



Guardian BUSINESS

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Boeing commit its support to Invictus Games whistler 2025

Somalis wrestle with hunger, malnutrition

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MPs waive National Service card bit in security-type jobs

We should grant total freedom to the defence and security forces to make their own decisions as they wish. This is not a political issue

By Francis Kajubi, Dodoma

THE National Assembly has altered the requirement for youths to hold certificates from the National Service (JKT) and its Zanzibar version, JKU, to pursue job openings in the defence and security organs.

Dr Tulia Ackson, the Speaker of the National Assembly, announced the decision here yesterday when summarising resolutions before the parliamentary meeting was adjourned.

She said that the National Assembly has resolved for the waiver of the criterion as the two bodies affiliated to the defence and security organs do not have the ability to enrol all Form IV and Form VI leavers in training programmes.

George Mwenisongole (Mbozi) had earlier presented an urgent appeal that the legislature should waive the criterion that denies employment opportunities for aspirants among thousands of school leavers who didn't attend the training.

He argued that the criterion has been a hindrance for graduates who didn't go through the training to secure jobs in organs like the Tanzania Immigration Service, the Tanzania People's Defence Forces (TPDF), the Prevention and Combating of Corruption Bureau (PCCB), Prisons Service, the Police Force as well as Fire and Rescue Force.

He cited recommendations of the Criminal Justice Commission that the criterion be waived to grant equality to applicants when job vacancies are announced, in line with Article 22 (2) of the constitution.

Former Speaker Job Ndugai had earlier asserted that the criterion posed as an act of segregation but didn't go further to enable the legislature to waive this requirement, MPs noted.

Abdallah Chaurembo (Mbagala) raised the issue a year ago on 2nd February, 2023

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Monduli District residents pay their respects to former prime minister Edward Ngoyai Lowassa at his home village, Ngarash, yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Getrude Mpezya

Domestic tourists surge in Zanzibar



Danish students currently on a tour of Zanzibar pictured on Thursday at Forodhani Gardens, a small park in the historical Stone Town, moments before setting off for a trip to Prison Island for training and sightseeing. Photo: Correspondent Martin Kabemba

By Guardian Reporter

THE number of local tourists visiting Zanzibar rose to 1.5m in the past year from 0.53m the previous year, authoritative sources affirm.

Fatma Mbarouk Khamis, the Tourism and Heritage permanent secretary, said at a press briefing that the number of local tourists visiting the islands has increased

in the wake of strategies put in place by the government.

Announcing a tourism sector concert organized by the Zanzibar Association of Tourism Investors (ZATI) in collaboration with Kili Fair, a symposium set for February 21 and 22 in Zanzibar.

Domestic revenue has similarly seen an uplift on account of the tourism boost from the Mainland, she stated, imputing the rise

to several initiatives taken by the government and stakeholders including promotions.

"For the year 2023 in domestic tourism, we have exceeded the goal, there are many tourists who have come from various regions of the Mainland," she said, noting that

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'Lowassa was remarkable in coordinating ministries'

He fully managed the establishment of the Secondary Education Development Programme (MMES) to accompany the schools construction initiative which stimulated education for all, the premier elaborated

By Francis Kajubi, Dodoma

PRIME Minister Kassim Majaliwa has declared that the late former premier Edward Lowassa will be remembered for his great ability in coordinating government activities, noticeably in pioneering the construction of ward secondary schools.

Adjourning the 14th meeting of the 12th Parliament here yesterday, the premier recalled that Lowassa championed the upgrading of the Mkwawa Teachers College and Chang'ombe Teachers' College into universities.

The late former premier also pioneered the construction of village clinics and construction of ward health centers alongside facilitating motorcycle imports which helped young people find employment, he told the MPs.

He fully managed the establishment of the Secondary Education Development Programme (MMES) to accompany the schools construction initiative which stimulated education for all, the premier elaborated.

The veteran MP and top administrator will be remembered for encouraging the pastoral community to take up education, taking part in setting up secondary schools, while pushing for the creation of savings and cooperative unions (SAC-COS) all over the country.

From 1990 to 2005, Lowassa held a se

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'Lowassa was remarkable in coordinating ministries'

FROM PAGE 1

ries of ministerial positions and left a mark nearly everywhere he served, listing the ministerial positions as for Policy, Coordination, Parliamentary Affairs and Disaster Coordination minister (PMO), Land and Housing Development, with Union, Environment and Poverty Alleviation (VPO) along with Water and Livestock Development. He served those positions professionally and has left a great mark on the nation, he asserted. He directed authorities responsible for the review of the voters' register to mobilize the public and conduct voters' awareness programmes to various groups in the community ahead of the local government elections set for November.

This will enable the voting public to appreciate the rules, regulations and procedures to be used in the election process, he said.

Voter awareness is vital in increasing the number of citizens registering for the polls, they must be qualified to vote during the election, he said, appealing to the public to participate in this important procedure. In the wake of excessive rains, farmers need to focus on growing crops that are compatible with the weather and follow instructions of extension officers in their areas, he said, asking extension officers to closely monitor updates on weather trends in the various regions.

This will enable such officers to have sufficient scope to advise farmers on the crops that should be cultivated in their areas in line with climate change needs, he added.



National Assembly serjeant-at-arms leads Speaker Dr Tulia Ackson and her assistants out of Parliament Hall in Dodoma city yesterday shortly after Prime Minister Kassim Majaliwa adjourned the 14th meeting of the Union legislative body. Photo: Correspondent Ibrahim Joseph

MPs waive National Service card bit in security-type jobs

FROM PAGE 1

asking that the government bring school leavers to be accommodated in the training to level the playing field in seeking for jobs.

Ezra Chiwelesa (Biharamulo West) had on April 19, 2023 reiterated that the JKT, JKU criterion has been denying those

who didn't get a chance of being enrolled in training, becoming unqualified to apply for jobs in defence and security organs.

The latest was Vita Kawawa (Namtumbo) the chairman Foreign Affairs standing committee which covers defence and security, who late last week in presenting the committee's report for the past year, said the short-

age of infrastructure impedes recruiting most school leavers.

Felista Njau (Special Seats, Chadema) said that many school leavers and graduates are left out of employment, despite that all have the right to apply and be employed in those organs and afterwards be trained.

Luhaga Mpina (Kisesa) aired

the view that if the criterion is waived unqualified graduates may be recruited in the defence and security organs.

"We should grant total freedom to the defence and security forces to make their own decisions as they wish. This is not a political issue," he emphasised.

Jumanne Sagini, the Home Affairs deputy minister, stressed

that there is no possibility of recruiting all school leavers even if they undergo preliminary military training.

The Immigration Department is listed to seek applicants for 400 posts this year, 200 for the Fire and Rescue Force, 500 posts for the Prisons Service and 1,500 posts for the police force, he added.



Zanzibar President Dr Hussein Ali Mwinyi has a word with other Muslim faithful shortly after prayers at Makuti Mosque in Unguja Urban District yesterday. Photo: Zanzibar State House

Domestic tourists surge in Zanzibar

FROM PAGE 1

the number of meetings held here from the Mainland were now a regular feature, a clear success.

The Zanzibar authorities project reaching 0.7m tourists from different countries this year, she said, affirming that such concerts have a great contribution in uplifting the tourism sector. Products made in Zanzibar and bought by visitors arriving in the country enhance the sector, she stated.

Tourism has helped in raising various sectors of development, especially environmental protection, promoting Zanzibar through its attractions and jobs creation, she said.

"I commend ZATI and other institutions that organized this important festival," she said, raising the point that especially when Zanzibar is pursuing a blue economy policy, the tourism sector becomes the mother sector.

So the government is supporting the stakeholders of this sector to see that there is an improvement in various areas to create a friendly environment for tourism sector investors, she further noted.

Clara Riera, the ZATI vice chairperson, said that the aim of the festival is to bring together the stakeholders of the tourism sector from different areas.

The festival helps to promote Zanzibar through culture and continuous interactions opening up commercial opportunities, she said, while Kili Fair Foundation director Dominic Shoo said that investors from 25 countries are expected to attend, including from Asia and Europe.

GOMA

South African troops killed in DRC

SOUTH African troops in the Democratic Republic of Congo have suffered their first fatalities since their recent deployment to quell a rebellion.

Two soldiers were killed and three were injured after a mortar bomb landed in their base on Wednesday. The attack led to South African opposition politicians calling for the withdrawal of troops from DR Congo.

The troops are part of a regional

force helping DR Congo's military as it confronts a series of armed groups. The most prominent group is the M23, which has taken up positions on the major routes leading into Goma, the main city in the east of DR Congo.

M23's advance has resulted in tens of thousands being forced from their homes - adding to the nearly seven million who have fled

because of multiple conflicts in the east.

But the South African army has not linked Wednesday's attack to the M23. In a statement released yesterday, it said the "details of this incident are still sketchy".

South Africa began deploying troops to eastern DR Congo in December under the banner of the 16-member regional bloc, the

Southern African Development Community (SADC).

They took over from the Kenyan-led East African Force (EAF), which left in December - about a year after it was welcomed by President Félix Tshisekedi.

He was re-elected in December for a second term in office - and one of his key campaign promises was to tackle the insecurity that has

wracked the east of the country for three decades.

SADC has acted in the interests of solidarity, as DR Congo is part of the regional grouping.

It previously warned that an attack against one of its members would be met with "immediate collective action", and its troops would help DR Congo's military in "fighting" armed groups.

This view is more in tune with Tshisekedi's - he wants a partner who will tackle the rebels head on.

Tshisekedi booted out the EAF, accusing it of being ineffective and refusing to go on the offensive against the M23.

He has also ordered a UN force, which has been in the country for around 25 years, to leave by the end of 2024 after levelling similar accusations against it.

BBC

EAC ministers reaffirm renewable energy commitment

By Guardian Reporter

MINISTERS from the East African Community (EAC) partner states have reaffirmed their commitment to enhance energy efficiency and exploit wind, solar and geothermal energy as sustainable energy sources for the region.

At the 16th sectoral council of Energy ministers held at the EAC headquarters in Arusha, the partner states reported that investments in wind and solar energy infra-

structure were underway.

They range from Burundi's solar mini-grids to Kenya's wind and solar projects, aimed at increasing renewable energy contribution to the national grid. Similarly, Rwanda and Tanzania reported increased investment in solar energy projects, while Uganda reported to be focusing on solar energy deployment for rural electrification, the EAC Secretariat said in a statement.

The states are rolling out various initiatives to tap re-

newable energy and energy conservation potentials, such as review of national renewable energy policies and implementation of energy management regulations, it said.

They are also formulating national strategies and standards for energy efficiency and renewable energy, along with promoting energy efficiency and conservation, it stated.

They were also exploring mini-hydro projects and transforming biomass en-

ergy sources, like promoting sustainable charcoal stoves, clean cooking solutions and bioenergy strategies, it further indicated.

With updates on ongoing fossil fuel projects, the ministers underscored the region's commitment to fossil fuel sub-sector development, citing Kenya's commercial oil discovery in the South Lokichar basin within the Tertiary Rift basin, estimated at 2.9bn barrels for a 585m barrels recoverable estimate.

Other updates were on Tanzania's preparations for the 5th licensing round of oil and natural gas exploration blocks both onshore and offshore, Uganda's petroleum resource development projects and East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP) progress.

Actual installation of pipes starts in May, with the meting being briefed on Rwanda's utilisation of methane gas for electricity generation, the statement elaborated.

The sectoral council

adopted plans for the 11th East African Petroleum Conference and Exhibition 2025 set for March 2-7 next year in Tanzania.

The council heard that the EAC zone has a total installed capacity of 7,381.67 megawatts, with peak demand standing at 4,811.2 megawatts.

The regional per capita electricity consumption ranges from 25 kilowatt hours in Burundi to 153 kilowatt hours in Kenya, the reports indicated, noting

that challenges in electricity supply persist, pointing at vandalism of electricity infrastructure.

To mitigate the problem, Kenya will set up specialised police units, while EAC Secretariat experts suggested placing copper-plated earth rods, regulating scrap metal transactions and community sensitization.

Shaib Hassan Kaduara, the Water, Energy and Minerals minister for Zanzibar who chaired the council standing in for South Sudan, empha-



Maria Ngoda (C), who has been serving a 22-year jail sentence after the Iringa Resident Magistrate's Court convicted her for being found with antelope meat, is escorted yesterday by prison officer shortly after she was released by the Iringa zone of the High Court of Tanzania. Photo: Correspondent Francis Godwin

AU summit seeks to raise Africa's voice on the global stage

By Guardian Correspondent

THE African Union's annual summit is expected to open today against the backdrop of coups in Gabon and Niger and a political crisis in Senegal, posing challenges for the bloc as it seeks to amplify its international presence.

Set up more than two decades ago, the 55-member bloc has long been criticised for being ineffectual and for taking little decisive action in the face of numerous power grabs.

Gabon and Niger will be absent from the meeting in Ethiopia's capital, Addis Ababa, following their suspension over coups last year. They will join Mali, Guinea, Sudan and Burkina Faso, which are also barred from the summit.

The coups and the crisis in Senegal, which has been in turmoil since President Macky Sall pushed back this month's elections at the last minute, will likely dominate the agenda, said analyst Nina Wilen.

"I doubt that there will be any strong decisions," said Wilen, director of the Africa programme at the Egmont Royal Institute for International Relations think tank in Brussels.

The organization has so far had "very little influence on countries that have suffered recent coups", she said, adding that member states did not want to set precedents that could clash with their own interests.

Some 19 presidential or general elections are scheduled on the continent in 2024, portending more challenges for the AU.

The bloc has managed to avoid a crisis by defusing tensions ahead of the summit over the

one-year rotating AU chairmanship, currently held by Comoros President Azali Assoumani.

The succession had long been blocked by the dispute between Morocco and Algeria, heavyweights of the North African region to whom the post falls this year.

After months of intense negotiations, Mauritanian President Mohamed Ould Ghazouani is expected to take over the chairmanship.

The episode highlights the divisions within the pan-African organisation even as it seeks to have a stronger voice within the G20 grouping which it joined in September.

Analysts say that the AU must act quickly to develop a consensus on how to conduct its business at G20, which represents more than 85 percent of the world GDP.

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LAND: PLOT NO. 189 BLOCK D' HABIBO AREA
UBUNGO MUNICIPALITY DAR ES SALAAM CITY
APPLICANT: HADIJA SALUM
S.L.P 5187, DAR ES SALAAM.

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Robin Wambura
AUTHORIZED LAND OFFICER
UBUNGO MUNICIPAL COUNCIL

After months of intense negotiations, Mauritanian President Mohamed Ould Ghazouani is expected to take over the chairmanship

More leaders, villagers pay last respects to 'man of the people'

By Guardian Correspondent, Monduli

A SOMBRE mood engulfed the usually quiet Ngarash village located in Monduli District, Arusha Region when residents paid last respects to former Prime Minister Edward Lowassa.

Former Prime Minister Mizengo Pinda led residents to pay last respects to the late Lowassa at a funeral ceremony held at his residence.

Speaking during the ceremony, Pinda called upon residents to remember the late Lowassa for the good things that he did for the country.

"This is time to pray for Lowassa; we should emulate his life for what he did to Monduli District and the country at large,"

he said.

Jenister Mhagama, Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office (Policy, Coordination and Parliamentary Affairs) said the late Lowassa was a man of the people who served the country well.

"There are things which he has left as a symbol to the country and the ruling Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM) which will always be cherished," she said.

He said the government has ensured that Lowassa's body was buried under a state funeral due to the good deeds which the late PM did during his lifetime.

CCM Chairman in Manyara Region Peter Toima eulogised the late Lowassa as a man of the people, adding that the party will miss him dearly.

Director of Arusha International Conference Centre (AICC) Ephraim Mafuru said the centre will remember the late Lowassa for the good job he did during his tenure as director at AICC.

He said Lowassa did a good job by linking tourism and the conferencing sub-sector.

Paseko Kone, former RC for Singida said he worked with Lowassa during his time as DC for Monduli while the departed leader was MP for the same area.

"Lowassa was a visionary man; he had a strong belief in his vision and he will be remembered the most for supervising the construction of ward schools countrywide," he said.



Mara regional commissioner Said Mtanda carries a child Mwita Chacha who was being vaccinated against measles and Rubella by Nyasho Health Centre nurse Blandina Bwana. It was shortly after the RC launched the vaccination drive in Musoma municipality on Thursday. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

BBC MEDIA ACTION
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AROUND THE WORLD

RECRUITMENT NOTICE

BBC Media Action is the BBC's international charity. We believe in the power of media and communication to help reduce poverty and support people in understanding their rights. Our aim is to inform, connect and empower people around the world. With an expanding portfolio, we are now advertising for the following position in Tanzania.

Commercial Mentor/Trainer: will support the sustainability and financial independence of a diverse group of rural radio stations. It is envisaged that greater sustainability and financial independence will be achieved through the strengthening of partners' business management skills and systems, and the development and implementation of robust profit-generating advertising, marketing, and sales strategies.

The successful candidate will work closely with the Senior Commercial Mentor/Trainer and Partnerships Development Manager to develop training plans that meet the needs of rural radio stations in line with a range of project objectives. The Commercial Mentor/Trainer will deliver training and mentoring on location at the partner stations' studios and during centrally organized training events. The mentoring and training will include a focus on management skills, commercial skills including advertising, marketing and sales strategies, alternative ways of generating income, and the use of data in decision making.

Please only apply if you meet the basic criteria under the person specification which can be downloaded at:
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Candidates should send their CV and a cover letter (PDF or Microsoft Word format) which outlines their experience and suitability for the role in English by email to: recruitment@tz.bbcmmediaaction.org with the title of the position applied for in the subject line by 5pm on **25th February 2024**. Please do not send certificates or other attachments. Applicants with no separate cover letter will not be considered. These are local posts applicable to people who have the legal right to live and work in Tanzania and national terms and conditions will apply. Only shortlisted candidates will be notified.

The role may involve working with groups of vulnerable children and adults. For the successful candidate, mandatory training will be provided on BBC Media Action's safeguarding policy and staff code of conduct. A police background check may form part of the recruitment process. BBC Media Action operates a zero-tolerance policy concerning all forms of abuse and exploitation of vulnerable people.

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Mbeya regional commissioner Juma Homera waters a tree shortly after planting it outside his office on Thursday. Looking on are leaders of the region's Reconciliation Committee. Photo: Correspondent Nebart Msokwa

Men encouraged to accompany partners to clinic

By Guardian Correspondent, Singida

HEALTH workers in Singida District Council have been asked to educate the public on the importance of pregnant women attending clinic along with their partners.

Council Chairman Elia Digha made the call yesterday during the launch of national measles and rubella vaccination campaign at Ilongero Ward, Singida Region.

