation in the Commonwealth positions us to play a crucial role in supporting member countries to harness the power of data to ensure sovereignty over how the digital assets are handled.

By collaborating with organisations, such as AGRA, who are doing important work on the ground with governments, communities and smallholder farmers the Commonwealth can help to reduce duplication and

improve impact."

Dr Kalibata said: "This partnership will complement our efforts to advocate for and advance Africa's food systems transformation for people and planet. It builds on our strengths to foster synergy to inspire action, attract investment and reform policies for improved livelihoods in a sustainable, inclusive and resilient environment.

Working together, we can strengthen South-South collaboration in advancing global dialogues on climate action, trade, investments and digitization, complementing our recent engagements with IICA, Grow Asia, UAE and Barbados."

With 21 member states in Africa, the Commonwealth aims to use this MoU to collaborate closely with AGRA to bolster support for these nations while advancing intra-Commonwealth knowledge sharing. The MoU signing marks a new phase of collaboration between the Commonwealth and AGRA to tackle significant agricultural challenges across Africa.

The implementation plan outlined within the MoU directly addresses these challenges, emphasising both organisations' shared commitment to fostering sustainable development and growth on the continent.

The Commonwealth champions a flagship programme on food system transformation, steered by the Commonwealth Connectivity Agenda. With a policy-driven approach, the Commonwealth aims to advance the impact of digital innovations in African agriculture through the facilitation of the enabling environment for digitalisation.

'African farming expanded to boost production next year'

NEW YORK

AFRICAN Agriculture Holdings—a global food security company operating a commercial-scale alfalfa farm has provided an operational update following its recent merger to become a publicly listed company.

Alan Kessler, Chairman and CEO of African Agriculture, commented: "We intend to accelerate our operational activities following our recent merger and listing on Nasdaq, resulting in African Agriculture becoming the first pure-play African agricultural company listed in the U.S. Previously, we began alfalfa production on approximately 300 hectares out of a total of 25,000 hectares of dedicated farmland we secured in Senegal."

"We recently placed orders for additional seeds and crop irrigation equipment, which we believe will allow us to expand land utilization by more than three-fold to approximately 1,000 hectares and significantly enhance production in 2024."

Importantly, according to World Bank data approximately 60% of the world's remaining arable land is located in Africa, and "we believe

Africa is poised to become the new breadbasket of the world."

He said: "Our mission is to help unlock Africa's potential through investments in infrastructure, irrigation and new technologies."

"Looking ahead, our strategy not only involves increasing alfalfa production on our 25,000 hectares of fertile farmland, but also broadening our product offering and expanding our geographic footprint. We could not be more excited about the outlook for the business and look forward to empowering local communities, through sustainable impact investments, to help address the global need for food security."

African Agriculture is a pioneering company dedicated to securing food and protein for the coming century. Born out of a global necessity, it focuses on harnessing Africa's vast agricultural potential. With 60% of the world's remaining arable land, Africa stands as a powerhouse of untapped resources, offering abundant sunshine, plentiful rain, and fertile soil. African Agriculture's mission is to optimize yields and harvests, creating sustainable job opportunities for local communities while delivering significant value to its shareholders.



New partnership to bring solar powered broadband to Africa

By Special Correspondent

A RECENTLY announced collaborative effort aims to deploy sustainable broadband, connecting millions in Africa, fostering local businesses, and promoting sustainability.

In this collaborative effort, announced at the 2023 UN Climate Change Conference, Curvalux, United Cities and Local Governments of Africa (UCLG Africa) and Pegasus Capital Advisors have signed a telecoms and renewable energy-focused memorandum of understanding (MoU).

The partnership aims to deploy sustainable solar-powered broadband technologies across Africa, benefitting millions with enhanced connectivity.

Curvalux, a manufacturer of solar-powered innovative fixed wireless access (FWA) broadband technologies, is partnering with UCLG Africa, a confederation of African cities and governments encompassing 16,000 townships and cities.

With Pegasus Capital Advisors, a leading global equity fund manager accredited by the Green Climate Fund, the partnership aims to build the necessary FWA technology infrastructure to bring sustainable high speed broadband services to up to 350 million African citizens who lack access to reliable, life-enhancing connectivity.

Curvalux intends to provide fixed wireless equipment, backhaul, power systems, site infrastructure and technical and business training. UCLG Africa has the local expertise to help navigate the due diligence, implementation and regulatory hurdles to bring this partnership into high gear and identify communities for rapid deployment.

Pegasus aims to provide the funding and financing to bring reliable, fully solar-powered, sustainable wireless internet connectivity to homes, businesses, schools, hospitals and public services.

There doesn't appear to be a timetable yet but overall, the partners say, this initiative addresses the significant internet service gap in Africa, unlocking opportunities in remote work, education, healthcare and economic development.



Vodacom offers health insurance coverage to 600 mothers, newborns in Dar es Salaam

By Guardian Reporter

VODACOM Tanzania has provided comprehensive health insurance coverage to 600 mothers and newborns at Mwananyamala, Amana, and Temeke regional referral hospitals in Dar es Salaam.

The idea is part of executing the ongoing festive campaign 'Sambaza Shangwe, Gusa Maisha.'

Speaking during the handover ceremony, Mwananyamala Regional Referral Hospital, Chief Medical Officer, Dr Zavery Benela stated that the donation comes at the right time.

Dr Benela said that the move comes just two days after President Samia Suluhu Hassan signed the Universal Health Insurance bill into law to facilitate access to healthcare services for Tanzanians regardless of their economic status.

"I would like to congratulate Vodacom for this unique donation that touches the health of mothers and newborns. This group often faces various illnesses in the early stages, thus resulting in financial burdens for many families who cannot afford medical costs.

With this significant health insurance assistance for one year, you have truly helped them and allowed them to plan for the future and celebrate this festive season at ease with their loved ones. Additionally, this donation aligns with the government's current plans to ensure that all Tanzanians receive healthcare services regardless of economic status," concluded Dr. Benela.

Vodacom's 'Sambaza Shangwe, Gusa Maisha' campaign was launched in November this year and is expected to last until mid-January 2024.

The main goal is to reward its customers for sticking with the telco whilst also providing a gift of love to both customers and non-customers. A total of 2,000 mothers and children nationwide are expected to benefit and so far, Mbeya, Zanzibar, and Dodoma have already received the donation.

One of the beneficiaries, Sharifa Abdallah stated: "I feel extremely happy and fortunate to be among the recipients of the free health insurance cover for a whole year for both me and my child. Oftentimes, health issues arise when I don't have any savings hence, I've had to either borrow money from neighbors and relatives or sell my household items. I thank Vodacom for putting us in their thoughts because, as mothers, we are prone to health challenges soon after childbirth, and our young ones whose immunity is not yet fully strong face the same.

This assistance is a great relief, as you have unburdened our expenses, and for that, we will not have to worry for the entire coming year."

Explaining the intention to involve even non-customers in this gift of love during this festive season, the Acting Executive Head of the Dar es Salaam and Coast Region at Vodacom Tanzania PLC, George Nyanda, said: "Maternal health has always been close to Vodacom's heart and since the festive season is about community and giving, we decided to use our innovative digital insurance product namely VodaBima to spread joy and touch lives of mothers and newborns because health challenges know no boundaries."

"This also aligns with our commitment to support the government in ensuring that Tanzanians get access to quality services regardless of their income status or where they are.

Through this campaign, we not only hope to raise awareness on the essence of medical insurance coverage but also demonstrate that medical insurance is for everyone not just the privileged few like many believe it to be," he said.

Cross-border payment offers African trade lifeline

By Temitayo Jaiyeola

THE Intra-African trade continues to be plagued by many challenges and the most worrisome of them is payment.

In this piece, Temitayo Jaiyeola (pictured) writes on how the Pan-African Payment and Settlement System might be the spark that will reverse the current trend of low intra-African trade.

Africa is a continent of 54 countries acting like strangers among themselves. It is easier to travel outside the continent than within the continent. And nothing travels more outside the continent than trade.

Between 2019 and 2022, Nigeria, Africa's largest economy, total trade with other countries on the continent totalled N2.8tn. Within that time frame, its total trade with countries in Latin and North America was N8.45tn and N76.09tn with Asian countries.

To improve trade on the continent, the African Continental Free Trade Area was established in 2018 to increase Africa's income from trade by \$450bn by 2035. By eliminating barriers to trade in Africa, the AfCFTA is poised to lift 30 million people from extreme poverty and another 68 million people from moderate poverty.

The agreement, which officially began in 2018, advocates for the dropping of 90 per cent of tariffs and pushing for policies aimed at eliminating non-tariff barriers, such as customs delays and others.

Nigeria signed the AfCFTA in 2019, and a 2021 Brookings report stated that the country stood to gain from increased access to cheaper goods and services on its continent as its intra-African trade is low.

It said: "Indeed, as of 2018, Nigeria's imports from the African region relative to total imports were at 3.2 per cent while the share of Nigeria's exports to the African region relative to total exports was 13.2 per cent. Moreover, in 2020, Nigeria's main trading partner was actually China."

The World Bank expected the implementation of AfCFTA to boost Africa's income by \$450bn in 2035 (a gain of seven per cent), adding \$76bn to the income of the rest of the world.

It argued that the trade agreement could increase Africa's exports by \$560bn.

While the AfCFTA promises many mouth-watering possibilities, perhaps its biggest hindrance is the inability of African countries to settle trade contracts in local currencies (there are about 42 individual currencies on the continent).



Today, most intra-African trade is settled in US dollars or euros, which adds to the cost and complexity of transactions and exposes African businesses to exchange rate volatility despite engaging in local transactions.

To contextualise this, if a Nigerian farm wants to buy fertilisers from a South African firm, the two transacting parties and their local banks will need a correspondent bank – usually outside of Africa – to settle payments in an external currency (dollars or Euros). This exerted pressure on the external reserves of African Central Banks further degrading the FX liquidity problem in most African countries.

To solve this problem, the African Export-Import Bank launched the Pan-African Payment and Settlement System in 2022 to aid cross-border payments in local African currencies.

PAPSS, which is a digital platform that enables African businesses and individuals to send and receive payments in their local currencies, without the need for intermediaries or conversion fees, aims to not only reduce the transaction costs but also the time of intra-African trade by up to 60 per cent.