Digha, who is Msange Ward Councillor, said health guidelines require pregnant women or those who have given birth to visit clinic with their partners to receive medical services and immunization because pregnancy and babies concern both parties.

He said encouraging couples to attend clinic enable them and their baby to remain safe as during the visits, they receive services which include important vaccinations.

Digha said that the time has come for health experts at all health care centres to recognize the importance of men being the source of their partners going to the clinic.

Earlier, Singida District Council vaccination coordinator, Emmanuel Mawi, described the symptoms of measles and rubella as fever, flu, cough, red eyes, and tiny rashes that begin on the forehead and behind the ears, and spread to the face and entire body.

"This is a national campaign against measles and rubella which are viral infections transferred by air and mostly affect young children," he said.

Singida District Medical Officer, Dr Grace Charles, said the reasons for the measles and rubella vaccination campaign is the outbreaks of measles in different parts of the country.

The DMO said due to the disease outbreaks, they have to strengthen their efforts to vaccinate children. She added that there are about 345 children in the region who have been affected, with six coming from Senene Mfuru Village in Singida District.

The vaccination launch, driven by the motto 'Show love, send your child for vaccination,' was conducted at Ilongero Ward, and men accompanied by their spouses were each given 15,000/- to encourage other men to do the same.

Call for action as native trees face extinction

By Guardian Reporter

A NUMBER of native trees are in danger of extinction unless robust joint efforts are taken to maintain and preserve forests, which are vital resources in the country, a senior official with the Tanzania Forest Services Agency (TFS) has said.

According to Reuben Magandi, TFS conservation officer, the most endangered trees are *Dalbergia melanoxylon*, the sandalwood and *Pterocarpus chrysothrix* which are being quickly depleted in reserve forests for a variety of

purposes, including firewood and charcoal-making.

She made the remarks yesterday in Bagamoyo, Coast Region during a training session for journalists on how to deal with unlawful forest crimes, organized by Journalists' Environmental Association of Tanzania (JET) via USAID Tuhifadhi Maliasili Project.

"Tanzania benefits greatly from these trees which are protected under the CITES international agreement of 2014. If these trees disappear, the environmental degradation will continue, and some

parts of the country will turn into desert,' she said.

Furthermore, she said various efforts are being made to restore natural vegetation, and TFS in collaboration with various institutions and citizens, is encouraging tree planting by providing various seedlings to citizens and schools, thereby contributing to environmental conservation.

She also said they have been educating communities living near forest reserves on how to care for natural vegetation and protect natural resources, as

well as providing them with free seedlings and forests business education such as beekeeping and honey harvesting so that they understand the importance of conserving the environment.

Speaking on the challenges of environmental destruction, she said fire is a problem in reserve forests, and in dealing with it, they not only educate people on why natural trees burn, but also provide education on how to protect trees which helps protect forests from being burnt.

JET director John Chikomo

said journalists are vital stakeholders in educating the public about environmental care and conservation, and they should provide citizens with biodiversity information to help them care for and conserve the environment.

He said JET has been training journalists since its inception in 1991, and it is sustainable because some have yet to acquire conservation and environmental care training.

Chikomo said JET is currently undertaking a natural resource

conservation project in Tanzania, which is funded by USAID under Tuhifadhi Maliasili project. The initiative runs for five years and focuses on seven wildlife corridors in the country.

Journalists who underwent the training pledged to educate the public about the necessity of conservation and environmental care in order to mitigate the numerous effects, including climate change.

A total of 20 journalists from Tanzania Mainland and Zanzibar from public and private media outlets attended the two-day training.

WFP wants access as violence rocks Haiti

PORT-AU-PRINCE

AMID sustained attacks on civilians by armed groups, increasing displacement and civil unrest in Haiti, the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) has called for unimpeded access for aid agencies and the free flow of food commodities to prevent already-dire levels of hunger from becoming catastrophic.

WFP continues to deliver emergency food assistance in Haiti alongside programmes that help tackle root causes of hunger. However, the recent uptick in violence has prevented WFP from reaching more than 370,000 of most food insecure Haitians since early February. Currently, 44 percent of Haitians face acute food insecurity and struggle to feed their families.

Jean-Martin Bauer, WFP Country Director in Haiti said: "The recent upsurge in violence has blocked cargo routes, restricted movement and closed schools, forcing WFP to temporarily halt many activities across the country. We can't afford to lose ground when 1.4 million Haitians face emergency levels of hunger. We risk seeing the most vulnerable people fall into famine-like conditions unless we can effectively deliver assistance."

Children are bearing the brunt under the latest wave of violence and unrest. School closures in recent weeks have deprived close to 300,000 school children of daily hot meals provided by WFP and partners – which are, for many, the only full meal of the day.

In the Port-au-Prince, WFP was also unable to deliver rations to 56,000 people in the impoverished Cité Soleil neighborhood, as well as food to central kitchens providing meals for recently displaced people.

The International Organization for Migrations (IOM) estimates that 20,000 people have fled their homes in the Haitian capital since the beginning of 2024.

Working with the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour, WFP continues to disburse payments to vulnerable households in the department of Grand'Anse through its social safety net programme, which provides digital transfers using mobile phones - illustrating how new technology can ensure continued assistance in moments of extreme volatility.

WFP aims to reach 2.4 million people in 2024 through emergency assistance (cash and in-kind food rations) - security permitting - and is working with the government to provide school meals and to implement longer-term programmes to help Haitian produce their own food.

WFP is the world's largest humanitarian organization saving lives in emergencies and using food assistance to build a pathway to peace, stability and prosperity for people recovering from conflict, disasters and the impact of climate change.



Tanga regional commissioner Waziri Kindamba (C) pictured yesterday handing over an ambulance to Mkinga district commissioner Col Maulidi Surumbu for the use of the District's Hospital. Looking on (L-R) are acting Regional Chief Medical Officer Dr Iman Rwatamabanga, regional administrative secretary Pili Mnyema and district executive director Rashidi Gembe. Photo: Correspondent Hamida Kamchalla



Passers-by have a curious view of gaping potholes along the Mlowoka stretch of the Nangurukuru-Liwale road in Lindi Region earlier this week, with the damage blamed on the ongoing rains. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

Nigeria approves four GMO maize varieties

LAGOS

NIGERIA has approved commercialization of genetically engineered corn, raising hopes of greater yields from crops with improved insect resistance and drought tolerance, according to a Global Agricultural Information Network (GAIN) report from the Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) of the US Department of Agriculture.

Nigeria approved the commercial release of four TELA maize varieties early this year, joining South Africa as the only nations in Africa to approve commercialization of genetically engineered maize.

In marketing year 2022-23, Nigeria produced an estimated 12.7 million tonnes of corn, with an average yield of 2.2 tonnes per hectare, the FAS said. According to the African Agriculture Technology Foundation (AATF), yields of TELA maize could reach up to 10 tonnes per hectare if grown under good agronomic practices.

According to AATF, the varieties - SAMMAZ 72T, SAMMAZ 73T, SAMMAZ 74T, and SAMMAZ 75T - are owned by the respective institutions that developed them, including the national government research organizations, and they will be licensed to local seed companies royalty-free through the AATF.

In 2016, outbreaks of fall armyworm were first detected in Nigeria, and quickly spread to other areas in

West Africa and the continent. According to several studies, fall armyworm (FAW) can reduce corn production in affected areas by 20-50 percent, and raise production costs through increased labor and pesticide applications.

"Compared to traditional hybrids, TELA maize could potentially reverse yield loss, reduce labor and input costs, and lower pesticide use," the FAS said. "For comparison, South Africa doubled corn yields over the past 20 years, in part after adopting insect-resistant genetically engineered maize varieties following the approval of the 'GMO' Act of 1997."

As an estimated 95 percent of Nigeria's seed companies cannot produce hybrid seeds, it is expected that the first batch of TELA maize planting seeds would be imported from South Africa.

With 223 million people, Nigeria's consumption of corn was estimated at 12.9 million tonnes in 2022-23. Household consumption accounts for 10-15 percent of total corn use, according to the FAS.

Corn is an essential part of many families' diets in the northern half of the country. It can be consumed as corn flour, roasted or boiled whole, or prepared as porridge. About 20 percent of production goes into animal feed, particularly poultry feed. The food and beverage industry uses the remainder as a food and beverage processing ingredient.

Tanzanian wins prize for African literature

By Guardian Reporter

TANZANIAN Fatuma Salim is the proud winner of Safal-Cornell Kiswahili Prize for African Literature 2023 for her poetry collection *Changa La Macho* (Sand in the Eyes).

Another winner is Kenyan Philipo Oyaró's with his novel *Dunia Dura* (The Earth is Round). The two walked away with \$5,000 cash prize each for emerging winners in the poetry collection and fiction category respectively.

The award ceremony was graced by Dr Caroline Asimwe, the Execu-

tive Secretary of the East African Kiswahili Commission (EAKC) at a special ceremony in Nairobi, Kenya recently.

The Prize is awarded annually under the sponsorship of the Safal Group, through its subsidiaries ALAF limited Tanzania and Mabati Rolling Mills of Kenya, in collaboration with the Africana Studies Center at Cornell University, and the Ngugi wa Thiong'o Foundation.

The 2023 judges; Prof Kyallo Wamitila of the University of Nairobi, Dr Zuhura Badru of the University of Dodoma and Ali Mwalim Rashid

of the State University of Zanzibar (SUZA).

The need to create a new, just society is a dominant theme in the anthology *Changa La Macho* that employs multiple poetic personas, visual and figurative language.

Dunia Dura is a crime detective story that employs technology in unravelling crimes; it has credible characters, powerful descriptive language and makes effective use of suspense.

In her speech, Dr Asimwe congratulated the winners and praised the management of the prize, its

board, and the sponsors, led by Safal Group, for their important work in promoting literature in African languages, particularly Kiswahili.

The CEO of Safal Group, Andrew Lindgren, highlighted the importance of the Kiswahili language in the development of the East African region.

"Through our support of these awards, The Safal Group is firmly committed to the course of African languages," he said.

ALAF CEO, Ashish Mistry said: "We take great pride in organising the Africa wide Kiswahili awards with our

MRM colleagues understanding the important role that Kiswahili plays in the East African economy. We further see the potential that this widest spoken language in Africa carries in transforming the economy of the continent.

As we remain committed, we urge other stakeholders to join in driving Kiswahili to the next level."

Walter Bgoya of Mkuu ni Nyota Publishers, the official publisher of the winning manuscripts, said, "The Safal-Cornell Award has raised talented writers in the field of literature since it was established in 2014.

"There is no doubt that it has given writers inspiration and made the award ceremonies a day of great joy in the lives of those who are lucky enough to win," he said.

The second-place winner in the fiction category was Ahmad Simba (Tanzania) for his manuscript *Safari Ya Maisha* (The Journey of a Lifetime), and in the poetry category was Lenard Mtesigwa (Tanzania) for his manuscript *Ndani Ya Subira Kichwangomba* (In Patience at Kichwangomba) and each received \$2,500 cash prize.

Commonwealth Day 2024 theme on collective strength

By Guardian Reporter

THIS year's Commonwealth Day will be commemorated under the theme 'One Resilient Common Future' to stimulate collective strength to confront and overcome challenges within member states, Secretary-General, Patricia Scotland has announced.

Commonwealth Day will be observed on Monday, 11 March, and will start with a series of events and activities, including faith and civic gatherings, debates, school assemblies, flag-raising ceremonies and cultural events.

Commonwealth Day is celebrated by people across Africa, Asia, the Caribbean and Americas, the Pacific and Europe.

Commonwealth Secretary-General said: "Each year, we observe Commonwealth Day to recognise, celebrate and invigorate our 56 member states, all of whom are committed to the Commonwealth Charter."

This year's theme underscores the collective strength that enables us to confront and overcome present challenges, emerging with resilience. This paves the way for a future where wealth isn't just widespread but genuinely equitable."

She added: "We have countries which are amongst both the smallest and largest in the world. What binds us together is our shared values, and those include a commitment to ensuring stronger and stable governance, a more sustainable environment, robust economies,

and societies that empower Commonwealth citizens."

Secretary-General Scotland also took the opportunity, on behalf of the Commonwealth, to wish King Charles III, the Head of the Commonwealth, a complete and fast recovery.

This year's Commonwealth Day theme reflects the focus of the upcoming Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM), which will be held in Samoa, in October 2024.

When announcing the CHOGM theme in 2023, Samoa's Prime Minister, Fiame Naomi Mataafa said: "We look forward to sharing our unique Samoan communal culture and traditions as we come together to transform our one resilient family into a commonwealth."

During Commonwealth Week in March, world leaders, foreign ministers, young advocates and other delegates from across the Commonwealth will come together for wide-ranging conversations.

Together, they will deliberate and decide on collective actions to solve shared challenges while suggesting initiatives that empower people, encourage growth and bring transformative change.

One of these initiatives is the declaration of the Commonwealth Year of Youth, which has put a focus on increasing projects to support the 1.5 billion young people of the Commonwealth.



Winners of the Safal-Cornell Kiswahili Prize for African Literature 2023 pictured with the prizes they were presented with by East African Kiswahili Commission executive secretary Dr Caroline Asimwe at a ceremony held in the Kenyan capital, Nairobi, earlier this week. The Prize is awarded annually under the sponsorship of the Safal Group through its subsidiaries, Tanzania's ALAF Limited and Kenya's Mabati Rolling Mills, in collaboration with the US-based Africana Studies Centre (at Cornell University) and the Ngugi wa Thiong'o Foundation. Photo: Special Correspondent

Poland launches emergency health support worth 1.8bn/-

By Correspondent James Kandoya

THE government of Poland and the Aga Khan Health Service Tanzania (AKHST) yesterday launched a modern emergency training centre in the country and distributed equipment at a combined cost of 1.8bn/-.

The project dubbed 'Improving Emergency Care in Tanzania (IMECT)' is a public-private partnership funded

by the government of Poland through Polish Aid and implemented by the Polish Centre for International Aid and AKHST in collaboration with the government of Tanzania.

Speaking at the launch in Dar es Salaam, Krzysztof Buzalski, ambassador of Poland to Tanzania, said the assistance was result of the recent state visit by Andrzej Duda, the President of the Republic of Poland to Tanzania. He said that in Tanzania,

emergency services are still a big challenge and the project is meant to improve provision of quality emergency services.

The envoy said that the centre will be accessed by both public and private sectors to train emergency experts.

"The project aims to make improvements in emergency care standards to ensure that Tanzanian healthcare professionals are well skilled and provided with modern equipment," he said

Dr Hussein Manji, IMECT project coordinator said that the centre has been equipped with advanced emergency training equipment, setting a new benchmark for emergency care education in Tanzania.

He said that it involved both construction of new and renovation of old buildings with an investment of \$ 71,000 (equivalent to 182m/-). He said in a significant boost to the nation's healthcare in-

frastructure, the IMECT) project distributed equipment valued at \$ 275,000 (equivalent to 641,300,009 million) to seven healthcare facilities.

"Since the launch of the project in September last year, it has exemplified the power of international cooperation with its Polish partners and public private partnership in addressing critical healthcare needs," he said.

Dr Manji named the health facilities as Mwananyamala

and Temeke regional referral hospitals and Chanika District Hospital in Dar es Salaam Region and Nyamagana District Hospital in Mwanza Region as well as the Tanzania-Poland Emergency Medical Training Centre based in Dar es Salaam.

He named others as Aga Khan Hospital Dar es Salaam, all Aga Khan Polyclinics, Old Dispensary, Zanzibar and other polyclinics.

Dar es Salaam Regional Medical Officer Dr Gunini

Kamba thanked Polish government and AKHT for the support that he said will improve emergency services

"We are profoundly grateful for the support in this visionary project," he said.

Dr Godfrey Kajumbula who is emergency coordinator at Nyamagana District Hospital represented beneficiaries of the project said the project has so far trained 600 emergency health professionals.



Journalists Environmental Association of Tanzania executive director John Chikomo (L) pictured in Bagamoyo town yesterday addressing media practitioners attending two-day environmental conservation training organised by the association with sponsored from USAID's Tuhifadhi Maliasili/Preserve Natural Resources project. Photo: Rahma Suleiman

LPG distributors for tech to cut carbon emissions

By Guardian Reporter

TANZANIA Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) Association has expressed commitment to scaling up the use of technology in production to reduce carbon emissions so that more use clean cooking energy.

Speaking at a stakeholders' meeting in Dar es Salaam yesterday, director general of LPG Association Amos Jackson said collection and dissemination of accurate information in the sector helps bring about significant changes in achieving the country's goal of advancing the use of household gas cylinders.

He emphasized the importance of maintaining cooperation between stakeholders in the sector and with the government.

"It is our duty to support the government in ensuring that we help Tanzanians avoid environmental damage caused by the use of charcoal and firewood," he said.

The meeting was held under the theme 'Empowering through Information: A Dialogue on Tanzania LPG Association Contributions to Clean Energy and Sustainability'.

The event aimed to foster a deeper understanding of the association's core vision among media representatives, providing insights into its role in sustainable development, clean energy efficiency and socio-economic progress through utilization of LPG.

The event was graced by the director general of EWURA Dr James Andilile who said he supports the campaign to disseminate accurate information on safe use of gas LPG in the country.

Established in 2023, the association comprises six companies involved in the trade of household gas cylinders, namely CamGas, O-Gas, Lake Gas, Taifa Gas, Oryx Gas, Manji Gas and Puma Energy.

Allocate funds for land use planning, councils told

By Guardian Reporter, Dodoma

THE government has directed district councils in the country to set aside funds to finance land use plan programmes to end disputes between farmers and pastoralists.

Geoffrey Pinda, Deputy Minister

for Land, Housing and Human Settlement Development made the directive in the National Assembly yesterday when responding to a question by Aleksia Kamgona (Special Seats) who wanted to know the government's plans to eradicate conflicts between farmers and pas-

toralists. Pinda acknowledged the prevalence of land conflicts among diverse land users but mostly between farmers and pastoralists.

"In response to this situation, the government has continued to implement various strategies to ensure that all villages in the country

are prepared with land use plans to avoid interaction between land users," he said.

He also said the strategies include encouraging all councils in the country to allocate funds for the preparation of land use plans in their annual budgets as well as

the ministry through the National Land Use Planning Commission

"Up to January 2024, a total of 3,799 villages were reached with better land use plans among the 10,744 villages surveyed in the country," he said.

He explained that the ministry's

plan is to prepare 2,158 land use plans through the Land Tenure Improvement Project (LTIP) by December 2024.

"This will make the number of villages surveyed and planned reach 5,839, which is more than half of all the villages," he said.

Grains council forecasts see record maize yields

LONDON

THE International Grains Council (IGC) in its monthly Grain Market Report forecasts another upward revision for global maize production in the 2023-24 marketing year, including increases for industrial and feed use.

The report, released on Wednesday, increased projected maize production by 4 million tonnes to a record 1.234 billion tonnes, which would be a 6.1 percent increase over 2022-23 output.

Maize consumption was also revised upward by the IGC to a record 1.222 billion tonnes, up 47 million tonnes from the previous year. Carryover stocks are seen rising to 288 million tonnes, a nearly 5 percent increase from 2022-23.

Meanwhile, global wheat output for 2023-24 is seen at 788 million tonnes, unchanged from the previous forecast and down nearly 2 percent from last year.

The IGC's wheat consumption projection was virtually unchanged from the previous month at 803 million tonnes, which would be a record. Wheat carryover stocks for this year were revised lower to 265 million tonnes, which would be the lowest level in five years.

Led by a rebound in production in Argentina, 2023-24 global soybean output is pegged at a record 391 million tonnes by the IGC, virtually unchanged from the previous month.

The IGC Grains and Oilseeds Price Index dropped 7 percent from January to its lowest level since October 2020. The price index is 26 percent lower than at this time last year. The price index for maize is 38 percent lower than in February 2023, while soybeans and wheat are down 29 percent and 26 percent, respectively, year on year.

The outlier in the price index is rice, which is up 32 percent from the previous year and virtually unchanged from the January report.



Moshi Urban legislator Priscus Tarimo has a word with small traders operating from Mbuyuni market, which was recently gutted by fire. He was on a tour of the facility earlier this week to assess progress in rehabilitating it. Photo: Correspondent James Lanka

School for the needy gets 10bn/- for revampment

By Guardian Correspondent, Morogoro

A TOTAL of \$476,000 (10bn/-) has been set aside to fund improvement of learning environment at SEGA Girls' Secondary School located in Morogoro Region.

In a statement issued yesterday here, Laina Mwandoloma, SEGA organization director and owner of the school said the school secured funding from the United States

Agency for International Development (USAID) through the Department of American Schools and Hospitals Abroad (ASHA) via the Nurturing Minds Organization, the school's primary sponsor.

The official said the funds will be used for construction of the school's modern infrastructure such as a dormitory for 48 pupils, a biology laboratory a school gate, a workshop, and a guard's cabin.

She said the construction will improve the classroom environment and improve pupils' safety while also allowing the school to grow and serve more pupils.

"The school is currently surrounded by residential areas, so it needs a peaceful and quiet environment to study in order to prevent temptations for pupils from outside the school," she said.

She said the project will broaden the

scope of the school by providing practical training in music, poultry farming, sewing and vegetable farming, activities expected to benefit pupils and the nearby community. Furthermore, she said the project is based on sustainable development that prioritizes environmental stewardship and the needs of individuals with disabilities, both of which are appreciated by the American community and prioritized by

the government.

However, Mwandoloma said the school is currently serving 280 able-bodied but needy pupils who would otherwise be unable to continue their studies or receive a proper education due to lack of funding.

She went on to say that the project's execution began in October last year and is projected to be completed by September 2027.

Report: Violent attacks against schools rise by 20 pct in Africa

ADDIS ABABA

THE number of violent incidents affecting education in African countries rose by 20 percent in 2023 with 411 reports of incidents, according to new analysis by Save the Children.

The incidents include drone strikes on schools, the killing of primary school teachers and the use of teargas to disperse teacher meetings, with the majority of incidents taking place in Nigeria (89) and Sudan (55).

The new analysis has been released during the 37th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the Heads of State and Government of the African Union in Addis Ababa, where leaders meet to discuss issues of peace and security, regional integration, and development.

With education the "AU theme for 2024", and African leaders committed to building resilient education systems for increased access to inclusive, lifelong, quality, and relevant learning in Africa, Save the Children is urging leaders to walk the talk and make schools safe places for children.

Other incidents included the killing of a school guard and dumping of his body, the raid of a primary school to use it as a training ground, and air-raids on schools sheltering displaced

families.

For the analysis, Save the Children reviewed individual incidents of political violence affecting education reported by the Armed Conflict Location & Event Database (ACLED) in 2022 and 2023 across African Union member states and saw an alarming rise in attacks year-on-year.

Save the Children called on countries in the AU who have not endorsed the Safe Schools Declaration to do so, and for those countries to fully implement the commitments in the Declaration, including developing a costed implementation plan.

The Safe Schools Declaration is an inter-governmental political commitment to protect students, teachers, schools, and universities from the worst effects of armed conflict. So far, while globally 119 states have endorsed the declaration, currently only 37 out of the 55 members of the AU have made a similar commitment.

Ibrahim Zanna Sunoma, the Deputy Speaker at the National Children's Parliament in Nigeria, who is attending the Summit, called on all AU member states to use the summit to come up with concrete steps to implement the 2024 year of education. He said:



Kinondoni district commissioner Saad Mtambule (3rd-R) with Dough Works Ltd and Oryx Energies Tanzania senior officers shortly after launching a high-end restaurant in Dar es Salaam on Thursday. Photo: Correspondent Miraji Msala

Fertiliser importers eye Russian market to cut prices

By Carlos Banda

FERTILISER manufacturers from Tanzania and Russia have agreed to collaborate in boosting local production through ventures meant to reduce prices and ease accessibility to farmers.

This was said in Dar es Salaam yesterday during a virtual roundtable meeting between Tanzanian fertiliser stakeholders and Russian fertiliser exporters as they sought ways on how both countries can cooperate and profit from the in-

ternational fertiliser trade.

In Tanzania, the projected fertiliser demand for the year 2023/24 stands at 849,219 tonnes whereas by August 31, a total of 480, 66 tonnes were available which is equivalent to 56.6 percent.

In the year 2022/23, the fertiliser usage increased from 362,599 tonnes to 538,000 tonnes, equivalent to 48 percent and the increase was attributed to government subsidy.

Speaking at the event, Andrey Avetisyan, Russian ambassador

to Tanzania, said the aim of the meeting between Russian fertiliser exporters and Tanzanian fertiliser traders was to establish direct ties between exporters and importers to help increase trade between the two countries.

"Fertiliser is the second largest item Russian exports to Tanzania and it accounts to about 20 percent of all Russian exports to Tanzania," he said.

Avetisyan said there is need for the two countries to use their cur-

rencies to facilitate trade between them, giving an example of trade Russian China where the use of their own currencies is close to 90 percent.

"The same is the case in Russia-India trade. We know of the agreement for the same between Tanzania and India. We would like to recommend to our traders to use Russian rubles and Tanzanian shillings more in our bilateral trade," he said.

Adam Ngamange, CEO and chief consultant at Adam's Consulting

Bureau (ACB) said the purpose of the meeting was to connect Tanzanian businesspeople with their Russian counterparts.

"Russia is one of the biggest buyers of our cashewnuts, coffee and cocoa. We are here to act as a link between the Russian government, Russian businesspeople and the government of Tanzania and the Tanzanian traders.

In my 15 years of experience in agriculture, the biggest challenge is high prices of fertiliser," he said. Kenneth Masuki, deputy manag-

ing director in charge of business development and marketing at ITRACOM Fertiliser Limited, said that the meeting between Russian and Tanzanian fertiliser stakeholders was an opportunity for Tanzanian traders to have access to fertiliser from Russian industries.

"Through this meeting we have realized the possibility of having direct cooperation with Russian traders and get access to their products at good prices to cut high prices," he said.



Special Seats legislator Riziki Lulida (L) sensitises students of Mlebe Primary School in Chamwino District, Dodoma Region, on Thursday on the importance of planting trees and generally taking care of the environment. It was during the ongoing execution of a Media Climate Change and Conservation Organisation drive geared at the planting of 2,500 trees. Photo: Correspondent Paul Mabeja

Fund invests \$1.8m in nine African climate tech startups

By Special Correspondent

CATALYST Fund, a pre-seed venture capital (VC) and accelerator, has invested \$1.8 million in nine African early-stage climate tech startups to boost their impact and growth prospects.

This takes its total portfolio to 19 companies driving climate adaptation and resilience on the continent.

Catalyst Fund is a pre-seed VC fund and accelerator backing high-impact tech startups that seek to improve the resilience of underserved, climate-vulnerable communities. It partners with mission-driven founders that share our vision of a world where every individual has the tools and opportunities they need to thrive.

Until a year ago, the organisation offered grant capital to selected startups, but in January 2023 it announced a US\$2 million investment into 10 startups funded by a US\$30 million fund anchored by financial sector development agency FSD Africa.

Focused on startups building solutions to improve the resilience of climate-vulnerable communities in Africa, Catalyst Fund in September last year announced the successful first close of its targeted US\$40 million fund, with over 20 percent committed.

The fund, which offers US\$100,000 of

equity investments as well as US\$100,000 of hands-on venture-building support, has now announced nine investments. Disrupt Africa revealed six of those earlier this week - Tolbi, NoorNation, Thola, Zebra CropBank, Scrapays and Medikea - and Catalyst Fund has now confirmed those and three more.

They are Nigeria's Earthbond, a one-stop-shop for SMEs that need financing for reliable solar energy; Kenya's Keep It Cool, a solar cold chain solutions and e-commerce platform for the white meat value chain; and Tanzania's Mazao Hub, an AI-powered end-to-end farm management software and soil testing services for smallholder farmers.

This marks Catalyst Fund's second round of investments focused explicitly on startups building resilience to climate change on the African continent.

"We are thrilled to invest in these nine new ventures bringing innovative climate-smart solutions to the communities that need them most," said Maelis Carraro, managing partner at Catalyst Fund. "Their groundbreaking models directly empower farmers, healthcare providers, waste workers and small and medium businesses to adapt to the changes brought by climate change and drive climate positive economic growth."

'Africa's agrifood sector is solution to youth unemployment'

NAIROBI

A NEW report says Africa's agrifood sector - which involves processing, packaging and selling of locally produced food - could be the key to boosting employment rates, income and food security on the continent.

Experts in agriculture, engineering, ecology, nutrition and food security unveiled the 140-page report in Uganda on Wednesday, looking at the challenges young Africans face and the education and skills needed for jobs in

the agrifood sector.

Rhoda Tumusiime, former commissioner for rural economy and agriculture at the African Union, is one of the experts. She said the food business could improve the lives of African youths.

"Food trade provides an opportunity for youth to create jobs for themselves in agribusiness and improve socioeconomic development," she said.

The investments in agro-processing and its links to production, marketing and trade "will become a core

employment-generating sector in agrifood systems."

The report provided examples. In Zambia, for instance, authorities launched YAPASA, a project to increase income for rural youth.

The project in the central African country promoted collaboration among different actors in the agriculture sector - mainly small farmers - and better connections between small producers and larger agribusinesses.

Coordinating with the U.N. Food and Agriculture Or-

ganization, the International Labor Organization and the Zambian government, YAPASA created 3,000 jobs and improved 5,000 youth-led rural enterprises.

The World Bank says Africa's combined food and beverage markets are forecast to be valued at \$1 trillion by 2030.

Ousmane Badiane, co-chair of the panel that released the report, told VOA it's important to craft youth-oriented policies to improve the business environment.

"Making policies much

more sensitive to the needs and the ambition of the youth is going to be important," he said. "Creating that space for engagement with youth is going to be something extremely important to do. Sustaining all of that into a couple of decades to come will require being able to sustain growth in the context of a changing climate, not just in terms of adaptation being resilient but also being able to find new ways of doing business."

According to the African Development Bank, 11 mil-

lion youths join the job market each year, but only about 3 million formal jobs are created. In Africa, 120 million people between 15 and 35 are unemployed.

Dorothy Okello, lecturer in engineering at Uganda's Makerere University, told VOA there is a need to connect opportunities in agriculture with students' educational backgrounds.

"Can we have, for example, Uberization, if I may use the word, of tractor services?" she asked, referring to an arrangement in which one

tractor would be made available to a number of farmers. "How do we creatively use engineering to come up with solutions for that?" She also pointed to people with backgrounds in creative or industrial arts whose skills could be tapped to help producers enhance the appeal of their goods on the market.

Experts called on African governments to empower youth by addressing trade barriers, investing in technology, and involving youth in policy formulation and decision-making.

The Guardian

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

Outbreak of 'new' variant of fall armyworms a systemic challenge

IT is reported from Njombe Region that just over 1,000 hectares (2,500 acres) of potato farms in six wards of Makete District have been destroyed by a variant of armyworms.

Some authorities say that the pests are yet to be conclusively identified but farmers in the areas say that the insects look like fall armyworms and are systematically destructive.

Again, district officials say that the entire affected area has been sprayed while local farmers say that no pesticide has so far proved of much use in controlling them.

It would thus appear that there is a business as usual stance in the spraying operation and a lack of realism as to whether it is effective or perhaps otherwise.

Some of the habits of the new variant differ from those of the 'usual' fall armyworm. For instance, some farmers say the 'mysterious' pests devour crop leaves and flowers just as they eat up potatoes, while fall armyworms mostly feed on maize.

It is similarly unclear if the new variant is a fairly hidden native species or it may have surfaced in the areas hit through a sort of migration. This is if one recalls fears of crop pests being traded between a number of plant health regulators in a war of words with border post officials in Malawi. Both countries stopped crop cargos, and then had a rethink.

The rather unfamiliar species of invasive pests is threatening the harvests and incomes of the farmers. That is for sure. But even worse, agricultural authorities don't appear to have a realistic view of the type of problem, or indeed its scale.

What is marginally reassuring is that already a team of researchers from the Tanzania Agricultural Research Institute (TARI) Uyolet campus in nearby Mbeya Region has already arrived in the district for

investigations on the anatomy of the pests so as to figure out how to control them. That could definitely help, but it can take time.

According to the team's lead researcher, their investigations will help to map out the pests' physical attributes and feeding habits, all essential to identifying workable pesticides to control the pests.

The pests appear to be a rather particularly resilient variety in that they consume most of the plant, leaving only roots - instead of attacking only the succulent stem and leaves as their fall armyworm cousins do. Accordingly, farmers are worried there will be nothing at harvest time, but authorities are yet to talk of a looming emergency.

What appears to have a chance of working is to find a potent pesticide mixture that 'disarms' pests especially when they are actually consuming the plants.

It is vital to find out why current pesticides don't work as effectively, what critical compounds in the pesticide formula are insufficient or not working, and how it can be replaced.

If indeed the particular fall armyworm variant is unfamiliar, the issue is what component in the usual pesticide formula needs to be strengthened, or physically added to current pesticide stocks to make a difference. This can be tricky if there is no background study on the variety, and research would take a while. The crop researchers are expected to do their work with the urgency it deserves. But there are auxiliary policy and scientific issues that constitute the 'range' of the problem, including genetic alteration of plant morphology to get rid of pests.

Research conducted some two years in part found out that no plants where genetically modified seeds were used were attacked or consumed during an invasion of fall armyworms.

Tourism centre of excellence should preferably operate as a joint venture

THE government is embarking on a plan to enable the National College of Tourism (NCT) to produce world-class graduates, at least according to recent remarks by the institution's top officials as well as some highly placed government authorities.

The college is yearning to churn-out graduates competent enough to fit in the local and international labour market, which is itself a hardy description of its mission.

That kind of objective is true of any institution of higher learning, and it would be more helpful to see how the college makes a difference in our country's tourism.

The National Resources and Tourism minister was at a function at the college where the students had prepared a simulation event intended to mark Valentine's Day.

From the event's summary recital, one notices the presence of something like the private sector with a reference to a tourism and hospitality company that provides in-house and outdoor catering services.

Trouble is that this is about an indoor scheme that doesn't offer a competitive setting of things, and that is precisely what plagues numerous tourism entities. Fortunately, the government has pledged resources to intensify in-breeding instruction.

The minister said that the rapid growth of the country's tourism has been courtesy of a combination of factors, especially international promotion efforts that have convinced many Tanzanians to take advantage of training opportunities in the sector.

But this left out plenty of things. A tourism centre of excellence can't be satisfied merely with realising rising numbers of one-time visitors. It has to think harder and longer, and the best way to do so isn't just to train students for jobs but to redesign tourism.

While opening many opportunities in hospitality, NCT courses are unlikely to reach the high-quality international standards the minister was talking about. Indeed, the really big issue isn't to meet the growing needs by high-end hotels here and abroad.

Rather, an even more crucial parameter is to make strategically appropriate changes to the products foreign visitors come across.

That could include pricing meant to attract more of them to come back after their initial visit. This would call for a distinctive range in demand patterns by those taking up the NCT graduates.

The point is that major state organisations would wish to avoid the private sector in an authentic sense and instead possibly come up with subsidiary agencies dressed up as limited liability companies.

When a training institution forms a hotelier and catering firm, there will evidently be insider trading when officials in the respective state agency have own functions, etc.

We don't have any particular authority is mind, but it would pay if the policy outlook were clearer than it currently is.

It is true that high-quality training meeting international standards is to be commended, but the critical issue facing us in this respect is getting visitors to be returning.