The solution is meant to serve as a payment infrastructure connecting all of Africa's fragmented payment structure as one. It is expected to save businesses on the continent \$5bn in transaction costs annually.

A report by Kora, a fintech, explained: "PAPSS aims to rival traditional swift networks, functioning as an automated clearing house for pan-African payments and as a crucial cross-border payment switch, facilitating transactions across the continent."

At the launch of the solution, the AfCFTA Secretariat's Chief Technical Advisor, Prudence Sebahizi, noted that it

would allow a consumer or a buyer to pay in their currency while the vendor receives payment in their currency.

He highlighted that this would make trade easier and less expensive than converting the Kenyan shilling to the US dollar and then the US dollar to the Ghanaian cedi, as had previously obtained.

The Chief Executive Officer of PAPSS, Mike Ogbalu, commented, "The commercial launch marks a significant milestone in connecting African markets seamlessly. It will provide a fresh impetus for businesses to scale more easily across Africa and is likely to save the continent more than \$5bn in transaction costs every year."

Later in the year, Ogbalu would lament, "Intra-Africa trade is by far the lowest intra-continental trade globally standing at 15-17 per cent."

For the Executive Director of the International Trade Centre, Pamela Coke-Hamilton, PAPSS will assist businesses "in these uncertain times. African countries now have a commercially viable tool that can address a critical barrier for MSMEs to trade competitively."

In a recent interview with The PUNCH, the Group Managing Director of United Bank for Africa, Oliver Alawuba, stressed the importance of intra-African trade to economic development and how PAPSS is crucial to it.

He said, "Today, you are aware that Afreximbank has a Pan-African Payment and Settlement System, a payment system for the settlement of business transactions across Africa and UBA is at the forefront of that partnership. Intra-African trade is important. Africa needs to trade more with each other and that will further improve economic development across the continent."

It is not only traditional trade organisations that are raving about PAPSS, stockbrokers on the continent are also ruminating over how they might soon be able to transact

on different exchanges in other African countries.

Recently, Nigeria's Securities and Exchange Commission stated that the implementation of its agreement with PAPSS would aid diversification within the capital market.

The Head of the Office of the Chief Economist of SEC, Dr Okey Umeano, said: "PAPSS makes it easy to trade across Africa. It makes intra-African trade more efficient and we have always wanted it."

"It was created initially for just the usual everyday trade but we have always wanted it for the capital market because we think that if we can link the exchanges and the markets across the continent we will have a bigger opportunity set for everybody, so we have been working on that."

However, PAPSS is not without its challenges. For it to succeed, it needs the cooperation and coordination of all stakeholders, including central banks, regulators, commercial banks, payment service providers, and traders.

So far, only the Central Bank of Nigeria, Bank of Ghana, Central Bank of Liberia, Central Bank of the Republic of Guinea, Central Bank of The Gambia, Bank of Sierra Leone, Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe, Bank of Zambia, Banque Centrale De Djibouti, and Central Bank of Kenya, and 50 commercial banks are connected.

This is a drop in the ocean when one considers that there are about 763 commercial banks and 54 central banks on the continent.

To successfully achieve its aim, these central banks need to come together to harmonise policies, standards, and regulations.

Recently, the Chair of the Association of African Central Banks Payment Systems Integration Working Group, told the World Bank, "The key challenges are that some countries are slow at migrating from their legacy systems or are finding it difficult to integrate with PAPSS."

"We have had various payment systems integration initiatives on the continent and some institutions are finding it challenging to seamlessly harmonise their other initiatives with what we have currently agreed on."

"Another challenge is that many African countries don't have enough reserves to fund their settlement reserve accounts at Afreximbank for net settlement of transactions."

Central banks, which are at the heart of the system, would have to reconcile differences in national regulations, infrastructure, and oversight systems, the International Monetary Fund recently

noted. Deciding on how to settle transactions among several volatile currencies could also prove difficult, it added.

Furthermore, the system requires the adoption of modern technologies and infrastructure to ensure the security, efficiency, and reliability of the system.

There are arguments that the individual digital capacity of Africa's countries is not enough.

For instance, when Nigeria tried to push payments fully online, it failed.

The World Bank said of the attempt, "The lack of adequate digital and financial infrastructure and processes to support a swift transition to a cashless economy – coupled with the fact that only 40 per cent of adults have a bank account – further exacerbated the situation."

Also, there is the problem of user adoption. The AfCFTA promises that SMEs from different African countries will be able to tap into a bigger market. This has been inhibited by payment issues, which PAPSS is hoping to solve, but not many businesses know this.

As a former Director General of the Nigerian Association of Chambers of Commerce, Industry, Mines, and Agriculture, Dr John Isemede, puts it, "What is PAPSS to an average Nigerian when we have no plans for SMEs."

In a conversation with the Director of Africa Growth Initiative Senior Fellow, Global Economy and Development, The Brookings Institution, Aloysius Ordu, in 2022, the CEO of PAPSS, Ogbalu, noted that the initiative was aware of this limitation.

He expanded, "First of all, we are talking to different trade associations and medium businesses and trade groups in the different countries to begin to express to them the value that PAPSS will bring to that small shoemaker that is in Aba, who is developing shoes today and putting a brand that is not African on it because he thinks that that brand can't sell."

"But let him understand that the infrastructure that PAPSS is providing will open up markets for him across the continent. So, he can focus on making his shoes and not worry about the buyer in Ethiopia who is paying birr and how that birr comes to naira for him in Aba."

It is still too early to judge the performance of PAPSS considering that the AfCFTA that should serve as its launching pad is still wobbling. But there are high hopes that someday, payment across the African conti-

Africa's renewable energy potential: A fossil fuel non-proliferation treaty can propel development

DUBAI

AS world leaders gather in Dubai for the 28th UN Global Climate Conference (COP28), Africa

stands at a crossroads.

The continent is home to vast untapped renewable energy resources, yet it remains plagued by energy poverty, with 600 million people living

without electricity.

Meanwhile, the continued exploitation of fossil fuels is fueling the climate crisis, disproportionately impacting Africa's most vulnerable



VIEW FROM THE TOP

communities.

A new report by the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty (FFNPT) Initiative highlights the urgent need for a paradigm shift in Africa's energy landscape.

The report, entitled "How A Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty Can Propel Africa's Renewable Energy Transition" was drafted to brief African policy makers, and exposes the shortcomings of fossil fuels in addressing Africa's energy needs and the continent's immense potential for renewable energy development.

The report also provides recommendations, solutions and a call to action for African nations to support the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty which has been endorsed by governments, leaders and grassroots organizations including ten nation-states from Latin America, the Pacific, the Caribbean and South East Asia such as Colombia, Antigua and Barbuda, Samoa and Tuvalu.

In addition, the World Health Organization, hundreds of health professionals,

Vatican Cardinals, thousands of religious institutions, 2,200 civil society organisations, over 3,000+ scientists and academics and 101 Nobel laureates have supported the FFNPT treaty.

Despite decades of coal, oil, and gas extraction, a staggering 600 million Africans still find themselves without access to power. The fossil fuel sector, responsible for 86% of carbon emissions over the last decade, is marred by foreign ownership, draining both wealth and energy from the continent. Africa's energy landscape stands at a critical crossroads with a need for radical transformation.

The FFNPT report not only addresses critical issues surrounding the climate crisis in Africa, presenting an insightful analysis of the challenges posed by fossil fuel dependency, but also offers a compelling set of solutions that could pave the way for a transformative and just and equitable energy transition across the continent.



Record high demand and Saudi supply cuts have brought back deficits," Goldman Sachs Group Inc. analysts including Daan Struyven and Yulia Zhestkova Grigsby said in a note that reaffirmed a forecast for Brent at \$86 a barrel by December

WORLD

UK PM Sunak battles to unite divided party in pivotal week

LONDON

PRIME Minister Rishi Sunak faces the most dangerous moment of his premiership this week, when he is due to appear before a COVID-19 inquiry and must win a crunch vote in parliament on his plan to revive a policy to send asylum seekers to Rwanda.

Just over a year since he became prime minister, Sunak is struggling to maintain his authority, as politicians on both the left and the right of his Conservative Party are threatening to vote against his flagship asylum policy.

Parliament will hold a first vote on Tuesday on the legislation that would override some human rights law with the intention that this would allow the first deportation flights to leave for Rwanda before a national election expected next year.

The proposed law is opposed by some moderate Conservative politicians who are worried about Britain breaching its human rights obligations and also by right-wing lawmakers who want the government to go further. Both sides are taking legal advice before deciding how to vote.

For Sunak, struggling to revive a weak UK economy and heavily trailing the main opposition party in opinion polls, the Rwanda policy has become the defining issue for his government, despite lawyers saying at every stage that it will not work.

"The Rwanda policy has become a totemic struggle and it has liberated the factions in the Conservative Party to continue their all-out war," said Tony Travers, a politics professor at the London School of Economics.

The plan was ruled unlawful by the UK's Supreme Court last month, which said genuine refugees would be at risk of being returned to their home countries where they might face potential violence or ill treatment, which would breach British and international law.

The government has spent about a quarter of a billion pounds on the scheme in the hope it will deter the tens of thousands of people - including from Afghanistan, Iran and Iraq - who arrive on the south coast of England after crossing in small boats from France.

In a sign of how uncertain Sunak is about the size of any parliamentary rebellion, he decided against making it a



Britain's Prime Minister Rishi Sunak gives an update on the plan to "stop the boats" and illegal migration during a press conference in the Downing Street Briefing Room in London on Dec 7, 2023. AP

confidence vote. If Sunak had done so and lost, he would have faced calls to hold a general election.

But the prime minister stands to be badly weakened if he loses any vote on the legislation. Only 29 Conservative members of parliament would need to rebel to defeat the government.

Asked on Sunday if Sunak would call a snap election if the legislation failed to pass, Michael Gove, a senior government minister in charge of regional development and housing, played down the possibility.

"No, we're not contemplating that because I'm confident that when people look at the legislation and have a chance to reflect, that they will recognize that this is a tough but also proportionate measure," he told Sky News.

Divisions

Sunak finds himself in a similar crisis that engulfed the Conservative Party under former prime minister Theresa May during the 2016-19 fight to implement Brexit.

Once again a prime minister is facing a revolt from backbench members of parliament, there are rumours of colleagues plotting a leadership challenge, there are concerns about Britain abandoning its international promises, and questions about the power of parliament versus the judiciary.