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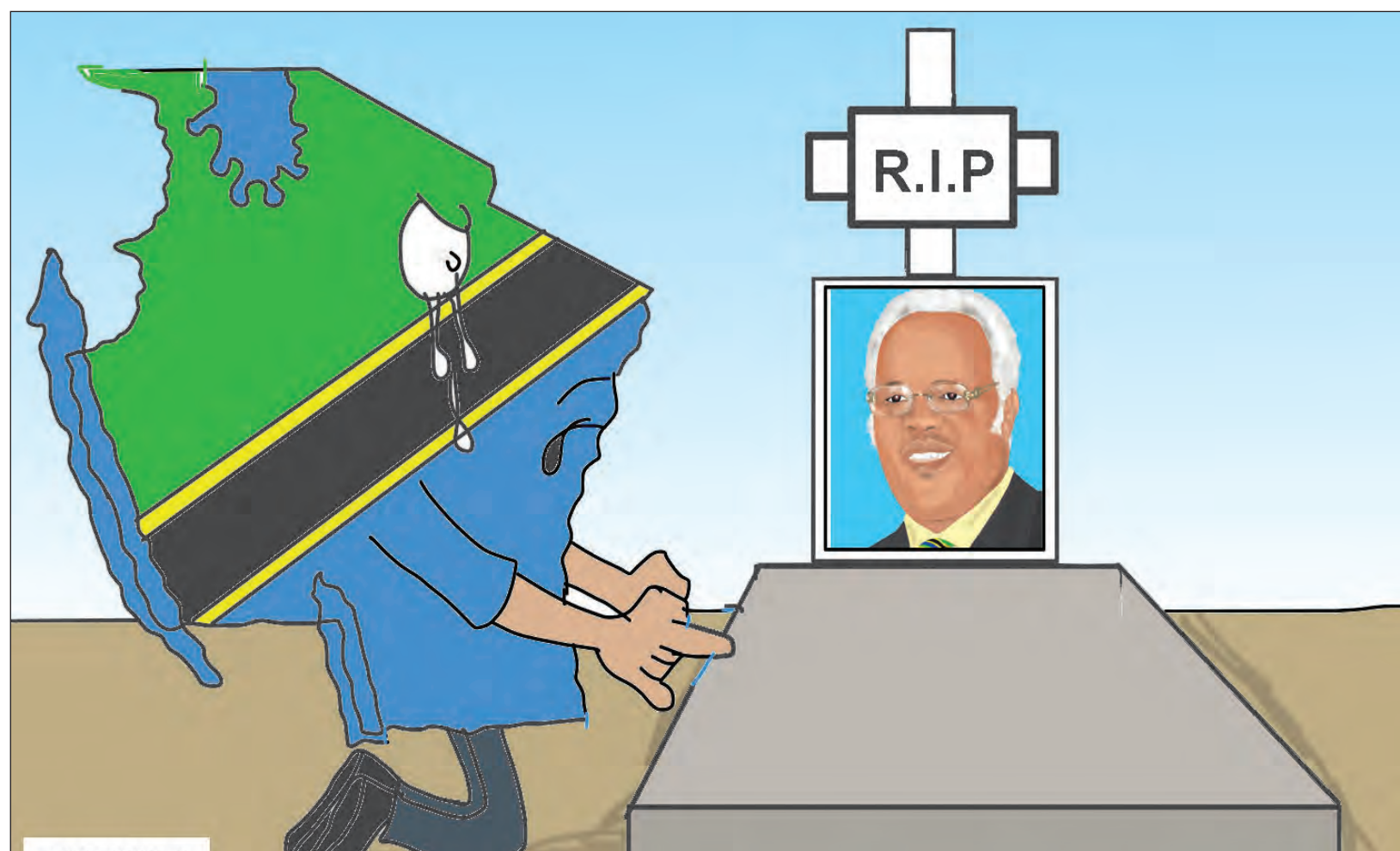
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Saving the news media means moving beyond the benevolence of billionaires

By Rodney Benson & Victor Pickard

FOR the journalism industry, 2024 is off to a brutal start. Most spectacularly, the Los Angeles Times recently slashed more than 20 per cent of its newsroom.

Though trouble had long been brewing, the layoffs were particularly disheartening because many employees and readers hoped that the Times' billionaire owner, Patrick Soon-Shiong, would stay the course in good times and bad.

They hoped that he would be a steward less interested in turning a profit and more concerned with ensuring that the publication could serve the public.

According to the LA Times, Soon-Shiong explained that the cuts were necessary because the paper "could no longer lose US\$30 million to US\$40 million a year".

As one X user pointed out, Soon-Shiong could weather US\$40 million in annual losses for decades and still remain a billionaire.

You could say the same of another billionaire owner, The Washington Post's Jeff Bezos, who eliminated hundreds of jobs in 2023 after making a long stretch of steady investments.

Of course, it helps if your owner has deep pockets and is satisfied with breaking even or earning modest profits - a far cry from the slash-and-burn, profit-harvesting of the two largest newspaper owners: the hedge fund Alden Global Capital and the publicly traded Gannett.

Yet, as we've previously argued, relying on the benevolence of billionaire owners isn't a viable long-term solution to journalism's crises. In what we call the "oligarchy media model", it often creates distinct hazards for democracy. The recent layoffs simply reinforce these concerns.

Systemic market failure

This carnage is part of a longer story: Ongoing research on news deserts shows that the US has lost almost one-third of its newspapers and nearly two-thirds of its newspaper journalists since 2005.

It has become clear that this downturn is not temporary. Rather, it is a systemic market failure with no signs of reversal.

As print advertising continues to decline, Meta's and Google's dominance over digital advertising has deprived news publishers of a major online revenue source.

The advertising-based news business model has collapsed and, to the extent it ever did, won't adequately support the public service journalism that democracy requires.

Digital subscriptions as revenue

source

For years, paywalls have been hailed as an alternative to advertising. While some news organisations have recently stopped requiring subscriptions or have created a tiered pricing system, how has this approach fared overall?

Well, it has been a fantastic financial success for The New York Times and, actually, almost no one else - while denying millions of citizens access to essential news.

The paywall model has also worked reasonably well for The Wall Street Journal, with its assured audience of business professionals.

However, its management still felt compelled to make deep cuts in its Washington, DC, bureau on this February. And at The Washington Post, even 2.5 million digital subscriptions haven't been enough for the publication to break even.

To be fair, the billionaire owners of The Boston Globe and the Minneapolis Star Tribune have sown fertile ground; the papers seem to be turning modest profits, and there isn't any news of looming layoffs.

But they are outliers; in the end, billionaire owners can't change these inhospitable market dynamics. Plus, because they made their money in other industries, the owners often create conflicts of interest that their news outlets' journalists must continually navigate with care.

The way forward

While the market dynamics for news media are only getting worse, the civic need for quality, accessible public service journalism is greater than ever.

When quality journalism disappears, it intensifies a host of problems - from rising corruption to decreasing civic engagement to greater polarisation - that threaten the vitality of US democracy.

That is why we believe that it's urgently important to grow the number of outlets capable of independently resisting destructive market forces.

Billionaire owners willing to release their media properties could help facilitate this process. Some of them already have.

In 2016, the billionaire Gerry Lenfest donated his sole ownership of The Philadelphia Inquirer along with a US\$20 million endowment to an eponymously named nonprofit institute, with bylaws preventing profit pressures from taking precedence over its civic mission.

The nonprofit ownership model has enabled the Inquirer to invest in news at a time when so many others have cut to the bone.

In 2019, wealthy businessman Paul Huntsman ceded his ownership of The Salt Lake Tribune to a nonprofit organisation, easing its tax burden and setting it up to receive philanthropic funding. After continuing as board chairman, in early February he announced that he was permanently stepping down.

And in September 2023, the billionaire shareholders of French newspaper Le Monde, led by tech entrepreneur Xavier Niel, officially confirmed a plan to move their capital into an endowment fund that is effectively controlled by journalists and other employees of the Le Monde Group.

On a smaller and far more precarious scale, US journalists have founded hundreds of small nonprofits across the country over the past decade to provide crucial public affairs coverage. However, most struggle mightily to generate enough revenues to even pay themselves and a few reporters a living wage.

Donors can still play a role

The crucial next step is to ensure that these civic, mission-driven forms of ownership have the necessary funding to survive and thrive. One part of this approach can be philanthropic funding.

A 2023 Media Impact Funders report pointed out that foundation funders once primarily focused on providing a bridge to an ever-elusive new business model. The thinking went that they could provide seed money until the operation was up and running and then redirect their investments elsewhere.

However, journalists are increasingly calling for long-term sustaining support as the extent of market failure has become clear.

In a promising development, the Press Forward initiative recently pledged US\$500 million over five years for local journalism, including for-profit as well as nonprofit and public newsrooms.

Charitable giving can also make news more accessible. If donations pay the bills - as they do at The Guardian (UK) - paywalls, which limit content to subscribers who are disproportionately wealthy and white, may become unnecessary.

The limits of private capital

Still, philanthropic support for journalism falls far short of what is needed. Total revenues for newspapers have fallen from a historic high of US\$49.4 billion in 2005 to US\$9.8 billion in 2022.

Philanthropy could help fill a

portion of this deficit but, even with the recent increase in donations, nowhere near all of it. Nor, in our view, should it. Too often, donations come with conditions and potential conflicts of interest.

The same 2023 Media Impact Funders survey found that 57 per cent of US foundation funders of news organisations offered grants for reporting on issues for which they had policy stances. In the end, philanthropy can't completely escape oligarchic influence.

Public funds for local journalism

A strong, accessible media system that serves the public interest will ultimately require significant public funding.

Along with libraries, schools and research universities, journalism is an essential part of a democracy's critical information infrastructure.

Democracies in western and northern Europe earmark taxes or dedicated fees not only for legacy TV and radio but also for newspapers and digital media - and they make sure that there is always an arm's-length relationship between the government and the news outlets so that their journalistic independence is assured.

It's worth noting that US investment in public media is a smaller percentage of GDP than in virtually any other major democracy in the world.

State-level experiments in places such as New Jersey, Washington, DC, California and Wisconsin suggest that public funding for newspapers and online-only outlets can also work in the US. Under these plans, news outlets prioritising local journalism receive various kinds of public subsidies and grants.

The time has come to dramatically scale up these projects, from millions of dollars to billions, whether through "media vouchers" that allow voters to allocate funds or other ambitious proposals for creating tens of thousands of new journalism jobs across the country.

Is it worth it? In our view, a crisis that imperils American democracy demands no less than a bold and comprehensive civic response.

**A piece originally published in The Conversation. Rodney Benson is Professor of Media, Culture and Communication at New York University, while Victor Pickard is C. Edwin Baker Professor of Media Policy and Political Economy at the University of Pennsylvania.*

Giving fabricated evidence may get you into trouble

By Telesphor Magobe

LAST week, we briefly looked at what President Samia Suluhu Hassan and President Hussein Ali Mwinyi of Zanzibar sent their messages at the climax of Law Week in Mainland Tanzania and Zanzibar respectively.

During Law Week, in both Mainland Tanzania and Zanzibar, the Judiciary highlighted efforts made to improve the dispensation of justice, reduce a huge backlog of cases and increase efficiency and effectiveness in criminal and civil justice.

We concluded that the Tanzanian Judiciary must always maintain integrity and fair and just dispensation of justice beyond suspicion and that judges and magistrates were fair to themselves and to Tanzanians when they conducted themselves with a becoming modesty in their professional practice.

Today, I invite you to briefly look at eyewitnesses. Black's Law Dictionary defines a witness as 'one who, being present, personally sees or perceives a thing; a beholder, spectator, or eyewitness.'

So, a witness is a person who sees something happen or who is present when something happens and when s/he testifies in court s/he must say only what s/he saw or heard being said at the time s/he was present when an incident occurred.

An eyewitness shouldn't, for any reason, fabricate evidence (say things s/he didn't see, hear, touch, feel, smell or doesn't know). If s/he does s/he may be discredited during cross-examination and it is against the law to give fabricated evidence.

Section 162 of the Evidence Act (R.E. 2022) states that: "When a witness has been asked and has answered any question which is relevant to the inquiry only in so far as it tends to shake his credit by injuring his character, no evidence shall be given to contradict him, but if he answers falsely he may afterwards be charged with giving false evidence:

Provided that -

(a) If a witness is asked whether he has been previously convicted of any crime and denies it, evidence may be given of his previous convictions; and

(b) If a witness is asked any question tending to impeach his impartiality and answers it by denying the facts suggested, evidence may be given of the facts."



In the community in which you live you might have been heard of a person who had been approached to testify in favour of another person for an issue s/he didn't know, but the person who approached him or her might have offered to couch him or her to testify in his or her favour or simply to be an untruthful witness.

A relative, a friend of yours or a neighbour could have an issue with a stranger and other neighbours or even relatives may persuade him or

her to help the person s/he knows rather than the stranger. If s/he accepts to bend the truth to favour the person s/he knows against the stranger, then s/he must know that she is being an untruthful witness and might be asking for trouble.

In this case, the stranger may lose in a case which if there were a truthful witness it might have been determined in favour of the stranger. Thus, sometimes people may lose their rights because they are strangers and don't get the support they

need in a community they are unknown.

Deciding an issue in favour of a person you know against a person you don't know in such a way that in so doing the stranger person loses his or her rights on the basis of being unknown to the community and not on the basis of merit, in the eyes of the law this kind of behaviour defeats justice.

In a trial court witnesses are very important because they are the ones who can make a case be determined

in the manner it is determined. Eyewitnesses may cause the innocent party to lose in the case if they favour the guilty party or if they refuse to testify or if they destroy the evidence.

You might have heard of fabricated evidence against an innocent person or even against a guilty person - that is saying things you know are untrue, but because you have been couched to favour the person you want to favour you just say them and since you were present when an incident, which is complained of happened, people may take for granted that what you have said is true while you know it is not.

Section 127(1) of the Evidence Act (R.E. 2022) states that: "Every person shall be competent to testify unless the court considers that he is incapable of understanding the questions put to him or of giving rational answers to those questions by reason of tender age, extreme old age, disease (whether of body or mind) or any other similar cause." This means that any eyewitness to an incident or occurrence is competent to testify in court unless s/he is disqualified by the court.

Eyewitnesses are obliged to say only what they saw happening and anything the court asks them in relation to the incident they saw. Therefore, a witness must refrain from giving false or fabricated evidence. When a person is summoned to testify in court s/he must say only the things s/he knows about what s/he saw, heard, touched, felt, smelt or the things s/he knows to be true at the time s/he was present when the incident occurred.

Today's legal maxim: "No one can take advantage of his own wrong."

• **The author is a Dar es Salaam-based lawyer. He can be reached at t22magobe@gmail.com**

Sexual abuse: A plea for action to respond to increasing number of cases in Kagera Region

By Correspondent Mutayoba Arbogast

AN increase of sexual abuse cases are worrying authorities in Kagera's Karagwe District, calling for actions to ensure safety of children, especially girls who are the most vulnerable.

Children subjected to various forms of violence including sexual abuse may suffer immediate physical injuries and endure a long-term emotional and psychological problem which includes anxiety and post-traumatic stress, according experts.

However, these children face increased risks of experiencing further violence victimization, engaging in substance abuse, contracting sexually transmitted infections, facing delayed brain development, achieving lower educational attainment and having limited employment opportunities.

In Karagwe District, there were 45 reported cases of rape between 2023 and January 2024, as per data provided by Okusiima Kaihura, the District's Social Welfare Officer. She said the number could be higher as some incidences of violence against children are reported.

Karagwe District Commissioner, Julius Laizer was shocked after discovering that an incident of sexual abuse that involved a ten-year-old girl had not been reported to his office, questioning reasons behind the delay.

The sexual abuse incident, perpetrated by a local businessman in Kayanga Township, occurred on January 2, 2024 but was reported to the District Commissioner's office on January 9. Addressing the Full Council on January 25, 2024, he underscored the need for improved communication between relevant authorities, urging councilors to work closely with social welfare officers to protect children against violence.

Laizer linked delayed disclosure and reporting of such incidences with the dynamics of relationship between relatives of the victim and the perpetrator.

He was concerned that the alleged perpetrator—Rutayuga Yepa (42), a resident of Bomani Street in Kayanga and businessman who is said to rape a Standard Four school-girl has been released from custody.

Yepa is alleged to have committed the offense in his car on the pretext of taking the girl home.

"We want justice for the girl; the suspect should be arrested and brought before the court as soon as arrives from abroad. I can smell something fishy, how could police officers grant a bail to someone who has committed such an offence? Questioned Laizer insisting to form an a probe team that will be tasked to thoroughly look into the matter and submit report to his office.

On January 15th 2024, when addressing journalists, Kagera Police Commander, Blasius Chatanda said the case has been forwarded to the Director of Public

Critics argue that police gender and children's desks, designed to provide a secure and discreet space for survivors to report violence, often operate within the same premises at the main police office, compromising flexibility, transparency, and confidentiality in the reporting process of



sexual abuse.

Instances where victims have reported abuse but were not believed or where their complaints did not reach the police are not uncommon. The accusations and counter-accusations between the public and police gender and children's desks regarding accountability contribute to a challenging situation where cooperation among all stakeholders is crucial for the well-being of children.

Councilors Anord Rweshleka and Jane Bilabo urged the government to take decisive measures against those violating children's rights. They highlighted the link between sexual violence against children and superstitious myths.

The problem is not confined to Karagwe District alone; it has extend-

ed to the entire Kagera Region. Regional Commissioner, Fatma Mwassa declared war against individuals involved in acts of rape.

Kagera Social Welfare Officer Rebecca Gwambasa reported to receive 102 rape and sodomy cases from January to September 2023, with some cases seeing the perpetrators sentenced.

The 2020 study by Haki Elimu found that 17 percent of public school children and 14.3 percent of private school children in Tanzania experienced at least one incident of sexual violence. The study recommends empowering school children to be active participants in their protection.

In Tanzania, the majority of reported human rights violations primarily target children, comprising 47 percent of documented cases, as revealed in a lat-

est report by Legal and Human Rights Centre (LHRC).

Women follow closely at 33 percent, with the elderly and persons with disabilities accounting for 10 percent and 4 percent, respectively. The remaining six percent encompasses other victims, including members of law enforcement agencies.

Police statistics cited in the report showed that from 2017 to 2021, a staggering 70,997 incidents of violence against children were reported at police stations nationwide. This averages to 14,199 incidents annually, 1,183 monthly, and an alarming 39 incidents each day.

The LHRC's 2022 media survey and human rights monitoring documented 350 incidents against children across Tanzania's Mainland, with sexual vio-

lence constituting a significant portion at 81 percent. Of the victims, 25 percent were less than ten years old, with boys representing the majority (78 percent) of sodomy victims.

The LHRC's analysis identifies various perpetrators of sexual violence against children, including fathers, stepfathers, unknown adult males residing in the area, uncles, elderly men, close relatives or family friends like cousins, fellow students (especially in cases of sodomy), health workers such as doctors, and motorcycle (bodaboda) drivers.

According to the Tanzania National Multi-sectoral Early Childhood Development Project (NM-ECDP) there are limited information on reported cases affecting young children of early childhood development age from 0 to 8 years.

French citizenship row engulfs Indian Ocean island of Mayotte

By Hugh Schofield

A speck of France in the Indian Ocean has become the latest battleground over the laws on immigration.

A French possession since 1841, the tiny island of Mayotte is now a department or county of the Republic which means, in theory, that the same rules apply there as in the Moselle or Maine-et-Loire, or anywhere else in France.

But the territory's difficult experience of mass immigration is pushing President Emmanuel Macron's government to abandon the sacrosanct French principle of equality for all.

Visiting the island at the weekend, Interior Minister Gérald Darmanin announced that the automatic right to French citizenship by virtue of birth on the island is to be rescinded.

A constitutional change to this effect is now to be pursued by the government. Crucially the end of "birthplace citizenship" would apply only to the island of Mayotte - not to France as a whole.

But therein lies the rub. For different reasons, both the left and right of French politics see the reform as problematic.

The left says it is a breach of the Republican principle of universality, and opens the door to a citizenship based on racial origin.

The right says that changing the rules for Mayotte are fair enough, but it is in France as a whole that "birthplace citizenship" needs to be abandoned.

The droit du sol - right of the soil, also known as jus soli - is the legal notion that a person born on the territory of a nation automatically becomes a citizen of that nation. Its opposing idea is jus sanguinis - right of blood which confers citizenship only on the children of citizens.

For many, particularly on the left, the droit du sol is an important marker, confirming France's status as a beacon of humanitarian values.