Ahead of Tuesday's vote, Sunak will on Monday appear at the official COVID-19 inquiry for a day-long hearing examining his role in response to the pandemic.

Sunak, who was finance minister at the time, has been accused by one former government adviser of saying the government should "just let people die" rather than impose a lockdown because he was worried about the impact on the economy.

But the bigger danger for Sunak will come from the parliamentary battles over his Rwanda policy.

Some lawmakers said that while they expected the government to win the vote on Tuesday, a bigger showdown would come at the next stage when they can vote on amendments likely after Christmas.

"That's when the rebels will get stuck in," said one Sunak supporting Conservative member of parliament. The Conservative Party chairman Richard Holden underlined the threat to the government last week when he warned colleagues it would be "insanity" to oust Sunak.

Britain was once known for its stable politics. But if Sunak were to be toppled, the country would be on its sixth prime minister in just over seven years for the first time since the 1830s.

Another Conservative politician said her colleagues needed to remember "politics is a team game".

"If we have another leadership contest we would be annihilated" at the next election, she said. **Agencies**

mate Action. It is also in line with UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres' call to develop AI that is reliable and safe and that could supercharge climate action.

"We must manage the risks and seize the promise of artificial intelligence," said Ali Zaidi, an assistant to the president and national climate adviser of the United States.

"By working together, we can responsibly harness the power of this emerging technology to develop AI tools that help mitigate climate change risks, make our communities more sustainable and resilient, and build an equitable clean energy future for all," he added.

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Netanyahu calls Putin for first time since Israel-Hamas conflict

JERUSALEM/GAZA/DAMASCUS

ISRAELI Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Sunday had a phone call with Russian President Vladimir Putin, the first time since the conflict between Israel and Hamas broke out on Oct 7, according to his office.

During the phone call, Netanyahu appreciated the Russian effort to release an Israeli-Russian citizen held by Hamas, reaffirming that Israel would use all means to free all hostages from the Gaza Strip.

He also requested that Russia apply pressure on the Red Cross regarding visits and essential medicines for hostages held in Gaza, according to the statement.

The executive board of the World Health Organization adopted a resolution addressing the deteriorating health crisis in Gaza, urging for prompt and unrestricted humanitarian access.

The resolution, proposed by Afghanistan, Morocco, Qatar and Yemen, expressed "grave concern at the catastrophic humanitarian situation" in Gaza. It urged protection for all civilians and aid workers. It also warned of "long-lasting impacts" of attacks on medical personnel and "the large-scale destruction of health facilities including hospitals and ambulances."

Meanwhile, the Israeli prime minister criticized the "positions against Israel that Russia expressed on the international community, including at the United Nations," his office said in a statement.

Russia on Friday voted for a UN Security Council resolution demanding an immediate humanitarian ceasefire in Gaza, which was vetoed by the United States.

Khan Younis

Also on Sunday, Israeli forces continued to push into Khan Younis, the largest city in the southern Gaza Strip, where thousands of people were taking refuge after fleeing the deadly bombardments in other parts of the enclave.

Ground, aerial and naval forces struck more than 250 locations in Gaza over the past day, according to a statement released by the army.

Israel continued to intensify its firepower in Gaza, including the deployment of artillery into the densely populated 365 square km enclave, in which vast areas have been leveled by the Israeli bombardments. "For the first time since the beginning of ground operations, the Artillery Corps is operating inside the Gaza Strip," the army said.

In a video statement, Netanyahu said that "dozens" of Hamas fighters have surrendered in recent days. "They are laying down their weapons and handing themselves over to our heroic fighters," Netanyahu said.

He urged other militants to follow suit. "It is over. Don't die for Sinwar (Hamas leader in Gaza). Surrender -- now," he said.

Meanwhile, Abu Ubaida, the spokesperson for Al-Qassam, the armed wing of Hamas, said "Israel's repeated declarations of aiming to eliminate resistance are mere rhetoric ... it will not succeed on the ground."

He said that since the resumption of hostilities ten days ago after a temporary humanitarian ceasefire, Al-Qassam fighters have completely or partially destroyed 180 Israeli military vehicles, including armored carriers, tanks, and bulldozers.

He also announced carrying out multiple operations that "resulted in a significant number of casualties and injuries within the ranks of the Israeli occupation."

133 Palestinians killed

A Palestinian medical source said that at least 133 Palestinians were killed and dozens of others were injured on Sunday.

The source told Xinhua that over the past day, the bodies of at least 133 Palestinians who died in Israeli strikes were brought to hospitals across the Gaza Strip, 45 of whom were confirmed in Al-Aqsa Hospital in central Gaza.



Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, (left) gestures while speaking to Russian President Vladimir Putin during their talks in the Kremlin in Moscow, Russia, Jan 30, 2020. AP

DUBAI

EXPECT artificial intelligence to play an inseparable role in combating climate change after the United Nations Climate Change Technology Executive Committee, or TEC, and its collaborators launched a challenge to harness AI-powered solutions for climate action in developing countries.

The grand challenge was part of a high-level event organized by the UN Climate Change Technology Mechanism on Saturday in Dubai, in collaboration with the COP28 Presidency. The move will also focus on least developed countries and small island developing states. The TEC has part-

COP28 sets eyes on AI to fight climate change

nered with Enterprise Neurosystem, a nonprofit open-source AI community.

Attendees, ranging from leaders to UN agencies and business communities, emphasized how AI can be used in transformational climate action in developing nations while at the same time ensuring it does not contribute to the widening digital divide because of unequal access to technology.

Omar Sultan Al Olama, the minister of state for artificial intelligence, digital economy, and remote work applications in the United Arab Emirates, said that harnessing AI, as a strategic asset to mitigate climate change involved integrating it into national policies and plans.

"These measures and policies should not be viewed in isolation, but rather as a unified global initiative, acknowl-

edging that climate change transcends geographical boundaries and requires concerted global efforts," Al Olama said.

UN Climate Change Executive Secretary Simon Stiell said that the world has been seeing increasing evidence that AI can prove "an invaluable instrument in tackling climate change".

"While we remain mindful of the associated challenges and risks of AI, the Innovation Grand Challenge is a promising step forward in harnessing the power of artificial intelligence and empowering innovators in developing countries," said Stiell.

Digital divide

In dealing with the existing digital divide, Senegal's Minister of Communications, Telecommunications and the Digital Economy Moussa Bocar Thiam said

the integration of chatbot voice with local languages in emerging technology tools could be one of the solutions to fix the gap.

Shantal Munro-Knight, the minister in the prime minister's office of Barbados, said they were partnering with international tech companies to test their ideas in the country while contributing to the island's development.

These ideas include using machine learning and AI to check for the presence of tropical diseases.

"Collaboration, training and technology transfer are key to ensuring that AI contributes effectively to climate mitigation and adaptation for small island developing states," she said.

The high-level event was organized under the Technology Mechanism Initiative on Artificial Intelligence for

India in phase to take quantum jump for becoming developed says PM

NEW DELHI

PRIME Minister Narendra Modi, while launching 'Viksit Bharat @2047: Voice of Youth', said that India is undergoing a phase of history when it is going to take a quantum jump like several other nations, which made them a developed nation by doing so.

During the programme, PM Modi addressed Vice Chancellors of universities, heads of institutes and faculty members in workshops organised at Raj Bhawans across the country.

"This is the period in the history of India when the country is going to take a quantum jump. There are examples of many such countries around us, which have developed themselves by taking such a quantum jump in a given time. That is why I say that this

is the right time for India. We have to take advantage of every moment of this immortal time. We must not lose even a single moment."

Taking the pre-independence era as an example, Modi explained the role of educational institutions in turning the voice of independence into a nation-wide movement with the wide participation of youth.

"There was a time when every educational institution in this nation worked on developing an ecosystem and a whole generation of youth was raised for independence. A thought developed in the nation that what-



ever will be done is done for independence and will be done now only," the PM said.

"Similarly, today every person, every institution and every organisation has to move forward with the pledge that whatever I do should be for a developed India. The focus of your goals and your resolutions should be only on developed India," the PM added.

Further PM Modi said that in line with this vision, a section of 'Viksit Bharat @2047: Voice of Youth' has been launched under the My Government portal that will provide a platform to the youth of the country to contribute ideas to the vision of Viksit Bharat @2047. In this section, suggestions under five different categories can be given and the best of 10 suggestions will be awarded.

Congratulations to all the Governors for

organising the workshop PM said, "Today is a very important day regarding the resolutions of a developed India. I would like to especially congratulate all the governors who have organized this workshop related to building a developed India."

PM urged youth to provide suggestions for countering the side effects of modern lifestyles so that youth can have a glimpse of the world outside mobile.

The workshops will be a key step towards initiating the process of engaging youngsters to share their ideas and suggestions for making India a developed country by 2047.

The vision encompasses various aspects of development, including economic growth, social progress, environmental sustainability, and good governance, among others. **ANI**

AN international symposium marking the 75th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was held in Beijing on Dec 5.

Both Chinese and foreign participants in the symposium had in-depth discussions on the historical significance and contemporary value of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, advocating for safeguarding human rights through enhancing security, advancing human rights through development and facilitating human rights through cooperation. Together, they have further injected positive energy into the human rights development of the world.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights is of great significance for the development of human civilization. It has a profound impact on human rights advancement

China strives for greater progress in human rights

across the world.

It was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on Dec 10, 1948, and over the past 75 years, the international community has worked relentlessly toward the goal envisaged in the Declaration. The promotion and protection of human rights has taken deep root in people's hearts. The international human rights system has been improved. And countries around the world have taken more effective measures to promote and protect human rights.

Participants in the symposium noted that the commemoration of the 75th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights should serve as an oppor-

tunity to uphold the spirit of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, strengthen dialogue and cooperation, foster consensus, and promote the healthy development of the global human rights cause.

China is an active advocate of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The Communist Party of China (CPC) and the Chinese government have always considered the promotion and protection of human rights to be essential. Applying the principle of universality of human rights to China's national realities, the country has made leapfrog progress in its human rights cause. It has opened a new path for human rights development that adapts to the changing

times and suits its national conditions.

Since the country entered the new era, China has prioritized respecting and protecting human rights as an important aspect of national governance and scored a series of new, historic achievements.

China has eradicated absolute poverty, once and for all, on its land. It has established the world's largest education, social security, and health care systems. China has further advanced its socialist democracy, and steadily improved its whole-process people's democracy, creating more forms of democracy and expanding channels for democracy. China has also improved its legal system to fully

protect the rights of women, children, the elderly and people with disabilities.

China has taken a people-centered approach to human rights. It safeguards and improves people's livelihoods and protects and promotes human rights through development, and makes sure that development is for the people and by the people, and that its fruits are shared among the people. It is continuing its work so that the people will have a greater sense of happiness, benefit and security, and achieve well-rounded development.

Syldie Manirerekana, assistant to Burundi's minister of foreign affairs and development coop-

eration, said China's human rights philosophy and its practice can provide good reference for others.

Taking an active part in global human rights governance, China has made its contribution to and provided Chinese solutions for the development of the global cause of human rights.

Currently, global human rights governance is facing grave challenges. A few countries are practicing double standards, politicizing, weaponizing and instrumentalizing human rights issues, which seriously impedes the healthy development of the international human rights cause.

China always follows the spirit of the United Nations Charter and the

Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It has substantially participated in the work of the United Nations Human Rights Council and other multilateral human rights bodies, and has contributed to the adoption of major international human rights conventions and declarations.

China's vision of building a community with a shared future for mankind has been incorporated in a number of United Nations Human Rights Council resolutions, providing a Chinese approach to international protection of human rights. China has carried out exchanges and cooperation with United Nations human rights mechanisms and with over 30 countries and regions, contributing to global human rights progress.

People's Dai-

Ex-President Trump says he will not testify in NY fraud trial

WASHINGTON

FORMER President Donald Trump said Sunday that he would not testify in a New York courtroom this week, where he had been expected to appear for a second time to make the case that his company did not misrepresent the value of its properties to win favorable financing.

The civil fraud trial, which began in October, is one of several legal challenges the former president faces as he

mounts a comeback bid for the White House.

Trump said on social media on Sunday that "I will not be testifying on Monday." The former president and Republican frontrunner said that he had already testified and had "nothing more to say other than that this is a complete and total election interference."

In his first appearance in November, Trump often avoided direct answers and spent much of his time complain-



Former President Donald Trump, center, sits at the defense table with his attorney's Christopher Kise, left, and Alina Habba, at New York Supreme Court, Thursday, Dec 7, 2023, in New York. (PHOTO / AP)

ing of unfair treatment.

The judge overseeing the trial, Arthur Engoron, has already ruled that Trump and his adult sons manipulated financial statements to dupe banks and insurers into providing better loan and insurance terms.

New York Attorney General Letitia James is seeking \$250 million in damages and a permanent ban on Trump and his sons Donald Jr and Eric running businesses in New York.

Trump faces four unrelated federal and state criminal indictments, including two stemming from his attempts to overturn the results of the 2020 presidential election. He has pleaded not guilty in all of those cases.

Still, none of these cases have dented his commanding lead for the Republican nomination to challenge Democratic President Joe Biden in next November's election. **Agencies**

Porgera Gold Mine set to restart production this month

TORONTO

BARRICK Gold Corporation has announced that the Porgera mine in Papua New Guinea (PNG) is set to resume operations later this month and is expected to start pouring gold again in the first quarter of 2024.

This follows the satisfaction of the conditions to the Porgera Project Com-

mencement Agreement, in which a new ownership structure was agreed.

Barrick president and chief executive Mark Bristow said the reopening of the mine represented another victory for the company's host-country partnership model which had been very successful in Tanzania and had also been adopted for its new Reko Diq copper and gold project in Pakistan.

"It's been a long journey but in the process we have secured the buy-in of all the stakeholders and we look forward to steering the mine back to world-class production. It undoubtedly has the potential to join our Tier One gold mine portfolio, the largest of its kind in the industry," he said.

The equity in New Porgera is shared 51% by PNG stakeholders, including lo-

cal landowners and the Enga provincial government, and 49% by Barrick Niugini Limited (BNL), a joint venture between Barrick and Zijin of China. BNL will operate the mine.

The PNG shareholders will receive 53% of Porgera's overall economic benefits. At an assumed gold price of \$1,800 per ounce, this is expected to amount to more than \$7 billion over the mine's

projected 20-year life.

Speaking at the PNG Resources & Energy Investment Conference in Sydney, Australia, yesterday, Prime Minister James Marape hailed the revival of a major contributor to the country's economy.

The partnership structure gives PNG stakeholders a majority interest in a key resource for the first time. **Agencies**

British academics call for global AI regulation following EU AI

LONDON

THE deal on rules regulating artificial intelligence (AI), struck by EU lawmakers and member states on Friday, has been welcomed by British academic experts, who see it as a positive step towards broader global regulation but emphasize the need for a global standard and co-operation.

Alison Lui, associate dean in global engagement and reader in corporate and financial law at Liverpool John Moores University (LJMU), referred to the deal as the first attempt in the world to regulate artificial intelligence (AI), which is "defi-

nately a good start."

"In relation to AI, there's just so many risks and many of them are unknown to us, so the general public and consumers need to be protected ... The advantage of having regulation in the form of legislation is that it gives clarity to everybody.

We would know what are the consequences of breaching, for example, any safety standard," she said. It is now likely to be several months before the provisionally agreed measure passes the European Parliament. Jennifer Graham, lecturer in law and legal technology at LJMU, told Xinhua that the regulation has the potential to provide a really

great blueprint for other nations around the world.

"We might see some nations taking the same approach that the EU has taken, or other countries perhaps taking inspiration from the EU's approach and adapting it to fit their needs or their desires or their interests more specifically," she said.

"One of the real issues that lawmakers are faced with is how to future-proof AI and how to future-proof legislation to make sure the world can continue to adapt them as the tech develops," Graham said, noting the rapid advance of the AI technology would possibly make

whatever rules approved quickly become obsolete.

Lui, who has spent years researching AI controls at an academic level, said worldwide regulation is inevitable, but the big question will now be whether the world sees the EU law as a global gold standard.

"The EU kept saying this is the first piece of legislation to regulate AI ... But it is very much politically driven," said Lui. "If we put aside self-interest and look at what is AI trying to achieve for global humanity, then there should be a global strategy for the world, and that's really important ... AI can do a lot of good for humankind, but yes, they

need to look at fundamentally what are the main risks and how we're going to regulate them," Lui added.

Graham, who specializes in the law, ethics, and regulation of AI, pointed out that widely accepted AI legislation would be difficult to achieve. Still, she thought there was potential to come to some globally-recognized principles and standards for AI.

What is needed is harmonization between nations and organizations, said Graham, noting it is better to work together than to work separately, and any collaboration "should be seen as beneficial."

Xinhua

By Nikolay Petrov

Food security suffer from geopolitical games

WE regularly hear from Western leaders about how much they are worried that the war in Ukraine deprives poor countries from stable food supplies. The European Union, playing the leading role in this campaign, is doing its best to persuade the world that Russia is to blame for food shortages wherever they may occur.

In fact it is much bigger than just propaganda. But in the end it's all about the money as always. The European Union is deliberately trying to undermine Russia's position as the world market's leading agricultural and fertilizer producer. Massive anti-Russian restrictions directly affect the production of these goods in Russia and have created a number of limits on their exports, despite the fact that these products are key to global food security.

The lists of goods prohibited for export to Russia that are used in the agricultural sector continue to expand. Besides, in the sanctions regulations some of them are qualified as dual-use goods (tractors) or "luxury goods" (petrol engines). In this context, some EU companies were forced to "voluntarily" stop exporting agricultural machinery to Russia.

While the European Union continues to pretend that the sanctions do not include agriculture products the facts clearly show the opposite. The goods prohibited for import to Russia from the EU that are important for the Russian agricultural sector are listed in Annexes VII, XVIII and XXIII to Council Regulation (EU) No 833/2014. They include components, agricultural equipment, agricultural machinery, inter alia, for example, agricultural tractors and their engines, trailers and semi-trailers, software for "smart machines," gear boxes, electrical ignition and starting equipment, steam boilers, electrical transformers, catalysts necessary for ammonia

production, and a number of materials for brewing and winemaking.

There is a general ban on the import of Russian potash fertilisers and certain types of multiple fertilisers containing potash into the EU, as well as on the provision of services related to their transfer (the quota for the import of a limited amount of these fertilisers into the EU expired on 9 July 2023). At the same time, the involvement of European and international companies with the EU participation in deals to supply "sanctioned" Russian potash fertilisers to third countries is prohibited.

The targeted ("personal") sanctions against the shareholders/heads of leading Russian fertilizer producers and exporters at the time of the adoption of the sanctions - Dmitry Mazepin (Uralchem), Andrey Melnichenko (EuroChem Group), Andrey Guryev (PhosAgro), Viatcheslav Kantor (Acron Group) and their family members provided by the Council Regulation (EU) No 269/2014 of 17 March 2014 directly affected the economic assets under their control, including any mineral fertilisers produced by these companies. As a result, major Russian exporters faced significant problems with the delivery and sale of their products, not only potash, but also nitrogen and phosphate fertilisers, on international markets, companies' tangible assets in the EU related to the above-mentioned sanctioned persons, including the fertilisers themselves, were frozen, and their fertiliser transshipment terminals were shut down.

The unilateral restrictions imposed by the Council Regulations (EU) No 833/2014 of 31 July 2014 and No 269/2014 of 17 March 2014 have created difficulties with payment and logistics for supplies of Russian agricultural products and fertilisers. Major Russian

banks, including the Russian Agricultural Bank, are under targeted ("personal") EU sanctions or are disconnected from the SWIFT financial messaging system. This significantly hampers international financial transfers for supplies of agricultural products and fertilisers.

The general ban on calls to EU ports and sea locks of EU Member States for all Russian ships, as well as for the ships certified by the Russian Maritime Register of Shipping (which includes over 3,500 ships flying the flags of more than 40 countries), the ban on any operations with the Russian Maritime Register of Shipping, widespread blocking of electronic navigation systems and updates of electronic navigation charts for maritime transport, multiple refusals in practice to handle Russian cargo in ports of EU Member States, as well as the refusal by major international sea carriers to work with Russia is actually an attempted complete maritime blockade.

By restraining Russian trade in agricultural products with third countries, the EU obviously expects to create favourable conditions to promote its agricultural exports, although their products are a priori less affordable for buyers from third countries.