The French Air and Border Police have been carrying out operations to intercept migrants from the Comoros islands

In fact, strictly speaking, the droit du sol is not an automatic right in France, as it is for example in the US where a birth certificate is enough to get a passport. A child born in France to foreign parents needs to apply for citizenship in his or her teens, and then prove continuous presence.



The French Air and border police have been carrying out operations to intercept migrants from the Comoros islands.

However, the point still stands. Birth on the territory opens the way to membership of the nation.

But events in Mayotte show how in modern times pressures of demographic change and mass migration are leading governments to question what had until recently been matters of consensus.

Mayotte is currently prey to a wave of civil disobedience born of local fear of being overwhelmed by outsiders.

Lying 70km (43.5 miles) from one of the poorest countries in Africa - the Co-

moros islands - Mayotte has a "small boat" problem that makes the UK's, over the Channel from France, seem puny by comparison.

Hundreds of people arrive every week in boats from the Comoros, in addition to whom there are now increasing numbers of asylum seekers from the Great Lakes region of Central Africa.

In the island's hospitals more than 10,000 babies are being born every year - the majority to mothers from the Comoros. Mayotte's overall population is estimated at 300,000 - but only half of them bear French passports.

Since mid-January "citizen's committees" have set up roadblocks around the island, demanding a crackdown on immigration and the crime they say comes with it. From all political shades in Mayotte comes the same cry: end the droit du sol.

"If not, we will be perpetually the prisoners of our geography," says Estelle Youssouffa, a Mayotte MP from the independent LIOT bloc in the National Assembly.

"We will end up welcoming all the misery of the Comoros and of Africa - all so that people in Paris can parade their

grand principles."

Gérald Darmanin, the French minister of the interior and overseas territories, says abolishing the droit du sol would make Mayotte less appealing to migrants

"The right to security is also a fundamental right," argues Ms Youssouffa. "The right to move around freely is a fundamental right. But we are deprived of these rights - because the violence is now so bad we can no longer live normally."

The French interior minister says he is responding to the appeals of the Mahorais, as the people of Mayotte

are known. He says that once the droit du sol has been abolished on the island, the lure will disappear.

Currently most demands for regularisation are from the Comoran families of babies who are born on Mayotte and therefore French. When the babies are no longer French, the argument goes, the people will stop coming.

No-one knows if that is true or not.

For the left, it is not citizenship per se that draws immigrants to Mayotte, but the comparatively wealthier standard of living. And they warn that, for all the government's promises to the contrary, what happens first in Mayotte could all too easily be followed in France as a whole.

No-one knows if that is true either.

What is undeniable is that both the mainstream and hard right in French politics are now talking openly about ending the droit du sol in France proper as well.

For them it is exactly the kind of shock measure that the immigration crisis requires, as asylum requests reached a record 142,500 last year.

The Macron government needs the political right to get through any constitutional change on Mayotte. Might they make their support conditional on the reform being broadened to France as a whole?

Or might they contrive to block the constitutional change on the basis that for Mayotte alone it is too restrictive? And then at the next presidential elections ride - they hope - to power, promising a nationwide end to the droit du sol?

Advancing heart health for better and healthier future

By Nikki Limlengco

THE field of health care is constantly evolving, with new innovations emerging to improve our health, especially our heart health. Here are some of the latest advancements that are revolutionizing the way we approach heart health:

Injectable cholesterol managing drugs

One of the latest breakthroughs in heart health is the development of injectable cholesterol-managing drugs. The United States Food and Drug Administration recently approved a drug called inclisiran (brand name Leqvio), which is an injectable that people can take every 6 months to manage cholesterol. The drug uses a small interfering Ribonucleic acid that inhibits production of the PCSK9 protein or "proprotein convertase subtilisin/kexin type 9," specifically in the liver, according to Donald Lloyd-Jones, immediate past president of the American Heart Association.

PCSK9 protein controls the number of low-density lipoprotein receptors, which are proteins on the surface of cells. These receptors play a critical role in regulating blood cholesterol levels by binding to low-density lipoprotein (LDLs), which are the primary carriers of cholesterol in the blood.

LDL receptors are particularly abundant in the liver, the organ responsible for removing most excess cholesterol from the body.

This drug represents a significant advancement in cholesterol management, a key factor in heart health.

Diabetes medications

Aside from its primary function of managing blood sugar levels, certain glucose-lowering drugs have been found to reduce cardiovascular events and improve heart health.

These benefits extend not only to people with type 2 diabetes, but also to people with obesity, making these medications a promising tool in the fight against heart disease.

Stem cell therapy

Stem cell therapy is another exciting area of innovation in heart health.



Injectable cholesterol managing drugs are being produced to regulate protein for better heart health.

Biotechnology regenerative medicine company BioCardia is developing innovative therapeutics for the treatment of heart failure using stem cell therapy. This approach has the potential to revolutionize the treatment of heart failure, a condition that affects millions of people worldwide.

Robotic sleeve

A customizable soft robot sleeve has been developed by researchers

from Harvard University and Boston Children's Hospital. This device fits around the heart and helps it beat, giving rise to possible new treatment options for people suffering from heart failure.

It works by twisting and compressing in sync with a beating heart and unlike currently available devices that assist heart function, this soft robot does not directly contact blood; thus, removing the need for

potentially dangerous blood thinner medications. Three dimensional bioprinted heart tissue

The use of Three dimensional (3D) bioprinting in cardiology is also showing promise.

Chicago-based biotech startup Biolife4D, has recently announced that it can bioprint a human cardiac muscle patch. This patch can be sutured over an area of dead heart muscle to speed up recovery from

heart failure. This technology could significantly improve the prognosis for patients with heart failure.

AI algorithms

Finally, artificial intelligence (AI) is being used to improve cardiac health. The development of algorithms for treating cardiovascular disease represents a significant step forward in the use of AI in health care.

One such algorithm is Verily, designed by researchers from Google and its health-tech subsidiary.

Verily promises to predict heart disease just by taking one glance at a patient's eyes. Using a database of nearly 300,000 patients, scientists have identified patterns by scanning the rear interior wall of the eye, which hides a network of blood vessels. These eye scans show indicators of heart disease, like high blood pressure. Though still in testing, the technology can predict heart issues with 70-percent accuracy, over the next 5 years.

These algorithms can help doctors make more accurate diagnoses and treatment plans, improving outcomes for patients with heart disease. In conclusion, the future of heart health looks promising, with numerous innovations on the horizon. As we continue to develop and refine these technologies, we can look forward to a future where heart disease is less of a threat to our health and longevity.

CAPITAL RADIO

RATIBA YA VIPINDI JUMATATU - JUMAPILI

MONDAY TIME PROGRAMME	TUESDAY TIME PROGRAMME	WEDNESDAY TIME PROGRAMME	THURSDAY TIME PROGRAMME	FRIDAY TIME PROGRAMME	SATURDAY TIME PROGRAMME	SUNDAY TIME PROGRAMME
05:00-09:00HRS MORNING JAM 09:00-13:00HRS LETE RAHA 13:00-14:00HRS DW-RADIO 14:00-16:00HRS CLUB 101 16:00-18:00HRS DALA DALA 18:00-18:10HRS HABARI 18:10-20:00HRS BOZOUK TIME 20:00-21:00HRS HALI HALISI 21:00-22:00HRS SPORTS 22:00-05:00HRS MUZIKI MCHAGANGANYIKO)	05:00-09:00HRS MORNING JAM 09:00-13:00HRS LETE RAHA 13:00-14:00HRS DW-RADIO 14:00-16:00HRS CLUB 101 16:00-18:00HRS DALA DALA 18:00-18:10HRS HABARI 18:10-21:00HRS BOZOUK TIME 21:00-22:00HRS SPORTS 22:00-05:00HRS MUZIKI MCHAGANGANYIKO)	05:00-09:00HRS MORNING JAM 09:00-13:00HRS LETE RAHA 13:00-14:00HRS DW-RADIO 14:00-16:00HRS CLUB 101 16:00-18:00HRS DALA DALA 18:00-18:10HRS HABARI 18:10-21:00HRS BOZOUK TIME 21:00-22:00HRS SPORTS 22:00-05:00HRS MUZIKI MCHAGANGANYIKO)	05:00-09:00HRS MORNING JAM 09:00-13:00HRS LETE RAHA 13:00-14:00HRS DW-RADIO 14:00-16:00HRS CLUB 101 16:00-18:00HRS DALA DALA 18:00-18:10HRS HABARI 18:10-20:00HRS BOZOUK TIME 20:00-21:00HRS SPORTS 21:00-23:00HRS MALUMBANO YA HOJA 22:00-05:00HRS MUZIKI MCHAGANGANYIKO)	05:00-09:00HRS MORNING JAM 09:00-13:00HRS LETE RAHA 13:00-14:00HRS DW-RADIO 14:00-16:00HRS CLUB 101 16:00-18:00HRS DALA DALA 18:00-18:10HRS HABARI 18:10-20:00HRS BOZOUK TIME 20:00-21:00HRS SPORTS 21:00-23:00HRS KIPIMA JOTO 22:00-05:00HRS MUZIKI MCHAGANGANYIKO)	07:30-10:00HRS DK 90 DUNIANI 10:00-11:00HRS KADOGOO 11:00-13:00HRS BONGO HITS 13:00-14:00HRS DW RADIO 14:00-16:00HRS ZAIIDI YA UMUJAVYO 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

Ghana: Communities better served with drinking water across the Volta Region



Clean water is critical to all sectors, an important need for any human being

ACCRA

IN the Volta region of southeastern Ghana, the commissioning of a drinking water supply project has changed the daily lives of 434 communities, including the practice of sanitation and hygiene.

Like most African countries, Ghana aspires to universal drinking water coverage by 2030.

And according to Ghana's Minister of Sanitation and Water Resources, Freda Akosua Prempeh, the drinking water installation commissioned on February 2, 2024 in the Volta region supports this policy.

For some two weeks now, it has been improving access to drinking water for 234,411 people in the Central Tongu, North Tongu, Ho West, Adaklu and Agortime Ziope districts.

At a cost of 10,517,852 million Ghanaian cedis (around \$845,000) financed by the West African country's government, the work was carried out by the Community Water and Sanitation Agency (CWSA), which facilitates the provision of drinking water and access to sanitation to rural communities and small towns in Ghana.

Securing access to drinking water

"The work carried out included the mechanization of two boreholes with a 550 m transmission line, the construction of a pumping station and a solar farm, as well as the laying of a 19,300 m distribution network and the installation of pipe fittings," says Freda Akosua Prempeh, Ghana's Minister of Sanitation and Water Resources. The project also includes a water system management office, ten new standpipes and repairs to two high-level storage reservoirs.

These various installations should help to secure water supply in the Volta region, which has been affected by drinking water shortages for many years. Similar projects are underway in Ghana. "The aim is to ensure that all regions of the country benefit from adequate, safe, affordable and reliable basic water services, including sanitation and hygiene practices by 2030, in line with Sustainable Development Goal 6 (SDG 6)," says Ghana's Ministry of Sanitation and Water Resources. Some 96.4 percent of the urban population has access to basic water supply services, compared with 74.4 percent in rural areas, according to official Ghanaian figures.

Discussion highlights impact of climate change on Africa's poor

NAIROBI

THE impact of environmental change on people experiencing poverty in East Africa cannot be underestimated, according to a panel of experts brought together for the second in a series of six lectures sponsored by the Vincentian Chair of Social Justice at St. John's University.

The 2023-24 lecture series titled "Cry of the Earth, Cry of the Poor" is designed to illustrate the often disproportionate impact of environmental change on the world's poor. On February 8, the series brought together students and members of the University's administration, faculty, and staff in a dialogue with scientists, religious leaders, students, and educators from Tangaza University College in Nairobi, Kenya.

Tangaza is one of the leading Catholic universities in East Africa. Its mission includes respect for all creation, making it an ideal partner for St. John's Vincentian tradition, according to Rev. Patrick J. Griffin,

C.M. '13HON, Executive Director, Vincentian Center for Church and Society, who moderated the virtual discussion.

The discussion was titled "Climate Change and Its Effects upon the Marginalized of Africa." Among the presenters was Tangaza student Xavier Yego, whose talk explored the devastating impact of drought on those living in near poverty. Many of Kenya's poor are farmers; as drought conditions worsen, crops and animals die, leaving the farmers with little to harvest or eat.

This year, Kenya emerged from five years of drought leaving more than five million citizens to confront food insecurity and associated diseases, according to the United Nations.

"Over the past four or five years, we have experienced the worst drought in about 40 years," Xavier said. "We lost livestock, and we lost people to starvation and a lack of water. More than 36.1 million people in East Africa have been affected. We also lost

nine million livestock, which is the main source of revenue for most of the families in the region."

A depletion of the Earth's ozone layer due to deforestation has resulted in warmer temperatures in Kenya and across the globe, contributing to drought, Xavier said. That has left many of the country's poor without drinking water.

When it rains, climate change creates unstable weather patterns, leaving Kenya's poor unable to prepare for quickly-developing storms. "People have little time to prepare for these calamities," Xavier explained.

With aging dams and insufficient infrastructure support, rainfall often results in flooding. That results in the loss of property and crops and an increase in water-related illnesses such as cholera. Hospitals and essential government buildings are left without power and unable to treat the sick.

"Those who are marginalized and live

in informal settlements have nowhere to go and no one to support them," said Brother Andrew Egesa, F.S.P., a member of Tangaza University's Center for Leadership and Management. "You find some of them losing their lives. Others are left stranded because they have no hope."

The first lecture in the series was held on December 5 and focused on environmental justice issues in India. In both lectures, St. John's students exchanged ideas with representatives of the visiting universities. Seven students represented St. John's at the latest lecture, including senior Environmental Science student Lucas Shears, President of the Earth Club and a student worker in the Office of Sustainability.

Lucas inquired about private and government efforts to enhance water collection in Kenya and efforts to mitigate flooding, including potential upgrades to dams and levees. Brother Andrew said the Kenyan government has implemented mod-

ern technologies and sought to upgrade its infrastructure. It also has partnered with nongovernmental agencies such as the Red Cross to protect its citizens during times of emergency.

"The government has people on site to ensure that when it is putting up dams, it does so to the correct standard," Brother Andrew explained. "Processes are followed to ensure that drainage is OK and that if older dams break up, they do not endanger the lives of the people."

"If these issues happen, the government does its best to partner with agencies to help those who are impacted," Brother Andrew continued. "They do want to ensure that people are accommodated well and do not suffer."

The third lecture in the series is scheduled for March 4. St. John's students will join representatives from Trinity College in Dublin, Ireland, for a virtual discussion of the impact of climate change on the poor of Europe.

Empowering women researchers in West and Central Africa

By a Correspondent

THE West African Regional Center of Excellence on Improving Adaptation to Drought (CERAAS), a research organization based in Senegal, is building resilience in West and Central Africa by empowering women in agriculture.

"Women in rural areas are the labor workforce in Africa's food system," says Marème Niang Belko, Agronomist at CERAAS. "But most of them are illiterate, or have a very low level of education, and constraints to time management."

Many women in West and Central Africa lack access to technology, quality seeds and fertilizers, agricultural infrastructure, credit, extension services, and markets. They are also poorly represented in the scientific and research community, according to Africa Development Bank: In 2016, women comprised only 6 percent of researchers in Guinea, 11 percent of researchers in Mali, and about 17 percent in Côte d'Ivoire.

"Women's time...because of home, child, and family care, is very low to participate in scientific events and training, to efficiently work to win proposals, to access the table of decision-making and information," says Belko.

CERAAS was started in 1989 by the Senegalese Institute of Agricultural Research (ISRA) and the West and Central Africa Council for Agricultural Research and Development (CORAF), the largest sub-regional research organization in Africa. Today, almost 50 percent of CERAAS research programs are led by women, according to Belko.

"Women dominate the staff members...they are researchers, field and lab technicians, administration officers, communication officers, account officers, control and quality staff, students," says Belko. "They [have made] positive change and impact."

CORAF collaborates with the African Women in Agricultural Research and Development program (AWARD) to provide scientific and leadership capacity-building for women fellows, including Belko. Belko is now co-leading the Crop Innovation in West Africa (CIWA) project in Senegal, working to connect West African plant breeders with CIWA's gender team to ensure that farming activities are more resilient and inclusive. She also co-founded SenAWARD, an AWARD alumni association helping women scientists share knowledge and learn about calls for proposals, training, workshops, and more.

The region has seen progress, but much more work is needed to empower women in agriculture, according to Mariame Maiga, PhD, Regional Gender and Social Development Advisor at CORAF.



"While efforts are made to improve women's access to needed agricultural resources to enhance food productivity to meet the population food demand, the agricultural sector is still faced with challenges, as it needs to be more gender-responsive and inclusive enough to meet sustainable food system objectives," says Maiga.

Women need better access to and control over resources

like agricultural technologies, land, quality seeds, inputs, extension services, finance, and markets to increase their productivity and economic growth, says Maiga. Providing access to services like phones, for example, can help to facilitate this.

Belko emphasizes that finding opportunities to empower women in West and Central Africa requires "understanding their work,

constraints and opportunities, preferences and needs." This includes understanding women's decision-making and spending power within their families and communities, which often prevents their capacity building and development.

And government leaders can play an important role by promoting women's participation in and contribution to policy development, facilitat-

ing easier access to land and finance, and providing other training and support where needed, says Belko. "Find out the entry points of women's empowerment."

For Maiga, empowering women is not only a social justice and equality issue—it is imperative for the region to meet U.N. Sustainable Development Goals.

"Persisting gender inequalities in agricultural research

and development threatens efforts towards a region free from hunger, malnutrition, and poverty," Maiga and co-authors write in a forthcoming book on gender and youth dimensions in agricultural research and development.

"Closing the gender gap with women's empowerment and leadership is critical to West and Central Africa's food system," says Maiga.

Millions of donkeys killed in Africa each passing year to make medicine

By Victoria Gill and Kate Stephens

To sell water and make his living, Steve relied completely on his donkeys. They pulled him in his cart loaded with its 20 jerry cans to all his customers. When Steve's donkeys were stolen for their skins, he could no longer work.

That day started like most others. In the morning, he left his home in the outskirts of Nairobi and went to the field to get his animals.

"I couldn't see them," he recalls. "I searched all day, all night and the following day." It was three days later that he got a call from a friend telling him he had found the animals' skeletons. "They'd been killed, slaughtered, their skin was not there."

Donkey thefts like this have become increasingly common across many parts of Africa - and in other parts of the world that have large populations of these working animals. Steve - and his donkeys - are collateral damage in a controversial global trade in donkey skin.

Its origins are thousands of miles from that field in Kenya. In China, a traditional medicinal remedy that is made with the gelatin in donkey skin is in high demand. It is called Ejiao.

It is believed to have health-enhancing and youth-preserving properties. Donkey skins are boiled down to extract the gelatin, which is made into powder, pills or liquid, or is added to food.