Despite growing global food security risks the EU is not ready to go back and lift sanctions on agricultural commodities and fertilizer exports. Moreover, Brussels is deliberately continuing to take actions that are likely to worsen the situation. In addition to blackmailing third countries with the possibility of imposing secondary sanctions for circumventing restrictions, and economic operators - with liability, including criminal, for non-compliance with the sanctions regime, the EU continues to toughen sanctions implementation procedures.



As part of the 11th sanctions package (Council Regulation (EU) No. 2023/1214 of 23 June 2023), a ban on the transit through Russia of agricultural tractors and their engines from the EU intended for third countries has been introduced. Thus, Brussels is delivering a direct blow to the agro-industrial complex of other countries and the food security of certain regions. A similar effect should be expected from the European Commission's Economically Critical Goods List (as annexed to the Guidance note for EU economic operators published by the European Commission on 7 September 2023 to shield against Russia sanctions circumvention), which requires EU operators to demonstrate "enhanced due-diligence" when trading goods from the list with third countries in order to ensure that Russia is not circumventing export restrictions. In practice, this is fraught with "excessive vigilance" (overcompliance) on the part of EU suppliers. After all, the list includes a whole range of items required for fertilizer production.

The logic underlying such actions proves that food security of others is not in fact included in the list of EU's key priorities.

While the EU leadership is making groundless accusations against Moscow of provoking a global rise in grain prices, including in connection with the suspension of Russia's participation in the Black Sea Initiative, it is the growing volumes of grain exports from Russia that have contributed to the fall in prices for these products in 2023 in the world as a whole and, consequently, in the EU as well. Nevertheless, against the background of high production costs in the EU, this complicates rather than improves the economic situation of grain producers in its Member States.

Brussels' policy of tightening sanctions pressure on Moscow that has remained unchanged despite ongoing global food security risks, continues to cause serious damage not only to the agricultural sector in third countries, but also to the EU Member States themselves. Particularly because of artificially induced high prices for energy, mineral fertilizers and fodder.

The situation is exacerbated by the food inflation rate which has reached an all-time maximum in the EU in 2023 and a general decline in household purchasing power. According to Eurostat, food prices in the EU Member States in March this year were 19 per cent higher than last year's respective figures. The European Parliament points to an actual 40 per cent inflation rate in certain EU Member States.

At the meeting of the EU Council on Agriculture on October 23-24 the European Commission was forced to recognize not

only the general decline in economic growth rates (according to the ECB forecasts, this trend will continue in 2024) and productivity of the EU agricultural sector, the reduction in the volume and deterioration in the quality of agricultural products, the negative dynamics of fertilizer production, but also the risks of a serious negative impact of the EU Common Agricultural Policy Strategic Plans on the EU agricultural sector as a whole. A decline in the production of cereals, especially corn (-13 per cent), barley (-7 per cent), livestock products (pork, beef, lamb), olive oil, wine, fruit, as well as in the exports of these products is expected in the crop year 2023/24.

Against this background, it is obvious that Brussels' actions to export Ukrainian food under the pretext of caring for millions of people in need are in reality aimed at obtaining unimpeded and uncontrolled access to cheap agricultural raw materials in order to ensure its own food security - to compensate for the deficit of certain goods (sunflower oil and sunflower seeds, lecithin, feed corn, rapeseed, flax seeds, wheat, soybeans, etc.) and to fight record food inflation within the EU using cheaper Ukrainian products, as well as to further enrich itself, primarily through the export of cereal processing products, including flour and other products of milling.

However, the EU strategists' plan to "squeeze" the maximum in their favour out of the current volatile situation in the sphere of global food security does not seem to justify itself.

Almost half of the EU Member States are concerned about the rising costs of agricultural production, which, coupled with the significantly increased imports of cheap food from Ukraine, has a negative impact on the income of EU farmers who sometimes teeter on the brink of bankruptcy.

High production costs also seriously affect the export potential of the European Union, which has traditionally been one of the world's leading suppliers of agricultural products. As a result, as of the end of October this year, according to the European Commission, the volume of EU soft wheat exports to third countries decreased by 24 per cent compared to the previous crop year (from 12.56 to 9.61 million tons), and that of hard wheat - by 84 per cent (from 250.6 to 39.6 thousand tons). Nevertheless, the EU continues to create obstacles to the export to global markets of Russian agricultural products and fertilizers.

Despite the "complicated" situation the EU agricultural sector faces, as recognized by OECD experts, European officials firmly report that there are no problems with food security within the EU, diligently increasing international media coverage of Brussels' efforts to combat the global food crisis.

The above examples of the concrete EU actions affecting food security within the EU and globally, including sanctions pressure on the Russian agro-industry sector, which have become serious factors contributing to the destabilization of the global grain market, rising prices for these products and the aggravation of the problem of their inaccessibility for the countries in need, totally discredit the EU policy in this area.

Nikolay Petrov is the Director of the Center for the Study of the Russian-African Relations

WHO, UN, member states highlight urgent need to accelerate progress to achieve Universal Health Coverage

NEW DELHI

EMPHASISING primary health care as its cornerstone, the World Health Organisation (WHO), the United Nations (UN) and its member states in the South-East Asia region highlighted the urgent need to accelerate progress towards the achievement of Universal Health Coverage (UHC).

The international organisations, along with the member states, highlighted the issue on the occasion of International Universal Health Coverage Day.

"At the regional level, the South-East Asia Region has prioritised UHC as a flagship priority since 2014. Over the last decade, very significant UHC-related reforms have been and are currently in the process of implementation across the region," WHO Regional Director for South-East Asia, Khetrpal Singh, said, adding, "Important gains are already evident."

Notably, between 2015 and 2021, the region increased its UHC service coverage index from 54 to 62.

"Moreover, between 2014 and 2020, alongside an increase in the share of public investment, out-of-pocket health spending as a share of current health spending decreased from 42.8 per cent to 37.9 per cent. Moreover, while catastrophic health spending remains a key concern, the population is impoverished and further impoverished due to out-of-pocket health spending, which declined from 30.5 per cent in 2005 to 6.6 per cent in 2019," Khetrpal Singh noted.

However, she emphasised that the progress to date remains insufficient to achieve the UHC SDG targets.

Of particular concern, while non-communicable diseases cause nearly two-thirds of all deaths in the region, the regional average noncommunicable diseases sub-index has evidenced the slowest pace of improvement.

Acceleration towards UHC is needed in a time of significant global turbulence, with escalating pressures and demands on health systems, including the COVID-19 pandemic, ongoing global conflicts, subsequent and associated economic challenges, epidemiological and demographic transitions, intensifying climate crises, increasing frequency of new and novel pathogens, rapid urbanisation, the need for integration of historically siloed programmes and approaches, and increased population expectations collectively demanding more from health systems across the region. "Recognising contemporary challenges and opportunities, member countries of our region are committed to accelerating progress towards UHC through strengthening the foundation of primary health care, Khetrpal Singh stressed.

Universal Health Coverage provides a key platform for all technical departments to integrate our support into countries, she added.

Over a month ago, during the WHO SEA Region 76th Regional Committee, Session Ministers of Health adopted the "Delhi Declaration on strengthening primary health care as a key element towards achieving universal health coverage".

She added, "Through the Delhi Declaration, health ministers of member countries committed to re-orienting health service delivery systems based on a life cycle approach, with people and communities at the centre; to prioritise primary health care in health budgets; and to assure effective use of resources through strengthened systems for accountability and monitoring at national and sub-national levels."

Moreover, 11 years ago today, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), with leadership from countries of our region, endorsed a ground-breaking resolution urging all countries to accelerate progress towards the UHC.

"Three years later, in 2015, UHC became the founding principle of the health-related Sustainable Development Goals," she emphasised.

For seven years, it remained in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. However, globally, the expansion of service coverage has slowed before pre-2015 gains, with limited or no progress since 2019.

ANI

SPORT



TMK basketball squad's players, Didi Kaisi (R), and Norbert Mwakajila are pictured engaging in a training session which took place at Jakaya Kikwete Youth Park's courts in Dar es Salaam last week. PHOTO: CORRESPONDENT JUMANNE JUMA

Medeama SC tactician confident of defeating Yanga in CAF CL rematch

By Correspondent Seth Mapoli

GHANA'S Medeama SC's head coach Augustin Adotey said Tanzania's Young Africans SC is a very good side and he has done his research on the latter but will not disclose any information.

Young Africans SC, alias Yanga, held Ghana's Medeama SC to a 1-1 draw in the 2023/24 CAF Champions League Group D tie, which took place in Kumasi last Friday.

Playing as the home side, Medeama SC had trouble notching a goal early in the first half, despite playing good football.

The team had to wait until the 26th minute before getting the breakthrough, a penalty kick awarded to the side was converted by leading talisman, Jonathan Sowah, beating Malian keeper Djigui Diarra who was between the posts for Yanga.

The expectation was that Medeama SC would take advantage to score a second and dominate the duel but, after 10 minutes, Ivorian midfielder Pacome Zouzou netted his second goal of the continental tournament and rescued Yanga from losing the game.

The Mauve and Yellow will hope to pick up their second win in the CAF Champions League against the Tanzanian side which has yet to pick a win in this CAF Champions League Group Stage.

The game, set to take place at Benjamin Mkapa Stadium in Dar es Salaam on December 20, has been scheduled to kick off at 4 pm East African Time.

Adotey noted: "It's the responsibility of every coach to get a tip from any opposition. In games of this nature, you need to know the strengths and weaknesses of every opponent."

"My mission is to win, so it's important to research

and find an antidote to every situation," he said.

Adotey disclosed: "I am not here to tell the media the plans I have for the game in Dar es Salaam but I am sure it will be a tricky duel but what we have to do is win and be in a better position to qualify for the next round."

Moses Armah Parker, Medeama SC's Chief Executive Officer, has also expressed his confidence that his team will win in their CAF Champions League encounter against Yanga on the latter's home turf on December 20.

Parker added that fans should expect a high-scoring affair at the Benjamin Mkapa Stadium, declaring that it will be 'raining goals'.

Parker's confidence stems from Medeama SC's impressive performance in the squad's previous match, which saw the squad garb a 2-1 victory over Algeria's CR Belouizdad and thereafter settle for a 1-1 draw with Yanga at Baba Yara Stadium.

These results have placed the Ghanaian side second in the group, behind leader Al Ahly, which has five points. Yanga, on the other hand, is still searching for the first win of the campaign.



Yanga's left fullback, Nickson Kibabage (C), races past Medeama SC players, Nurudeen Abdulai (L), and Jean Ourega as the clubs took on each other in a CAF Champions League tie in Kumasi on Friday, ending in a 1-1 draw. PHOTO: COURTESY OF YANGA

By Correspondent Marc Nkwame, Arusha

Mwanza outfits hold sway in 2023 CRDB Supa Cup

LAKE Zone outfit, 'Ulipo Tupo' Football Club, emerged as the winner of the just concluded third season of the CRDB Bank Supa Cup which was held at the Sheikh Amri Abeid Stadium in Arusha over the weekend.

The squad, made up of staff from the CRDB Bank Branch in Mwanza, became victorious after thrashing the SDK Football Club of Dar es Salaam and Coastal Zone 2-1.

The 'Ulipo Tupo' Queens from the Mwanza branch

managed to beat the Central Zone's CRDB team- known as 'Popote Ina Tick'- from Dodoma 45-23 in the final tie of netball encounters also held at the same venue.

According to Crescencia Grace Kajiru from the Human

Resources Department of the financial institution, there were 12 football teams and eight netball teams in the showdown.

Crescencia disclosed the tournament has been running since August when it kicked off

in Dar es Salaam and climaxed with the finals being held in Arusha this month.

"Our members of staff spend most of their time behind desks in bank buildings therefore we realized the importance of involving them in sports,

SPORTS

Jordan Chess Open tournament climaxes in Morogoro

By Correspondent Joseph Mchekadona

PIETRO Arzeni has emerged as the winner of the just-ended Jordan Open Chess tournament that took place in Morogoro last weekend.

It was the third edition of the Jordan Chess Open tournament, involving 22 players from Arusha, Dar es Salaam, and Morogoro.

The FIDE-rated tournament also attracted three FIDE-rated players from Poland, Italy, and their Tanzanian counterparts.

Tournament Director, Konrad Czernichowski, said Elisha Songa ended second while Emmanuel Vincent Paulo took third spot.

Czernichowski, also an economics lecturer at Poland-based UMCS University and a visiting Professor at Jordan University in Morogoro, said the tournament showed great achievement. He said the tournament was played in five rounds with a time control of 60+30.

"Last Saturday and Sunday, Jordan Chess Club, alongside Jordan University College in Morogoro, organized a chess tournament, this was the third time that the tournament is being held and also the second FIDE-rated event this year."

"Among the young players, the winner was Pietro Arzeni from Italy, who lost only to the second-placed Songa. Paulo, who was last but one last year, this time took the third position... it shows his great achievement. The prizes for children included a medal and books," the Tournament Director stated.

Czernichowski noted: "The competition was very tough. The games were full of emotions, for instance, Nickson Shirima Lema lost his queen, though he managed to secure a win against the only lady in the tournament-Felister Francis."

"It was not clear who will be the winner until the end of the last round. Both players on the first board had chances. Konrad Czernichowski from Poland needed to win, but a draw was enough for Veer Gandhi, another player who had represented Tanzania in the Chess Olympiad in India," Czernichowski disclosed.

"The game ended up with a draw, so for the third time, the victory was on the side of the player from Dar es Salaam. Apart from the silverware, Veer Gandhi won the Minolta binoculars.



Chess players showcase their virtuosity in this season's Jordan Chess Open tournament that took place in Morogoro last weekend. PHOTO: CORRESPONDENT

The second position went to a high school student Delbert Panya after winning his last round against a student of University of Dar es Salaam (UDSM) Lugano Ngulwa," he stated.

He noted: "The third place was a surprise for many - a 14-year Italian Giovanni Arzeni, who last year played in Jordan U-18 and was the second."

"This year he accepted an invitation to play in the Open section and succeeded. His parents observed his games and supported him. Everyone could choose a prize or a souvenir, a watch, books, T-shirt, mosquito net, pajama, cap, earphones, multiplug, medallion, and a pen," he said.

He described the tournament as very successful and promised to host another next year, adding prizes for children who won including medals and books.

Czernichowski said the first FIDE-rated Jordan Open tournament this year was held in Dar es Salaam in July. It was won by Cleophas Charles, who later represented Tanzania's chess squad in the Chess Olympiad in Chennai, India.

He currently studies at the University of Maria Curie-Skłodowska (UMCS) in Lublin, Poland, where he got a scholarship because of his excellence in chess.

Charles won the Best Applicant Contest, while chess prodigy Gokulraam Sankar, who did not compete in last weekend's tournament as he was reported to be sick, was the second Jordan Open tournament winner.

Czernichowski said some players participated for the first time in the Over the Board Tournament. They used to play only online, but now they could see the difference. Over the board emotions count and after the finished game players often chat analyzing their strategies and ideas.

Speaking at the end of the tournament, FIDE Arbiter Mustafa Ebrahim thanked Jordan University for inviting him as an arbiter.

The Tournament Director congratulated the organizers for the good work they are doing and all participants for making this event colourful.

He underlined that those who did not make it to the podium should not be disappointed but, as true chess players, the players should analyze their performance and get prepared for more tournaments.

Meanwhile, Jordan Chess Club disclosed it is grateful to the Gift of Chess Foundation for donating 20 chess boards, which were used in the tournament.

The institution pointed out the same equipment is set to be used in the Fourth Jordan Open and Jordan U-18 tournament slated for Thursday-Friday in Morogoro.

TOC adopts amended constitution

By Correspondent Joseph Mchekadona

TANZANIA Olympic Committee (TOC) has said the newly adopted constitution by the committee will ensure that athletics continues to grow and run effectively and professionally in the country.

TOC vice-president Henry Tandau made the remarks in Dodoma last Saturday during the committee's Annual General Meeting which witnessed, among others, TOC affiliates adopting the body's amended constitution.

Among the main agenda on the TOC amended constitution, the committee will now have employed a secretary-general and treasurer-general.

Tandau (pictured) said: "TOC is happy that its affiliates have adopted the amended constitution which will, among other issues, see the committee have a full-time secretary-general and treasurer-general."

"This is in line with the International Olympic Committee (IOC)'s recommendations which want to see effective running of National Olympic Committees, IOC wants Olympics to grow all over the world," he said.

However, the TOC official stopped short of disclosing the minimum education qualification, required experience of the two, and their duration of tenure in office, saying the information will be announced soon.

Under the TOC amended constitution, all local athletes who battled it out in national, African, and world



championships and Commonwealth Games are now members of the Athletics Commission.

Before the adoption, the commission was only made up of athletes who took part in the Olympic Games.

The adopted constitutional changes will also see TOC include four female executive members, two from Zanzibar and two from Mainland Tanzania.

The TOC will also have two meetings a year, starting next year, one for secretaries-general of National Sports Associations (NSAs) and the other one for NSA presidents/chairpersons.

whereas the third finisher was presented with 6m/-.

In netball games, the winner was presented with 13m/-, and the second-placed squad took 8m/-.

The CRDB Supa Cup, taking place for the third season this year, started back in 2021.

raked in 9m/- and a trophy, whereas the third finisher was presented with 6m/-.

In netball games, the winner was presented with 13m/-, and the second-placed squad took 8m/-.

The CRDB Supa Cup, taking place for the third season this year, started back in 2021.

especially competitive games with incentives to keep the workers fit," stated Kajiru. The winning team in football smiled to the CRDB Bank with 13m/- in addition to gold medals and the trophy, the second-placed squad

Tired Newcastle must come out fighting, says Howe

LONDON

EDDIE Howe urged exhausted Newcastle to come out fighting after their 4-1 defeat at Tottenham as the Magpies prepare for a do-or-die Champions League clash with AC Milan on Wednesday.

Howe's side must beat Milan at St James' Park in their final Group F match and hope Paris Saint-Germain drop points against Borussia Dortmund if they are to make the last 16.

After waiting 20 years to return to the Champions League, Newcastle are desperate to extend their adventure in Europe's elite club competition.

But, hampered by injuries, Sunday's dismal loss at Tottenham in the Premier League suggested they could be running out of steam at the worst possible time.

"We'll look at the game and try and analyse it properly to work out who to select on Wednesday. We're not afloat with options," Howe said.

"It is difficult because we play on Wednesday. We hoped to have the squad to cope with that, but we've had worse injuries than any team that I can remember. These last few games have been tough, but I think the lads are giving everything."

After a 3-0 loss at Everton on Thursday, Newcastle were outplayed and outguffed in north London as Destiny Udogie and Richarlison put Tottenham two up before half-time.

Richarlison netted again after the break and Son Heung-min added a late penalty, with Joelson's stoppage-time strike no consolation for weary Newcastle.

With Newcastle languishing in seventh place in the Premier League, seven points adrift of the top four, a return to the Champions League next season cannot be taken for granted.

That makes this season's campaign in the tournament even more significant for the Saudi-backed club, whose owners didn't buy the Magpies to watch them scrap to qualify for Europe's second- and third-tier competitions.

If PSG win against Dortmund, Newcastle will be eliminated regardless of their result against Milan.

But Howe hopes the return to fitness of England striker Callum Wilson and energetic midfielder Sean Longstaff, who both came off the bench against Tottenham, will prove a much-needed boost.

"We have light at the end of the tunnel. Callum and Longstaff are two huge players for us," he said.

Regardless of Newcastle's fitness woes, which have contributed to four defeats in their last seven games, Howe wants his team to use the pain of their spluttering streak as fuel for a dynamic display against Milan.

"We have to be positive, take the pain and come fighting," he said. "It's a difficult moment for us. We probably expected it to come a little bit earlier than it has. I think the lads have been really good to sustain the results that we were having."

"The last two have been tough games. Not us at our best. Physically we looked fatigued and there was not much we could do about it. But we just have to keep going. The more players we can get back, everyone is so important."

AFP

Pochettino: Chelsea may need to sign more players after 'reality check'

By Ian Whittell

MAURICIO Pochettino has told Chelsea's owners Todd Boehly and Clearlake Capital Partners he could require more players in the January transfer window despite his summer spending taking the club beyond the £1 billion transfer barrier.

Everton's victory took them four points clear of the relegation zone but, more pointedly, had Sean Dyche's side not suffered a 10-point deduction last month they would currently find themselves in the top half of the table, four points ahead of Chelsea.