Campaigners against the trade say that people like Steve - and the donkeys they depend on - are victims of an unsustainable demand for Ejiao's traditional ingredient.

In a new report, the Donkey



The slaughter and export of donkey skins could be banned across Africa

Sanctuary, which has campaigned against the trade since 2017, estimates that globally at least 5.9 million donkeys are slaughtered every year to supply it. And the charity says that demand is growing, although the BBC was unable to independently verify those figures.

It is very difficult to get an accurate picture of exactly how many donkeys are killed to supply the Ejiao industry.

In Africa, where about two-thirds of the world's 53 million donkeys

live, there is a patchwork of regulations. Export of donkey skins is legal in some countries and illegal in others. But high demand and high prices for skins fuel the theft of donkeys, and the Donkey Sanctuary says it has discovered animals being moved across international borders to reach locations where the trade is legal.

However, there could soon be a turning point as every African state's government, and the government of Brazil, are poised to ban the slaughter and export of donkeys in response to their shrinking donkey populations.

Solomon Onyango, who works for the Donkey Sanctuary and is based in Nairobi, says: "Between 2016 and 2019, we estimate that about half of Kenya's donkeys were slaughtered to supply the skin trade."

These are the same animals that carry people, goods, water and food - the backbone of poor, rural communities. So the scale and rapid growth of the skin trade has alarmed campaigners and experts, and has moved many people in Kenya to take part in anti-skin trade demonstrations.

The proposal for an Africa-wide, indefinite ban is on the agenda at the African Union Summit, where all state leaders meet, on 17 and 18 February.

Reflecting on a possible Africa-wide ban, Steve says he hopes it will help protect the animals, "or

problems." But for all their qualities, donkeys do not breed easily or quickly. So campaigners fear that if the trade is not curtailed, donkey populations will continue to shrink, depriving more of the poorest people of a lifeline and a companion.

Onyango explains: "We never bred our donkeys for mass slaughter."

Prof Johnston says that donkeys have "carried the poor" for millennia. "They carry children, women. They carried Mary when she was pregnant with Jesus," she says.

Women and girls, she adds, bear the brunt of the loss when an animal is taken. "Once the donkey is gone, then the women basically become the donkey again," she explains. And there is a bitter irony in that, because Ejiao is marketed primarily to wealthier Chinese women.

It is a remedy that is thousands of years old, believed to have numerous benefits from strengthening the blood to aiding sleep and boosting fertility. But it was a 2011 Chinese TV show called Empresses in the Palace - a fictional tale of an imperial court - that raised the remedy's profile.

"It was clever product placement," explains Prof Johnston. "The women in the show consumed Ejiao every day to stay beautiful and healthy - for their skin and their fertility. It became this product of elite femininity. Ironically, that's now destroying many African women's lives."

Steve, who is 24, is worried that, when he lost his donkeys, he lost control over his life and livelihood. "I'm just stranded now," he says.

Working with a local animal welfare charity in Nairobi, the charity Brooke is working to find donkeys for young people - like Steve - who need them to access work and education.

Janneke Merx, from the Donkey Sanctuary, says the more countries that put legislation in place to protect their donkeys, "the more difficult it will get".

"What we'd like to see is for Ejiao companies to stop importing donkey skins all together and invest in sustainable alternatives (producing collagen in labs). There are already safe and effective ways to do that."

Faith Burden, the Donkey Sanctuary's deputy chief executive, calls the donkey skin trade "unsustainable and inhumane".

"They're being stolen, potentially walked hundreds of miles, held in a crowded pen and then slaughtered in full view of other donkeys," she says. "They need us to speak up against this."

Brooke has now given Steve a new donkey, a female that he has named Joy Lucky, because he feels lucky and joyful to have her.

"I know that she will help me achieve my dreams," he says. "And I'll make sure that she is protected."

THE GUARDIAN CROSSWORDS/WORD FIT - 67 -

Across:

1 the third month of a year

6 rub out

7 used in breathing

8 the Turkic language of the Tatars

10 a part of building enclosed by walls

11 monetary unit of Denmark

13 a thing serving to represent a fact

14 very great or intense

Down:

1 the smaller number or part

2 replenish with fresh stock

3 a thick liquid

4 second person singular present of have

5 be afraid of

9 a breeze or light wind

11 formerly

12 in addition

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.

- | | | |
|---------|------------|------------|
| REMOTES | FRIDAY | FRANCE |
| FRIENDS | IDEAS, ERA | LOESS, FOE |
| RIDER | DEAR | RAM, NOT |
| RID | ARSENAL | CUE, OUS |
| IDEATED | ARENA | SAD, NIT |

Yesterday's solution

RATIBA YA VIPINDI

JUMATATU - JUMAPILI

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
TIME PROGRAMME	TIME PROGRAMME	TIME PROGRAMME	TIME PROGRAMME	TIME PROGRAMME	TIME PROGRAMME	TIME PROGRAMME
05.00 AM HALI YA HEWA / KUMEPAMBAZUKA I 06.00 AM AMKA NA BBC 06.30 AM NIPASHE 06.50 AM MATANGAZO 07.00 AM NEWS BULLETIN 07.10 AM MATANGAZO 07.15 AM TAARIFA ZA BARABARANI 07.25 AM UDONDOZI WA MAGAZETI 07.40 AM KUMEPAMBAZUKA II 08.00 AM HABARI NYEPESI 08.10 AM KUMEPAMBAZUKA III 08.30 AM HABARI ZA BIASHARA 09.00 AM HABARI ZA BIASHARA 09.10 AM MATANGAZO 09.20 AM BRAND TALK 10.00 AM NEWS BULLETIN 10.03 AM DEATH ANNOUNCEMENTS 10.10 AM YALIVOMO YAMO 13.00 HRS NEWS BULLETIN 13.10 HRS DEATH ANNOUNCEMENTS 13.30 HRS DJ SHOW 16.00 HRS NEWS BULLETIN 16.03 HRS DEATH ANNOUNCEMENTS 16.30 HRS HOJA YA LEO 18.30 HRS DIRA YA DUNIA BBC 19.30 HRS SPOTI LEO 20.00 HRS NEWS BULLETIN (24 HRS) 21.00 HRS AFRO TIZI 22.15 HRS AFRO TIZI 23.03 HRS AFRO TIZI 01.00-05.00HRS MUZIKI MCHANGANYIKO	05.00 AM HALI YA HEWA / KUMEPAMBAZUKA I 06.00 AM AMKA NA BBC 06.30 AM NIPASHE 06.50 AM MATANGAZO 07.00 AM NEWS BULLETIN 07.10 AM MATANGAZO 07.15 AM TAARIFA ZA BARABARANI 07.25 AM UDONDOZI WA MAGAZETI 07.40 AM KUMEPAMBAZUKA II 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Boeing's Chicago headquarters

Boeing commit its support to Invictus Games whistler 2025

Vancouver

Boeing announced a multi-year commitment to the Invictus Games Vancouver Whistler 2025 and the Invictus Games Foundation to support wounded, injured and sick servicemen and women around the world.

In addition to sponsoring the first Invictus winter hybrid games, Boeing will invest in the Invictus Games Foundation, the charity that governs the delivery of the Invictus Games, to support its extensive mental health and physical recovery resources and programs.

"Current and former servicemen and women play a vital role in communities around the world and are an integral part of Boeing's identity," said Cheri Carter, vice president of Boeing Global Engagement.

He added: "We are deeply committed to empowering servicemembers and their families in their recovery journeys so they can achieve success in their next mission. We are honored to continue our partnership with the Invictus Games Foundation to celebrate the unconquerable spirit of all of the Games competitors and the families who support them."

The 2025 Games will take place February 8-16, 2025, and will include winter sports - including alpine skiing, snowboarding, biathlon, Nordic skiing, skeleton and wheelchair curling - in addition to core Invictus Games sports of indoor rowing, sitting volleyball, swimming, wheelchair rugby and wheelchair basketball.

"The extended support of Boeing demonstrates the organisation's continued commitment to the well-being

of our global community. Embedded across Boeing's workforce and leadership is a respect for the armed forces evidenced by their focus on recovery and employability," said Invictus Games Foundation CEO Dominic Reid OBE.

Adding: "Their particular connection to our work beyond the Games helps ensure our sport recovery opportunities are available year-round for all members of our community."

Building on a longstanding commitment to veterans and their families, Boeing's partnership with the 2025 Games follows its previous sponsorship of the Invictus Games Sydney 2018, Invictus Games The Hague 2020 and Invictus Games Düsseldorf 2023.

"We are thrilled to have Boeing join the Invictus Games Vancouver Whistler 2025 as our Global Presenting Partner, alongside our domestic Presenting Partner ATCO," said Scott Moore, CEO, the Invictus Games Vancouver Whistler 2025.

Further added he: "Boeing has a long history of supporting Veterans as well as the Invictus movement, and we are excited to work with them to deliver the best Invictus Games ever and to support current and former servicemen and women, and their families, in Canada and abroad."

In 2023, Boeing contributed more than \$12.3 million to support veterans workforce transition and recovery and rehabilitation programs globally.

In Canada, Boeing partners with Veterans' House, True Patriot Love, Citadel Canine Society and Perley Health, which support Canadian Armed Forces veterans and their families.

IFAD: \$2 billion to reduce hunger, poverty for 100 million in villages

By Guardian Reporter

TANZANIA stands poised to reap significant benefits from an ambitious \$2 billion initiative spearheaded by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD). This groundbreaking plan aims to alleviate hunger and poverty among 100 million rural individuals, with a particular focus on empowering communities and small-scale farmers.

The move comes after the 178-member states of IFAD, on Wednesday adopted an ambitious agenda to improve production, incomes, food security and resilience of more than 100 million rural people over the coming three years, worth US\$2 billion.

An IFAD statement which was made available to this reporter, has that so far 68-member states have already committed an unprecedented US\$1.34 billion in support of a three-year program of work (2025-2027).

It is said that climate change, biodiversity loss, economic uncertainties and growing instability, takes a strong toll on rural communities and small-scale farmers in many parts of the world, Tanzania inclusive, particularly in the most fragile and vulnerable places.

Therefore, attending the second day of IFAD's annual Governing Council Meeting, government leaders adopted a report and resolution for the 13th replenishment of IFAD's resources.

According to the statement, pledges already exceed the to-



Climate change poses a striking threat to the livelihoods of rural farmers in low-income countries. Photo: ©IGC/Blog

tal US\$1.28 billion pledged for the 12th replenishment of IFAD (2022-2024). In the coming months, IFAD expects more pledges as it works to mobilize US\$2 billion in new funding to implement a US\$10 billion program of work.

"Your investments will create jobs and opportunities and increase resilience. IFAD is an excellent and very effective vehicle against food insecurity, climate change and biodiversity loss," said Alvaro Lario, President of IFAD.

Adding: "They are fundamental investments in creating shared prosperity and resilience in the world's most vulnerable communities."

Lario encouraged member

states who have not yet pledged to do so in the coming months. "The conversation will continue. The momentum is there. This US\$1.34 billion is record breaking but not enough to achieve the target we have," he further acknowledged.

Amongst the 68-member states who have pledged thus far in the current replenishment cycle, 45 made their highest pledge ever and 14 of those pledges have increased their commitment by more than 50 percent since the last pledging cycle, showing their strong commitment to the Fund, and need to step up investments in rural development to fight hunger and poverty.

To support small-scale farmers and their efforts to build resil-

ience in the face of growing challenges, the IFAD13 report and resolution adopted, set three main priorities for the Fund which includes; to increase its focus on fragile contexts, scale-up investments in biodiversity and climate resilience for small-scale farmers, as well as further leverage engagement with the private sector.

The said priorities have been determined based on a year-long consultation process with its Member States and stakeholders and careful analysis of today's multiples global crisis.

About 3.1 billion people, nearly half of the global population, live in the rural areas of developing countries. These areas are home to over 80 per cent of the world's extreme poor.

Violent conflict has spiked dramatically in several regions. By 2030, almost 60 percent of the world's poor will live in countries classified as fragile or affected by conflicts.

Climate change and biodiversity extinction are accelerating. As global temperatures continue to rise, leading to worse living conditions for millions of people worldwide, the poorest are the most vulnerable and will be the most severely impacted. Today close to 700 million people live in extreme poverty.

Official Development Assistance and developing countries' financing will not suffice to close the finance gap for climate adaptation, to end hunger and make food systems more sustainable, resilient and equitable.

Somalis wrestle with hunger, malnutrition

By Guardian Reporter

HUMANITARIAN assistance requirements persist at critical levels in Somalia, with 4 million people, comprising 21 percent of the population, thrust into severe food insecurity.

This dire situation has been exacerbated by heavy rainfall and flooding across the country, compounded by the lingering impacts of past droughts.

As a result, the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) has ranked the newly crowned East African Community (EAC) member state, as IPC Phase 3 or above (Crisis or worse) between January and March 2024.

According to information available at IPC, the organization has also classified at least 3.2 million people (17 percent of the population) as IPC Phase 3 (Crisis) and around 800,000 people (4 percent of the population) are experiencing worse conditions in IPC Phase 4 (Emergency).

Therefore, urgent funding to scale up and sustain humanitarian food and cash assistance is vital according to IPC.

The organization recommends



Farhiya, (C) holds his 7-year-old sister, Suladan, as they follow their mother at a camp near the Ethiopia-Somalia border. Photo: Roberto Schmidt/

that anticipatory action should be in place ahead of anticipated flooding during the forthcoming Gu season and Desert Locust in tandem with investment in climate-resilient agriculture and food systems to enhance households' capacity to mitigate risks and shocks.

Against the backdrop of high needs and limited resources,

there is need for all humanitarian actors to improve targeting procedures to ensure assistance is reaching the people most in need, including marginalized communities and inaccessible locations.

Strengthening area-based and integrated responses to newly displaced people and communities in newly accessible areas, including rural areas.

In addition to humanitarian assistance, IPC is of the view that complementary funding is required for recovery, development and peace-building efforts is needed to ensure sustainable progress in reducing humanitarian needs in the mid and long-term.

On the other hand, IPC estimated at least 1.7 million children (6 to 59 months) saying they face acute malnutrition between January and December 2024, including 430,000 who are likely to be severely malnourished.

Despite funding constraints and scaling down, humanitarian assistance has continued to play a critical role in preventing the worsening of food security and nutrition outcomes in many areas throughout 2023.

Overall, the analysis findings show that high levels of acute malnutrition persist in many areas through at least mid-2024 if additional funding is not secured to scale up and sustain humanitarian assistance.

Therefore, IPC has highlighted the need for urgent funding to scale up and sustain humanitarian food and cash assistance.

US 'very concerned' about China's dominance as a critical minerals supplier, energy chief says

New York

US Energy Secretary Jennifer Granholm on Wednesday said the country is "very concerned" about China's grip on the global supply chain for critical minerals.

Her comments come amid skyrocketing demand for minerals and raw materials vital to the energy transition. The end use of metals such as nickel, copper, lithium and cobalt are wide-ranging and include electric vehicles, wind turbines and solar panels.

China is the undisputed leader in the critical minerals supply chain, accounting for roughly 60 percent of the world's production of rare earth minerals and materials. U.S. officials have previously warned that this poses a strategic challenge amid a pivot to low-carbon energy sources.



Construction workers install equipment at a construction site of a lithium battery project on April 6, 2023 in Renshou County, Meishan City, Sichuan Province of China. Photo: Vcg/Visual China Group/Getty Images

"It's one of the pieces of the supply chain that we're very concerned about in the United States. We do not want to be over-reliant on countries whose values we may not share,"

Granholm told CNBC's Silvia Amaro on Wednesday when asked about China's dominance as a critical minerals supplier.

Speaking on the sidelines of

International Energy Agency's 2024 Ministerial Meeting in Paris, Granholm said the U.S. was in the process of updating its own regulations, including a 150-year-

old mining law to ensure the "sustainable and efficient" extraction of critical minerals.

"But it also means that we will be partnering with friends, like Australia, like Canada, and it's one of the subjects that we are raising here at the International Energy Agency," Granholm said.

"We know all countries want to ensure that we have a critical stockpile of critical minerals and that we are allowed to diversify the supplies of those stockpiles. Both internationally and domestically, this is a focus of ours."

As part of a rapid uptick in demand for critical minerals, the IEA has warned that today's supply falls short of what is needed to transform the energy sector. That's because there is a relatively high geographical concentration of the production of many energy transition elements.

Most rare earth reserves are located in China, for example, while Vietnam, Brazil and Russia are also major rare earths countries based on reserve volume.

Asked how quickly the U.S. can boost cooperation and production to ensure it doesn't lose out in the critical minerals race, Granholm replied: "Cooperation can be addressed quickly. Production in the United States will take a little bit longer."

"We feel very strongly though that both extraction and processing of those critical minerals have to be addressed, either by the United States or our allies. And that's why we are working very closely to ensure that we have identified which raw materials [or] critical minerals we need to be able to do our transition to a clean energy economy."

Gen-AI in travel in 2024: Game-changer or hype?

New York

SPECULATION about the transformative powers of generative AI for our travel industry were everywhere you looked in 2023, but real-world working examples were few and far between.

So as 2024 advances will the world slowly lose interest as the technology doesn't deliver results? In fact some top analysts are already calling the technology 'overhyped', even predicting it will get a 'cold shower' in 2024 because of unrealistic expectations, high costs and regulatory challenges.

We asked technology experts from across the travel industry for their thoughts on whether or not generative AI will really change the travel experience in 2024, or whether we are getting too excited, too soon.

Mike Coletta, manager of research and innovation at Phocuswright, disagrees with the analysts who are negative

about the potential for generative AI. "The travel industry is on the cusp of massive change, and there's huge potential for AI to transform the travel experience for both travelers and the travel provider ecosystem."

According to him, Phocuswright research shows that nearly half of travelers in most countries would be extremely or somewhat comfortable using a GenAI tool to help them plan a trip. Between 13-22 percent of total traveler populations have used GenAI in some capacity.

As the industry moves beyond the initial hype, 2024 will be all about leveraging what has been learned so far to focus on the most beneficial use cases - and avoid wasting resources on those without a clear ROI.

"Travel companies in 2024 are expected to accelerate investment in generative AI applications. But separating the winning use cases from the losers will be an ongoing process of trial and error. At this juncture, a results-based approach



International Airport Review

is needed to highlight the most relevant and impactful use cases in travel," he added.

The initial success of AI is likely to depend on the challenges people are applying it to.

As Haluk Kayhan, CEO & Co-Founder of B2B accommodation booking platform Bedsopia which is powered by global distributor PrimeTravel points out: "AI could be hugely transformative for travel in 2024,

but the industry needs to work out where it is most needed and avoid trying to solve problems that no one knows they even have."