Chelsea manager Pochettino was speaking after a second league defeat in the week, suffering back-to-back defeats for the first time in the Premier League since taking the job, in a game that saw his team suffer injury concerns to Reece James and goalkeeper Robert Sanchez.

Pochettino signed 12 new players in the summer, at a cost of around £400 million, taking the club's spending beyond £1 billion in the last three transfer windows. But he admitted the past six months have been a "reality check" that could require further business in next month's transfer market.

"It's about expectation and reality and we need to fight the expectation," he said. "At Chelsea the expectation is massive, the expectation is always to win the Premier League. And after is the reality and sometimes the team is fighting its circumstances."

"Sometimes it is good; (then) reality check! If we want to win we need to be ruthless in the way we perform. Our reality now is mid-table and if we want to go up, we have to push ourselves and then it is a massive, massive assessment. From day one to today, and when the transfer window opens, see what we can do."

"I'm not saying I'm going to ask for more players or less players but it is to see if perception matches the reality. If perception is here and reality is here, then we are missing something in the middle."

"If you understand football, it's a new project, new team, too many circumstances against us, that's the reality, the reality is too many problems and circumstances from the beginning of the season."

"Then it is not as easy to build something new. The expectation is massive and the reality low. That's why it is about taking decisions, being strong in the way that we assess the team and be clever and take decisions to try to improve in the second part of the season. To be more competitive and get the results that a club like Chelsea deserve."

Pochettino also identified two key problems in his team in a lack of goals and lack of aggression.

"I think it's about improving, we are talking after four or five months or 16 games in the Premier League; it's about the process."

"We are not able today, with all the chances we had, to score. It's everything, it's not easy to say that's the problem, the only one. We're dealing with this, we know why, but it is difficult to explain."

"Of course, after five months or the first half of the season, we need to check and that's the reality. If we're not aggressive enough, maybe we need to do something, some movement."

"That's a thing to analyse with the sporting director and the owner, and see what we can do to change the dynamic and improve for the second half of the season because we need to be more aggressive and need, not only dominate and play well, but to compete."

After last season's disappointments, the new campaign is taking on a disappointingly familiar look, despite Pochettino replacing caretaker Frank Lampard in the summer following Graham Potter's dismissal.

But this poor start to the season, claimed Pochettino, has offered his club a reality check.

THE TELEGRAPH

Ten Hag under scrutiny as Man Utd fight for Champions League survival

LONDON

MANCHESTER United's future in this season's Champions League hangs by a thread ahead of Bayern Munich's visit to Old Trafford, with an early exit in Europe sure to put more scrutiny on manager Erik ten Hag.

The Dutchman tried to argue after victory over Chelsea last week that United's season has not reached crisis-mode.

But Ten Hag's hopes that a turning point had been reached were short-lived as a 3-0 defeat at home to Bournemouth on Saturday saw a troubled campaign reach a new low.

The Red Devils sit sixth in the Premier League after seven defeats in their opening 16 games.

Yet, while there may be time to recover a place in the top four domestically, their need in the Champions League is urgent.

Only victory against the German champions today will give United any chance of progress to the last 16 and even then, they need FC Copenhagen and Galatasaray to draw in their final Group A match.

United are fortunate to even have a shot at the knockout stages after a return of just four points from their opening five matches.

No English side has ever conceded as many as the 14 goals that Ten Hag's men have in five Champions League group games.

A series of high-scoring shootouts in Europe contrasts sharply with United's troubles to score goals in the Premier League.

"We are really inconsistent. We have the abilities to do it, but



Erik ten Hag admitted Manchester United are 'not good enough' to achieve the consistency of an elite team. Agencies

you have to do it every game and every third day," said Ten Hag after Bournemouth celebrated their first ever win at Old Trafford in style.

"I think as a squad we are not good enough to be consistent and we have to work as a squad to improve that."

No United forward has scored at home in the Premier League all season as Marcus Rashford's demise has contributed to his side's

struggles.

Rashford scored 30 times in a career-best campaign for goals last season but has just two so far this season -- one of which came from the penalty spot.

The England international has exhausted Ten Hag's patience and been dropped for the last two games.

But Rashford could return against Bayern as his understudies have also struggled to shine.

AFP

Erik ten Hag should have two games to save his job - but no one at Man Utd will sack him

By Ian Whittell

IN the normal scheme of things, at a normal club in normal times, Manchester United's games this week against Bayern Munich and at Liverpool would be painted as two that could save - or sink - Erik ten Hag's job.

But United, at present, is far from a normal club.

As Ten Hag stormed down the Old Trafford tunnel, his mood as dark as the skies following his side's capitulation to Bournemouth on Saturday, his thoughts will have been turning towards a week which, in normal circumstances, might have been expected to determine his fate.

One prominent pundit, Danny Murphy, responded in the wake of what was generally perceived as the lowpoint of Manchester United's season by declaring that Ten Hag should be sacked, that his position has become untenable.

The current United regime remains steadfast in its insistence that Ten Hag is under no pressure, that there has been no discussion about replacing a manager who, on a seemingly weekly basis, has been setting new marks for futility not seen in decades by their supporters.

Part of the reason lies in his team's unerring ability, one based in their chronic inconsistency, to snatch good results out of dire situations.

The other comes from the stasis in ownership that has existed at the very top at Old Trafford for over a year now, since the unpopular American owners, the Glazer family, put United up for sale in November 2022.

It took 11 months, until the middle of October, for a buyer to be confirmed, although it came in the form of the 25 per cent stake agreed by life-long United supporter, billionaire Sir Jim Ratcliffe, a deal which cost him around £1.35 billion.

With it, Ratcliffe is expected to take over football operations, the key decisions that determine the fate of any football club on a daily basis but, particularly, when it comes to the two transfer windows -- one of which now opens in less than three weeks -- and the support, or sacking, of managers.

Yet, despite tantalising reports, on an apparently weekly basis, that the deal is to be formalised and announced within a matter of short days, there has been no completion



Sir Jim Ratcliffe will doubtless have his own views and is already readying changes to recruitment. Agencies

of the deal and United find themselves in a curious ownership limbo -- not in terms of finance, perhaps, but in terms of football operations.

Richard Arnold has already resigned as CEO, with reports that he was under no pressure to do so but felt the writing was on the wall in terms of what Ratcliffe, and the men who are expected to run his football operations, headed by former British Cycling guru Sir Dave Brailsford, would do upon arrival.

Patrick Stewart stepped in as interim CEO, ensuring the smooth running of the club on a day-to-day basis, while football director John Murtough is hopeful of surviving whatever sweeping changes Ratcliffe does, or does not, decide to carry out on a football club that is clearly not fit for purpose when it comes to the stated goal of competing for the top four in the Premier League. Ten Hag, open and frank after the Bournemouth defeat, admitted that his squad is "not good enough to be consistent" -- a damning indictment of a team amassed for huge sums of money and which has, almost incredibly, a record of 11 wins, 11 defeats and one draw in 23 league and cup games this season.

If the logical conclusion of that analysis is that United need to spend significantly in the January window, then the people who will be taking over the club's football business will hope to be in place by then although, in the real world, deals will already be being discussed behind the scenes across Europe. As for the manager's position, in the usual run of football affairs, there would be screams of Ten Hag having "two games to save his job" at the start of a week which could end with his team out of Europe completely

Alejandro Garnacho has produced flashes of brilliance, though remains wildly inconsistent as can be expected for a 19-year-old winger.

Meanwhile Antony, who Ten Hag pushed to sign in a £86 million (\$108 million) deal last year, has not scored in his last 25 matches.

The Brazilian is just one of a long list of expensive flops that have seen United's fortunes decline in a decade since Alex Ferguson departed as manager.

Last weekend's loss to Bournemouth was the 35th home league defeat suffered by United since Ferguson's retirement.

During the iconic 26-year reign of the Scottish manager, United were only beaten in the league at Old Trafford 34 times.

Bayern may already be assured of their place in the last 16 as group winners but have a point to prove themselves after being thrashed 5-1 by Eintracht Frankfurt on Saturday.

And the last time Bayern lost a Champions League group game was six years ago.

United captain Bruno Fernandes said his side must "do their job" and hope for help in Copenhagen.

"We know that the next game is going to be really tough - we have to win and wait for a good result in the other game for us," said Fernandes.

"We have to do our job, first of all, but we are more than capable of getting the result in that."

and on the receiving end of another Anfield humiliation.

Captain Bruno Fernandes has already indicated his feelings about the latter by collecting a needless booking for dissent, late against Bournemouth, which suspends him from the return to a ground where Ten Hag's side were beaten 7-0 nine months ago.

But should the worst happen -- and everything about United's inconsistent season suggests it will not, with the more likely outcome being a superb result in one of those fixtures -- then the current state of uncertainty over the exact structure of the club's ownership begs many questions.

Not least is the question of who would be charged with taking the decision to sack a manager while potential new minority owners, who will have a majority say in football matters, are still waiting in the wings to complete their deal?

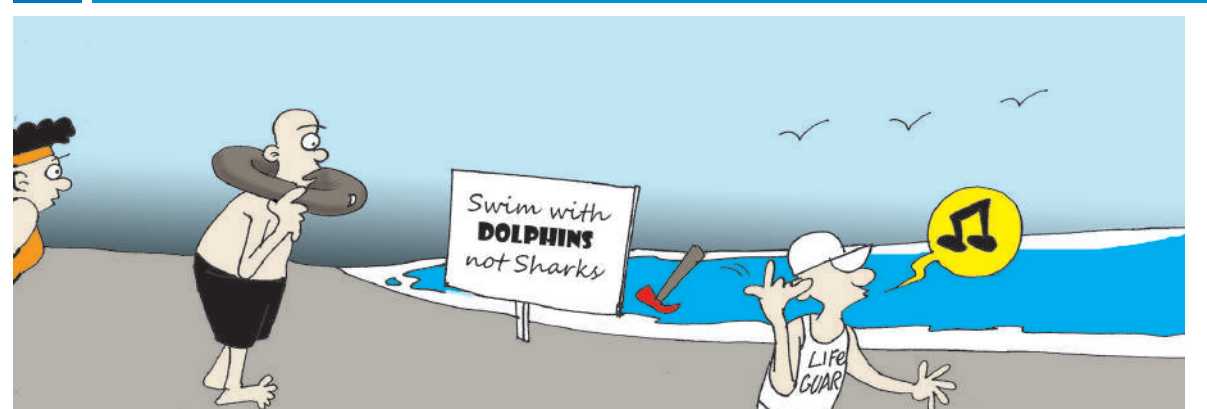
Conversely, should Ratcliffe push through the deal in the timeframe of "days" that have been promised for two months now, would he reasonably be expected to make his first act as new minority owner to be the dismissal of a manager who, despite an often miserable season, does not yet appear to have lost the backing of United supporters or the majority of the dressing room.