Adding that: "Focus on the real headaches or high-cost/low return areas of your operations like staff shortages, flight disruptions, sudden waves of cancellations, payments processing and operational inefficiencies generally. These are areas where AI could catalyze

the most change, most quickly perhaps even meaningfully in 2024. AI technology needs to be essential at this stage, not just a gimmick. Let's be realistic, it's not going to change the whole world overnight people aren't ready for that."

Access to data is a key consideration and one of the most impactful use cases for travel. "The main way we'll see AI make an impact on travel in 2024 is around data," says José Arozarena at from Tour Review, a platform for tours & activities providers to manage their online reviews.

"Companies with the largest amounts of data available or who offer services to clients who in turn have large data sets will benefit most and the most quickly too. AI will be able to make sense of that data more effectively, offering insights that result in them making services to travelers better and more personalised. Think of it like the revolution in consumer market research from the 1950s onwards, just happening over a few years and

not decades."

According to Sami Doyle from TMU Management, a data-driven insurance intermediary specializing in travel, generative AI could transform how financial institutions service the travel industry.

"The travel industry is inherently risk based and that risk extends to consumers paying for goods in advance of service and to financial institutions providing services to travel companies for future delivery products. AI could be a powerful tool to assist financial institutions in providing services such as credit card acquiring and financial protection in a sustainable manner that alerts stakeholders to potential exposures before they happen," he said.

Adding: "This has a knock on effect on the cost of these services and their continued provision to the sector, which would mean lower costs to consumers and comfort that financial protection is in place to cover failures."

As with any new technol-

ogy, the most valuable benefits aren't always immediately obvious. Adam Harris, CEO of Cloudbeds - the provider of hospitality technology solutions to independent property owners - believes that hoteliers will see accelerated efficiencies in their internal operations. "In a perfect world, advanced AI would fine-tune revenue management for hoteliers and work on their behalf as a 24/7/365 GM. This year that's the direction we'll be moving in as forward-thinking vendors like Cloudbeds continue innovating on products that drive and streamline internal efficiencies. Technology companies like ours are already using advanced AI and machine learning to make guest communication tools more intelligent and help hoteliers quickly develop web pages and high-performing ad copy. Over the next year, hoteliers will continue to benefit from intelligent AI solutions that help them make better decisions and execute them."

Retail sales tumbled 0.8 percent in January, much more than expected

New York

CONSUMER spending fell sharply in January, presenting a potential early danger sign for the economy, the Commerce Department reported Thursday.

Advance retail sales declined 0.8 percent for the month following a downwardly revised 0.4 percent gain in December, according to the Census Bureau. A decrease had been expected. Economists surveyed by Dow Jones were looking for a drop of 0.3 percent, in part to make up for seasonal distortions that probably boosted December's number.

However, the pullback was considerably more than anticipated. Even excluding autos, sales dropped 0.6 percent, well below the estimate for a 0.2 percent gain.

The sales report is adjusted for seasonal factors but not for inflation, so the release showed spending lagging the pace of price increases. On a year-over-year basis, sales were up just 0.6 percent.

Headline inflation rose 0.3 percent in January and 0.4 percent when excluding food and energy prices, the

Labor Department reported Tuesday. On a year-over-year basis, the two readings were 3.1 percent and 3.9 percent, respectively.

Sales at building materials and garden stores were especially weak, sliding 4.1 percent.

Miscellaneous store sales fell 3 percent and motor vehicle parts and retailers saw a 1.7 percent decrease. Gas station sales also declined 1.7 percent as prices at the pump dropped during the month. On the upside, restaurants and bars reported an increase of 0.7 percent.

The control group of retail sales, which excludes items such as food service, autos, gas and building materials, fell 0.4 percent. The number feeds directly into the Commerce Department's calculations for gross domestic product.

Consumer strength has been at the center of a U.S. growth picture that has proven far more durable than most policymakers and economists had expected. Spending accelerated by 2.8 percent in the fourth quarter of 2023, finishing out a year in which gross domestic product rose



US retail sales tumbled 0.8 percent in January, much more than expected

2.5 percent despite widespread predictions for a recession.

However, worries linger that stubbornly high inflation could take its toll and jeopardize prospects going forward.

"It's a weak report, but not a fundamental shift in consumer spending," said Robert Frick, corporate economist for Navy Federal Credit Union. "December was high due to holiday shopping, and January saw drops in those spending categories, plus frigid weather plus an unfavorable seasonal adjustment. Consumer spending likely won't be great this year, but with real wage gains and increasing employment

it should be plenty to help keep the economy expanding."

A separate economic report Thursday showed continuing labor market strength, another critical bedrock for the economic picture.

Initial claims for unemployment insurance totaled 212,000 for the week ended Feb. 10, a decline of 8,000 from the previous week's upwardly revised total and below the estimate for 220,000, the Labor Department reported.

Continuing claims, which run a week behind, totaled just shy of 1.9 million, up 30,000 on the week and higher than the 1.88 million estimate.

There also was some good news on the manufacturing front, as regional surveys in the Federal Reserve's Philadelphia and New York districts both came in better than expected for February.

The Philadelphia survey showed a reading of 5.2, up 16 points and better than the -8 estimate, while the Empire State survey for New York was at -2.4. Although the New York survey still indicated contraction, it was a much better reading than January's -43.7 and the -15 estimate. The surveys measure the share of companies reporting growth, so a positive reading indicates expansion.

Vulcan Materials records higher 2024 profit with boost in construction demand

New York

VULCAN Materials has forecast its full-year profit to rise, aided by higher pricing and robust demand for its concrete, asphalt and other construction aggregates, sending its shares up 5 percent in premarket trading.

The Birmingham, Alabama-based company expects its net earnings for 2024 to be in a range of \$1.07 billion to \$1.19 billion, higher than the \$933 million it reported in 2023.

The Biden administration's \$1 trillion infrastructure development package, aimed at upgrading transportation and non-residential projects, is driving demand for construction materials in the United States, benefiting companies like Vulcan.

Vulcan's largest segment, construction aggregates, which include sand, gravel and crushed stone, reported a quarterly profit of \$424 million, up 30 percent from last year.

"We expect pricing momentum and operational execution will lead to attractive expansion in aggregates unit profitability, regardless of the macro demand environment," CEO Tom Hill said.

The company's fourth-quarter revenue of \$1.83 billion came in line with the analyst's expectations, according to LSEG data.

On an adjusted basis, the company earned \$1.46 per share, higher than profit estimates of \$1.39 per share.

California

CALIFORNIA-BASED startup backed by two pioneering scientists, one of whom is a Nobel laureate, believes it is on the cusp of a "quantum leap" in the hydrogen energy race.

H2MOF, which was co-founded in 2021, is working to develop a solution for hydrogen storage by deploying the latest advancements in the field of molecularly engineered materials.

It says a breakthrough in what it regards as the greatest challenge facing the hydrogen economy is just a matter of time.

"The production of hydrogen, as far as I'm aware, is a settled problem," professor Fraser Stoddart, winner of the Nobel Prize in Chemistry in 2016 and one of the co-founders of H2MOF, told CNBC via videoconference.

"There are ample efficient ways of producing hydrogen. The big challenge that remains is to store it in a manner that stores a lot of it at low pressures and ambient temperatures," Stoddart said. "I am confident that one way or another we will get there of course."

Hydrogen is the lightest and most

Startup backed by a Nobel laureate vying for a breakthrough on hydrogen storage

abundant element in the universe, and has long been billed as one of many potential energy sources that could play a pivotal role in the green transition.

Transforming hydrogen into fuel requires energy. If produced using renewable energy, hydrogen's only climate footprint is water, making it an attractive option for applications such as transportation and electricity generation.

Currently, most hydrogen is produced using fossil fuels such as coal and natural gas, a process that generates planet-warming emissions.

Professor Omar Yaghi, founder of reticular chemistry field of science and co-founder of H2MOF, said the company is seeking to compress hydrogen into a small volume without having to use high pressure or low temperatures.

"That's really the holy grail of



The construction site of a plant for the production of hydrogen in Germany. Photo: Picture Alliance | Getty Images

the field," Yaghi said. "How can we store enough hydrogen at room temperature and be able to use it for automobile fueling?"

H2MOF's co-founders say they are hoping the firm can overcome

the high costs and energy demands associated with traditional hydrogen storage methods by designing tanks that can store the energy-rich fuel in a solid state.

Yaghi, who invented metal-

organic framework (MOF) materials, providing the inspiration for the startup's name, said it was difficult to say precisely when H2MOF's technology might be able to achieve a dramatic improvement in hydrogen storage capacity and safety.

"But I would say that in the next couple of years we should be able to make another quantum leap forward," Yaghi said.

Hydrogen challenges

Hydrogen power has been gaining momentum despite global headwinds such as rising interest rates and supply chain issues.

Countries including the United States, Germany, Japan and Australia have announced or updated national hydrogen strategies in recent years, seeking to expand their reliance on the gas to shift to a low-carbon economy.

An industry report published last year by the Hydrogen Council,

a business group, found that the hydrogen project pipeline had climbed to \$570 billion, a 35 percent increase from just six months earlier.

The report said that while growth in global hydrogen investments through to 2030 remained robust, further projects would need to be announced and existing projects would need to mature faster.

Samer Taha, CEO and co-founder of H2MOF, said an "intermediate solution" to the hydrogen storage challenge would likely be achieved in a few years.

"But reaching the holy grail? Probably more than a couple of years but not necessarily decades," Taha told CNBC via videoconference. "From the speed of research progress we see and being accelerated by AI and all these computer generated models, I predict that it is a matter of years not decades."

CNBC

Namibia expects its first offshore oil come 2030

By Guardian Reporter

NAMIBIA expects to produce first oil by 2030, with development plans underway for the eight discoveries made in the Orange Basin since 2022.

This string of upstream success will not only create new opportunities for job creation, industrialization and long-term economic growth, but has demonstrated the lucrative potential of offshore oil in southern Africa.

According to a statement issued yesterday by African Energy Chamber, Namibia's recent upstream success and future investment opportunities will be a key focus during the Namibia International Energy Conference (NIEC) - taking place from April 23-25 in Windhoek.

Movers and shakers from across the global and Namibia energy sectors will convene to discuss pathways to unlocking the full potential of the Orange Basin while drawing attention to emerging opportunities in surrounding fields.

NIEC is an influential event that brings together policymakers, energy stakeholders, investors and international partners to foster industry growth. Now in its sixth edition, the event takes place in partnership with the African Energy Chamber and serves to highlight Namibia's position as a prime investment decision.

On the other hand, it is noted that Multinational energy corporation Galp made two discoveries in PEL 83



One of the world's exploration hotspots, Namibia, expects first oil from the recent major offshore discoveries by 2030. Photo: Energy Capital & Power

this year, kicking 2024 off to an exciting start.

The company discovered a column of light oil in high quality reservoir-bearing sands at the Mopane-1X well in January 2024.

This find was shortly followed by a second discovery at the well, following the drilling, coring and logging of a deeper target. Galp's contracted rig has proceeded to spud the Mopane-2X well while a Drill Stem Test is conducted at Mopane-1X.

Shortly after, supermajor Total-

Energies discovered hydrocarbon-bearing intervals at the Mangetti-IX well in Block 2913B. A probe is currently being drilled as the major aims to determine commercial viability.

TotalEnergies' most recent find follows a discovery made in 2022 which opened up the Orange Basin. The Venus-1 discovery - located in PEL 56 - represented one of the largest in the world since the turn of the century, and likely holds as much as two billion barrels of recoverable reserves.

Energy major Chevron filed for an environmental clearance certificate for oil and gas exploration in PEL 90 in November 2023. The company plans to drill five exploration wells and five appraisal wells, with the first well expected to be spud in Q4, 2024.

Energy major Shell has made four discoveries in the basin, with the Jonker-1, La Rona; and Graff-1 wells expected to hold 1.7 billion barrels. The Jonker-1 alone likely holds as much as 300 million barrels.

The fourth discovery made was

the Lesedi-IX well. These discoveries have made the country one of the hottest oil plays worldwide, with approximately 11 billion barrels of reserves estimated to be held in the Orange Basin.

Eager to replicate upstream success, a slate of E&P companies have either entered or expanded their presence in the Orange Basin.

TotalEnergies has dedicated 30 percent of its exploration and appraisal budget to the country while acquiring an additional 10.5 percent

participating interest in Block 2913 and further 9.39 percent stake in Block 2912. Oil and gas exploration company Rhino Resources Namibia has plans to drill up to ten wells in Block 2914 while E&P company Woodside Energy acquired a 56% interest in PEL 87 in March 2023.

Meanwhile, oil and gas company Africa Oil acquired an additional 6.25% interest in Block 3B/4B in the Orange Basin in July 2023 while private exploration firm Impact Oil & Gas agreed to finance additional exploration in Block 2912 with a \$95 million Open Offer signed in May 2023. Taking place under the theme, Reimagine Resource-Rich Namibia: Turning Possibilities in Prosperity, NIEC 2024 builds of the success of the upstream market to connect new players to Namibia's offshore acreage.

The event features discussions on development strategies; untapped market opportunities; potential partnerships, and many more, driving deals and multilateral business.

Ndapwilapo Selma Shimutwiken, CEO and Founder of NIEC-organizer RichAfrica Consultancy, stated that: "Our newfound energy resources present immense potential...we must strategically prepare ourselves to harness the full value chain of these resources."

Adding: "Our theme, Reimagine Resource-Rich Namibia, encapsulates our vision to create a prosperous, inclusive and sustainable future for all Namibians and to position the country as a leading energy hub."

Plans to boost Africa's mining sector unveiled

By Guardian Reporter

SINCE 2014, AFC has invested over US\$1billion in Africa's mining of precious metals and critical minerals across several countries, and the latest partnerships will further strengthen the sector by driving significant capital flow into the continent.

THE Africa Finance Corporation (AFC), has unveiled several strategic partnerships on the sidelines of the recently concluded 2024 Mining Indaba conference in Cape Town, to boost Africa's mining sector, ushering the continent into a new era of growth and prosperity.

AFC statement which made available to this paper yesterday, indicated since 2014, the corporation has invested over US\$1billion in Africa's mining of precious metals and critical minerals across several countries, and the latest partnerships will further strengthen the sector by driving significant capital flow into the continent.

Speaking at the signing, AFC's Chief Investment Officer Sameh Shenouda said: "While over 30 percent of the world's minerals are in Africa, less than 5 percent of global development funding is invested in African mining projects."

He added that: "Recognizing the significant funding gap in the African mining sector, AFC is committed to pragmatic solutions and supporting the sector's growth, having invested about \$1 billion across metals and critical minerals in several African countries."

According to him, through such strong partnerships with like-minded stakeholders, AFC's goal is to open up new markets, promote a greener economy, and contribute to the overall development of African countries.

AFC was established in 2007 to be the catalyst for private sector-led infrastructure investment across Africa. AFC's approach combines specialist industry expertise with a focus on financial and technical advisory, project structuring, project development, and risk capital to address Africa's infrastructure development needs and drive sustainable economic growth.

16 years on, AFC has developed a track record as the partner of choice in Africa for investing and delivering on instrumental, high-quality infrastructure assets that provide essential services in the core infrastructure sectors of power, natural resources, heavy industry, transport, and telecommunications.

The corporation has 43-member countries and has invested US\$13 billion across Africa since inception.



While over 30 percent of the world's minerals are in Africa, less than 5 percent of global development funding is invested in African mining projects



MONDAY - WEDNESDAY FROM 10:30 PM

ITV PGM SCHEDULE

SATURDAY 13 Jan

5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi
6:00 HABARI
6:40 Kumekucha
7:00 Habari
8:00 Al Jazeera
9:00 Watoto wetu
10:05 Shika Bamba 5
10:35 Mjuzi Zaidi rpt
11:15 Chetu ni chetu rpt
11:50 Hawavumi lakini wamo
12:50 Art and Lifestyle
13:20 Shamba lulu
13:50 Soap: In Love with Ramon rpt
14:45 Mjuzi Zaidi
15:45 Igizo: Mizengwe
16:10 Igizo: Mizengwe
17:00 Shamsam za Pwani
18:00 Jiji Letu
18:15 ITV Top 10 rpt
19:00 Jungu kuu
19:30 Shika Bamba
20:00 Habari
21:05 Igizo: Slay Queen
21:40 Art and Lifestyle
22:10 ITV Top 10
22:50 Hawavumi lakini wamo
23:40 Soap: Uzalo rpt
00:30 Al Jazeera

SUNDAY 14 Jan

5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi
6:00 HABARI
6:40 Kumekucha
7:00 Habari
8:00 Al Jazeera
9:00 Watoto wetu
10:05 Shika Bamba
10:35 Mjuzi Zaidi
11:15 Chetu ni chetu rpt
11:50 Hawavumi lakini wamo rpt
12:50 Art and Lifestyle
13:20 Shamba lulu
13:50 Soap: In Love with Ramon rpt
14:45 Mjuzi Zaidi
15:45 Igizo: Mizengwe
16:10 Igizo: Mizengwe
17:00 Shamsam za Pwani
18:00 Jiji Letu
18:15 ITV Top 10 rpt
19:00 Jungu kuu
19:30 Shika Bamba
20:00 Habari
21:05 Igizo: Slay Queen
21:40 Art and Lifestyle
22:10 ITV Top 10
22:50 Hawavumi lakini wamo
23:40 Soap: Uzalo rpt
00:30 Al Jazeera

MONDAY 15 Jan

5:00 Soap rpt: Uzalo
5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi
6:00 HABARI
6:40 Kumekucha
7:30 HABARI
8:00 Kumekucha Michozo
8:55 Habari za saa
9:30 Soap rpt: Slay Queen
Jackpot
21:40 Mjuzi Zaidi
22:20 Soap: Uzalo rpt
00:30 Al Jazeera

WEDNESDAY 17 Jan

5:00 Soap rpt: Uzalo
5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi
6:00 HABARI
6:40 Kumekucha
7:30 HABARI
8:00 Kumekucha Michozo
8:55 Habari za saa
9:30 Soap: In Love with Ramon
9:55 Habari za saa
10:30 Soap: In Love with Ramon
11:00 Kumekucha Michozo
11:55 Habari za saa
12:30 Soap: In Love with Ramon
13:00 Kumekucha Michozo
13:55 Habari za saa
14:00 Kipindi maalum: NSSF rpt
14:15 Chetu ni chetu rpt
14:55 Habari za saa
15:30 Meza huru
15:50 Watoto wetu
16:00 Music: The Base
17:00 Music: The Base
18:00 Jiji Letu
18:15 Igizo: Mizengwe
18:30 Janja la warawake
19:00 Kipindi maalum: BOT
19:30 Soap: In Love with Ramon
20:00 HABARI
20:50 Kumekucha Michozo
21:55 Abu Yako
22:10 Kipindi maalum: Tanesco
21:25 Kipindi maalum: BOT
22:00 Ripoti maalum:
22:30 Soap: Uzalo
23:00 Habari
23:30 Music: The Base
00:30 Al Jazeera