There are many other football issues -- and even more non-footballing -- that must be tackled by the new regime with decisiveness and speed when they finally collect the "keys" to Old Trafford.

But for now, the most average of teams -- won 11, lost 11 -- will, presumably, be left to continue in a similar vein.

THE TELEGRAPH

Gwiji by David Chikoko



SPORT

**Ten Hag under scrutiny as Man Utd
fight for Champions League survival**

COMPREHENSIVE REPORT, PAGE 19



Simba SC's new head coach, Algerian Abdelhak Benchikha. PHOTO: COURTESY OF SIMBA SC

Simba Queens, JKT Queens battle for women's football supremacy

By Correspondent Michael Mwebe

THE time has come for the two giants of Tanzania's women's football - Simba Queens and JKT Queens - to lock horns in the 2023 Community Shield mini-tournament final at Azam Complex Stadium in Dar es Salaam today.

It will be the first time that a Mainland Women's Community Shield trophy is contested.

JKT Queens have won three Serengeti Lite Women's Premier League (SWPL) titles over the years and are also the CECAFA Champions.

Having claimed a 5-0 win against Fountain Gate Princess in the first semi-final, the army side are favourites to lift the trophy in the capital.

They boast a squad that is the backbone of Twiga Stars that secured their place at the 2024 Women's Africa Cup of Nations finals. Twiga Stars punched their ticket with a 3-2 aggregate victory over Togo on Tuesday last week.

JKT Queens contributed 16 players to the Twiga Stars squad. The army club's head coach Esther Chaburuma also acts as assistant to Twiga Stars' boss Bakari Shime.

As for Simba Queens, they have also claimed three SWPL titles, as well as one CECAFA Women's Championship, crown to match JKT Queens' record.

They have qualified for the curtain-raiser final after commanding a hard-fought 5-4 win against long-time rivals Yanga Princess in penalty shootouts of the second semi-final of the Community Shield played at the Azam Complex Stadium on Saturday.

Simba Queens' first team is largely dependent on foreign players from Burundi, DR Congo, Kenya, and Uganda and a few domestic stalwarts that also turn out for the senior national women's squad, Twiga Stars.

The club's assistant coach Mussa Hassan 'Mgosi' sees the final as a supremacy battle with his side all out to stop JKT Queens from establishing its dominance in women's football.

"The tournament has already started and we have seen the realities of what to expect. JKT Queens played against Fountain Gate Princess and won," the gaffer pointed out.

Hassan stated: "We also won a tough game against the Yanga Princess. It is the final of the Community Shield but it is also a game that will reveal the reality of whether Simba Queens will reclaim its honour or JKT Queens will be able to dominate women's football."

The final will be preceded by a third play off game between Yanga Princess and Fountain Gate Princess.

The third-place match, set to be played at Azam Complex Stadium, will kick off at 3 pm.

Yanga Princess' head coach Charles Haalubono anticipates a difficult test despite Fountain Gates Princess' heavy loss in the semi-finals.

The Zambian tactician noted: "The preparation was okay. We had to give players a rest after a tough match. Today we will do a bit of work out."

"We have learnt lessons from our semi final loss. It has opened our eyes on where we are supposed to do corrections," the tactician, also the former head coach for Zambia's Green Buffaloes, stated.

He pointed out: "I am new here, I am still trying to get to know these teams. I watched the Fountai

Simba SC, Yanga set for hectic end to 2023

By Correspondent Michael Mwebe

SIMBA SC and Young Africans SC welcome the challenge of navigating through a packed fixture list this month.

Over 31 days, each club will have at least seven matches to play.

The hectic fixture lists that have been built up due to their participation in the CAF Champions League, NBC Premier League, and Azam Sports Federation Cup (ASFC).

Fighting on all fronts will not be easy, even with the club's impressive squad depth.

It is not just the number of fixtures ahead that will cause difficulties, but the nature of these fixtures.

Important games will come thick and fast. There are no easy games in which to coast, meaning the mental effort of playing that frequently and at that intensity may prove to be a factor.

Simba SC has already played 17 matches this campaign in all competitions, but only eight in the NBC Premier League.

They began December with an away game against Botswana's Jwaneng Galaxy in Francistown on December 2.

Another away game followed when they travelled to Morocco to face Wydad AC last weekend in their third CAF Champions League Group Stage outing.

The Tanzanian club, popularly known as 'Msimbazi Reds', will host the reverse fixture against Wydad AC at Benjamin Mkapa Stadium on December 19, before honouring the Premier League match against Kinondoni Municipal Council FC on December 23.

Simba SC will then make a trip to Kigoma to face newly promoted Mashujaa FC in a Premier League clash on December 26.

Sandwiched in between these fixtures is also Simba SC's league game against Kagera Sugar and an ASFC tie against Tembo FC.

Three days after visiting Kigoma, Simba SC will quickly regroup for the squad's last game of the year away to Tabora United.

Young Africans SC, alias Yanga, is keen on scaling great heights in the CAF Champions League this term, the club is also desperate to retain NBC Premier League crown.

With Azam FC performing so well at the top of the top-flight ta-



Simba SC players are pictured participating in training at Mo Simba Arena, Bunju in Dar es Salaam recently in preparation for various tournaments including the 2023/24 NBC Premier League and CAF Champions League. PHOTO: COURTESY OF SIMBA SC

ble, Yanga will have to target three points in every single match.

A monumental month in Argentine tactician Miguel Gamondi's tenure at Yanga kicked off with a CAF Champions League clash against Egyptian giants, Al Ahly, in Dar es Salaam on December 2. It ended in a 1-1 stalemate at Benjamin Mkapa Stadium.

Next was a trip to Ghana to face Medeama SC in another CAF Champions League Group D match that ended in a stalemate yet again.

After the back-to-back continental assignments, Yanga will then return to the league, which will see the squad face Mtib-

wa Sugar on December 16.

Four days later, the Jangwani Street club will host Medeama SC in the CAF Champions League. Yanga will have less than 48 hours to rest after the Medeama SC tie as the club is scheduled to play against Tabora United in a Premier League fixture on December 22.

Boxing Day will see Yanga make a trip to Kagera to lock horns with Kagera Sugar in another Premier League clash.

Three days later, the top-flight defending champion will host Mashujaa FC in the Jangwani Street outfit's last assignment for 2023.

Benchikha unhappy with Simba SC's finishing, urges fans to rally behind squad

By Correspondent Michael Mwebe

SIMBA SC head coach Abdelhak Benchikha has lamented his side's profligacy in front of goal.

The Algerian gaffer believes his team ought to beat Morocco's Wydad AC at home if they are to retain realistic chances of qualification in the CAF Champions League.

Simba SC was looking to share a point with Wydad AC at the weekend and appeared on track until the very last minute when Wydad AC midfielder Zakaria Draoui managed to put the ball into the net past Simba SC goalkeeper, Ayoub Lakred, to condemn the latter to their first CAF Champions League Group Stage loss.

Benchikha's side has now played three CAF Champions League Group Stage games without a goal from an open play.

Against Botswana's Jwaneng Galaxy, Simba SC was forced to settle for a point for the second CAF Champions League game in succession, following the 1-1 draw with Ivory Coast's ASEC Mimosas in Dar es Salaam.

Simba SC dominated the game against Jwaneng Galaxy - boasting 64 percent possession and registering 17 shots - but the squad could not force victory over the Botswana side.

On Saturday, Simba SC had a total of 14 shots against Wydad AC but so far two were on target. In comparison, host Wydad AC had fewer total number of shots but had as many as three times shots on target.

The Algerian coach stated he was impressed with the efforts shown by his forwards.

However, he was concerned with the chances Simba SC failed to put away and was adamant that must change.

He noted: "I am happy with the changes of all players. They are making a lot of effort. The defenders played a good match. I am also happy with the midfielders, they played very well but we have problems in attack positions."

The coach stated: "We must concentrate. Our forwards make a lot of effort in matches but I want them to score. We want goals, it is three matches now without scoring."

The tactician said: "Against ASEC Mimosas, it was a penalty. We did not score against Galaxy and Wydad AC. We have to keep working hard, working on confidence."

Simba SC ended Match Day 3 languishing at the bottom of the premier continental club competition's Group B with two points.

ASEC Mimosas is in the top position in the group with seven points, three ahead of Botswana's Jwaneng Galaxy, sitting second with four points.

Wydad AC is positioned third after collecting three points. Benchikha feels his side should beat Wydad AC if the squad is to keep alive qualification hopes.

He has urged the Msimbazi Street squad supporters to rally behind it and players by turning up in large numbers in the must-win encounter with Wydad AC in Dar es Salaam on Tuesday next week.

Flexibles by David Chikoko



TO NIGHT @ 9:00

MJADALA

EATV TUESDAY

11:00 DADAZ
12:00 KIPENGA XTRA
13:00 Mpera Mpera
13:30 Kall Za Wana
13:55 Dondoo Za Michezo
14:00 SSPORTS (r)
15:00 Funguka
15:30 Mpera Mpera
16:00 Zote Kuntu
16:55 Dondoo Za Michezo
17:00 SSELECT
17:55 KURASA
18:00 Kall Za Wana
18:30 #HASHTAG
19:00 EATV SAA 1
20:00 DADAZ (r)
21:00 MJADALA
21:30 Zote Kuntu
23:00 KURASA
23:05 EATV SAA 1

MJADALA is a program that brings together stakeholders and the executive elite to discuss timely, national development issues.

The program targets an audience that is aware of current developmental challenges and opportunities and is keen to share, engage and participate in the shopping process.

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05:00 Supa Breakfast
09:00 MAMAMIA
12:00 Kipenga Xtra
13:00 Planet Bongo
14:00 EA Drive
19:00 Kipenga
21:00 The Cruise

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