TUESDAY 16 Jan

5:00 Soap rpt: Uzalo
5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi
6:00 HABARI
6:40 Kumekucha
7:30 HABARI
8:00 Kumekucha Michozo
8:55 Habari za saa
9:30 Soap: In Love with Ramon
9:55 Habari za saa
10:30 Soap: Uzalo
11:00 Jiji Letu
11:15 Igizo: Mizengwe
11:40 Igizo: Mizengwe
12:00 Habari za saa
12:30 Aiyeye ya jamii
12:55 Habari za saa
13:00 Jungu kuu
13:30 Shikabamba
13:55 Habari za saa
14:00 Kumekucha Michozo
14:10 Igizo rpt: Slay Queen
Jackpot
14:55 Habari za saa
15:30 Meza Huru
16:00 Watoto wetu
17:00 Music: The Base
18:00 Jiji Letu
18:15 Kipindi Maalum: Sema na Mahakama
18:30 Soap: In Love with Ramon
20:00 Habari
21:05 Kipindi Maalum: Maisha ni Nyumba
21:30 Kipindi Maalum:
21:45 Chetu ni chetu

THURSDAY 18 Jan

5:00 Soap rpt: Uzalo
5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi
6:00 HABARI
6:40 Kumekucha
7:30 HABARI
8:00 Kumekucha Michozo
8:55 Habari za saa
9:30 Soap rpt: In Love with Ramon
9:55 Habari za saa
10:30 Soap: Uzalo
11:00 Jiji Letu
11:15 Igizo: Mizengwe
11:40 Igizo: Mizengwe
12:00 Habari za saa
12:30 Aiyeye ya jamii
12:55 Habari za saa
13:00 Jungu kuu rpt
13:30 Mjuzi Zaidi rpt
11:50 Chetu ni chetu rpt
11:50 Hawavumi lakini wamo
12:50 Art and Lifestyle
13:20 Shamba lulu

FRIDAY 19 Jan

5:00 Soap rpt: Uzalo
5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi
6:00 HABARI
6:40 Kumekucha
7:30 HABARI
8:00 Kumekucha Michozo
8:55 Habari za saa
9:30 Soap: In Love with Ramon
9:55 Habari za saa
10:30 Soap: In Love with Ramon
11:00 Kumekucha Michozo
11:55 Habari za saa
12:30 Soap: In Love with Ramon
13:00 Kumekucha Michozo
13:55 Habari za saa
14:00 Kipindi maalum: NSSF rpt
14:15 Chetu ni chetu rpt
14:55 Habari za saa
15:30 Meza huru
15:50 Watoto wetu
16:00 Music: The Base
17:00 Music: The Base
18:00 Jiji Letu
18:15 Igizo: Mizengwe
18:30 Janja la warawake
19:00 Kipindi maalum: BOT
19:30 Soap: In Love with Ramon
20:00 HABARI
20:50 Kumekucha Michozo
21:55 Abu Yako
22:10 Kipindi maalum: Tanesco
21:25 Kipindi maalum: BOT
22:00 Ripoti maalum:
22:30 Soap: Uzalo
23:00 Habari
23:30 Music: The Base
00:30 Al Jazeera

SATURDAY 20 Jan

5:00 Soap rpt: Uzalo
5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi
6:00 HABARI
6:40 Kumekucha
7:30 HABARI
8:00 Kumekucha Michozo
8:55 Habari za saa
9:30 Soap rpt: In Love with Ramon
9:55 Habari za saa
10:30 Soap: Uzalo
11:00 Jiji Letu
11:15 Igizo: Mizengwe
11:40 Igizo: Mizengwe
12:00 Habari za saa
12:30 Aiyeye ya jamii
12:55 Habari za saa
13:00 Jungu kuu rpt
13:30 Mjuzi Zaidi rpt
11:50 Chetu ni chetu rpt
11:50 Hawavumi lakini wamo
12:50 Art and Lifestyle
13:20 Shamba lulu

SUNDAY 21 Jan

5:00 Soap rpt: Uzalo
5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi
6:00 HABARI
6:40 Kumekucha
7:30 HABARI
8:00 Kumekucha Michozo
8:55 Habari za saa
9:30 Soap rpt: In Love with Ramon
9:55 Habari za saa
10:30 Soap: Uzalo
11:00 Jiji Letu
11:15 Igizo: Mizengwe
11:40 Igizo: Mizengwe
12:00 Habari za saa
12:30 Aiyeye ya jamii
12:55 Habari za saa
13:00 Jungu kuu rpt
13:30 Mjuzi Zaidi rpt
11:50 Chetu ni chetu rpt
11:50 Hawavumi lakini wamo
12:50 Art and Lifestyle
13:20 Shamba lulu

SUN 14 Jan

08:30 Al Jazeera
09:00 In good shape
10:00 Capchat rpt
11:00 Sports Gazette rpt
12:30 DW
12:30 Bundeliga Kick Off rpt
13:00 In good shape rpt
13:30 DW
15:15 Abu Yako
15:30 Rev rpt
16:00 Dakika 45 rpt
17:00 The Decor rpt
17:30 Meza huru
19:00 Eco@Africa
19:30 Cookery pgm: Culinary Delights
20:00 Jajina
20:30 Out & About rpt
21:00 Dw News Africa
21:30 Capchat live
22:15 Telenovela rpt: The Three Sides
Of Ana rpt
00:00 Al Jazeera

MONDAY 15 Jan

06:00 Al Jazeera
09:00 Kumekucha Michozo rpt
10:00 Meza Huru Rpt
11:30 Business edition
12:00 Out and About
12:30 Our earth
13:00 Telenovela rpt: The Three Sides
Of Ana rpt
14:00 Ripoti maalum
14:45 Sports Gazette
15:15 Jajina
16:00 Tomorrow Today
16:30 Eco@Africa
17:00 Dw News Africa rpt
17:30 Meza huru
19:00 The Decor rpt
19:30 Shamba lulu
20:45 The Monday Agenda
21:30 Capital Prime News
22:00 Kipima Joto
00:00 Innovation rpt
13:00 Telenovela rpt: The Three Sides
Of Ana rpt
14:00 DW News Africa rpt
15:00 Jajina rpt
15:30 Mizengwe rpt
16:00 Tomorrow Today
16:30 Business edition rpt
17:00 In good shape
17:30 Meza huru
18:00 Out & About
19:30 Eco@Africa
09:00 Kumekucha Michozo rpt
10:00 Meza Huru Rpt
11:30 Monday agenda rpt
12:15 Sports gazette
12:45 Filler doc
13:00 Telenovela rpt: The Three Sides
Of Ana rpt
14:00 Business Edition Rpt
14:30 Ingood Shape
15:00 Shamba Lulu
15:30 Bundeliga Kick off
16:00 Culinary Delights Rpt
16:30 Capchat rpt
17:30 Meza huru

TUES 16 Jan

06:00 Al Jazeera
09:00 Kumekucha Michozo rpt
10:00 Meza Huru Rpt
11:30 Monday agenda rpt
12:15 Sports gazette
12:45 Filler doc
13:00 Telenovela rpt: The Three Sides
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MONDAY 15 Jan

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14:45 Sports Gazette
15:15 Jajina
16:00 Tomorrow Today
16:30 Eco@Africa
17:00 Dw News Africa rpt
17:30 Meza huru
19:00 The Decor rpt
19:30 Shamba lulu
20:45 The Monday Agenda
21:30 Capital Prime News
22:00 Kipima Joto
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13:00 Telenovela rpt: The Three Sides
Of Ana rpt
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15:30 Mizengwe rpt
16:00 Tomorrow Today
16:30 Business edition rpt
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Britain's Prime Minister Rishi Sunak leaves 10 Downing Street to attend the weekly Prime Ministers' Questions session in parliament in London, Feb 7, 2024. AP

Labour Party deals double blow to PM Sunak's Conservatives

LONDON

BRITAIN'S Labour Party dealt a crushing blow to Prime Minister Rishi Sunak's Conservatives yesterday, winning contests for two new lawmakers in votes that indicated the opposition party was on track to win a national election later this year.

The double defeat underlined the flagging fortunes of the governing party and will do little to silence Sunak's critics, who fear the Conservatives could be trounced at the national election and want him to change course.

The 43-year-old former investment banker has struggled to restore his party's fortunes despite recasting himself at various points over the past year as a bold reformer, a stable technocrat and now as someone who needs more time "to stick to the plan" because, he says, that plan is working.

But with the Labour Party ahead in the polls, Sunak might feel the need to bend to the demands of some in his party to offer an increasingly disaffected electorate a more right-wing conservative agenda before the election.

"By winning in these Tory strongholds, we can confidently say that Labour is back in the service of working people and we will work tirelessly to deliver for them," Labour leader Keir Starmer said in a statement.

"The Tories (Conservatives) have failed. Rishi's recession proves that. That's why we've seen so many former Conservative voters switching directly to this changed Labour Party."

Labour overturned a hefty Conservative majority in the central English town of Wellingborough to win the parliamentary seat with 13,844 votes against 7,408 in what polling expert John Curtice described as the governing party's "worst ever by-election reverse."

In another threat to Sunak's party, the candidate for the right-wing Reform Party won 3,919 votes, a sign, Curtice said, it had "now entered the electoral battle in a serious way ... that potentially adds to the Conservatives' difficulties."

Addressing that threat, Conservative Party Chairman Richard Holden told Times Radio a vote for

Reform was a vote for Labour.

"I don't think what we're seeing is that big switch to Labour ... but I think you are seeing Conservative voters, not at this stage willing to come out at the moment and support the government."

In Kingswood, southwestern England, Labour won with 11,176 votes against 8,675 for the Conservative candidate. Reform received 2,578 votes.

Pressure on Sunak

It appeared that the Conservatives had all but written off the two by-elections. While Labour sent many of its lawmakers and activists to campaign in both places, the Conservatives had a muted presence.

The party has only won four out of 21 by-elections since the last national election in 2019.

While so-called by-elections are often lost by the governing party, the scale of the defeat in two parliamentary seats the Conservatives have held for years piles pressure on Sunak, who became prime minister just over a year ago.

The challenge from the Reform Party adds a new dimension. Senior Conservative lawmaker Jacob Rees-Mogg said at least in Kingswood, if Reform supporters had voted for the governing party as part of the "Conservative family", the Conservatives would have held the parliamentary seat.

Few Conservatives believed they had any chance of winning in either place – the contest in Wellingborough was triggered after the former member of parliament was forced out over a bullying and harassment scandal, while in Kingswood, former minister Chris Skidmore resigned over Sunak's climate change policies.

But some had hoped Labour might have been damaged this week when Starmer did not move immediately to censure a Labour candidate who was recorded espousing conspiracy theories about Israel and for scrapping a green investment target.

But with turnout low, voters punished the governing party and Sunak, who is struggling to meet his election promises, including a vow to grow the economy. Data on Thursday showed it had slipped into recession in the second half of 2023.

With many voters angry over a punishing cost-of-living crisis, long waiting times to use the state-run health service and strikes on public transport, Sunak is running out of time to close the gap with Labour.

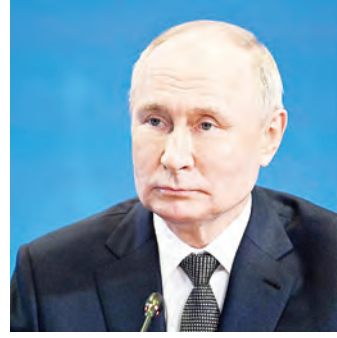
Polling expert Curtice said Labour's Starmer still looks "on course to be our next prime minister".

West's colonial past, present 'disgraceful,' Putin says

MOSCOW

THE West's colonial policy was supposed to remain just a page in its disgraceful history, but continues to resort to similar practices even today, Russian President Vladimir Putin said.

"Neo-colonialism is a disgraceful heritage of the centuries-long age of plunder and exploitation of the people of Africa, Asia and Latin America, as well as other regions of the planet. We see its aggressive manifestations in the collective West's attempts to retain its dominance at any cost, to economically subjugate other countries, to strip them of sovereignty, to impose alien values and cultural traditions," he said in his welcoming speech to the "For the freedom of nations" international forum.



According to the Russian leader, "such a policy has become one of the main destabilizing factors in international relations, a barrier to the development of humanity."

Putin pointed out that Russia did a lot to crush the foundation of the colonial system, to support the national liberation movements. It provided serious aid for young independent states in ensuring security, stabilizing the economy and

resolving pressing social and humanitarian issues.

"Today, we are ready to unite efforts in our fight for true freedom and justice. For progress for all countries and nations, for the establishment of a democratic, multipolar world, built upon the principles of international law, respect for each other's legitimate interests, mutual trust and creative cooperation," the Russian president said.

He stated his certainty that meetings in this format will become regular and will contribute to the deepening of a wide dialogue and partnership ties, to developing joint responses to global challenges.

Putin's greeting speech was read out by Andrey Klimov, Deputy Chairman of the Federation Council Committee on Foreign Affairs.

Palestine: Full UN membership 'right path to two-state solution'

RAMALLAH/CANBERRA/CAIRO/ATHENS/ANKARA

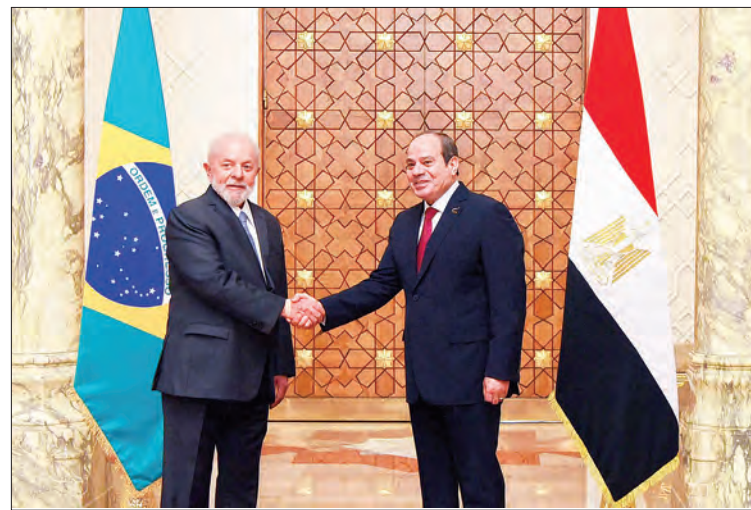
PALESTINE said on Thursday that obtaining its full UN membership is the right path to the two-state solution for resolving the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

The Palestinian Ministry of Foreign Affairs said in a statement that "any political initiative to stop the war and resolve the conflict that is not based on the full membership of the State of Palestine in the United Nations and its recognition by Western countries and America will fail."

The ministry welcomed all regional and international efforts to reach an immediate ceasefire in the Gaza Strip, protect Palestinian civilians, and release hostages and prisoners.

Earlier Thursday, the US newspaper The Washington Post published a plan that the US administration is formulating with Arab countries, which includes "the completion of a detailed and comprehensive plan for long-term peace between Israel and the Palestinians, including a solid timetable for peace and the establishment of the state".

According to the plan, the Palestinian state that will be created is expected



A handout picture released by the Egyptian Presidency shows Egyptian President Abdel-Fattah el-Sisi (right) receiving his Brazilian counterpart Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva in Cairo on Thursday. AFP

to be announced "in the coming weeks".

The last round of Israeli-Palestinian peace negotiations, sponsored by the United States, broke down in 2014 largely because of their divisions on the settlement issues.

The Palestinians seek to establish an independent state based on the 1967 borders with East Jerusalem as its capital, while Israel insists that the entire city of Jerusalem is its eternal indivisible capital.

Countries urge ceasefire

Leaders of Australia, Canada and New Zealand have called for an immediate humanitarian ceasefire in Gaza, stressing that a sustainable ceasefire is necessary to finding a path toward securing

a lasting peace for Israelis and Palestinians.

According to a joint statement by prime ministers of the three countries on Thursday, they expressed "grave concern" over indications that Israel was planning a ground offensive into Rafah in the southern Gaza Strip.

"We urge the Israeli government not to go down this path. There is simply nowhere else for civilians to go," it said.

Also on Thursday, Egyptian President Abdel-Fattah el-Sisi held talks with visiting Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva in Cairo, during which the two leaders agreed on the importance of reaching a ceasefire in the Gaza Strip, releasing the hostages and prisoners, and delivering as much aid to the strip as possible to protect the lives of civilians.

Netanyahu rejects unilateral recognition of Palestinian state

TEL AVIV

ISRAEL Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu yesterday rejected a plan for international recognition of a Palestinian state and international dictates regarding a permanent settlement with the Palestinians.

After speaking with US President Joe Biden for 40 minutes and after the security cabinet meeting, he shared a post on social media X, clarifying his position regarding the recent talk of imposing a Palestinian state on Israel.

"At the cabinet meeting, I clarified my position regarding the recent talk of imposing a Palestinian state on Israel. My position is summed up in the following two sentences. Israel outright rejects international dictates regarding a permanent settlement with the Palestinians," he wrote on X.

Additionally, Netanyahu said, "Such an arrangement will be reached only through direct negotiations between the parties, without preconditions."

Secondly, he said, "Israel will continue to oppose the unilateral recognition of a Palestinian state."

Israel PM added that this would give a huge reward to unprecedented terrorism.

"Such recognition in the wake of the October 7 massacre would give a huge reward to unprecedented terrorism and prevent any future peace settlement," he stated.

Netanyahu's comments come amid growing tension between him and US President Biden over critical issues regarding the Gaza war and the hostages, as reported by The Jerusalem Post.

Both the leaders spoke about the situation in the city of Rafah in the Gaza Strip amidst the ongoing Israel-Hamas war, emphasizing the need for a "credible and executable plan" for ensuring the safety and support of the civilians.

In the call between the two leaders, the second time in less than a week, the US President also emphasised the need to ensure humanitarian assistance for civilians in Gaza and secure the release of all hostages in Hamas captivity.

Reportedly, there is rising international pressure on Israel. On February 14, the Prime Ministers of Canada, Australia and New Zealand – all allies of the US in a joint statement called for a permanent ceasefire and urged Hamas to lay down its arms and release all hostages immediately. ANI



Donald Trump to face first criminal trial on March 25 in New York

NEW YORK

FORMER US President Donald Trump is set to undergo his first criminal trial, as jury selection is slated to commence on March 25 in New York, CNN reported, adding that the decision follows a ruling by Judge Juan Merchan, who dismissed a motion by the magnate to have the charges dropped in a criminal hush money case.

The charges stem from an indictment last March, wherein Trump faces 34 counts of falsifying business records to commit or conceal an-

other crime. Prosecutors allege that Trump orchestrated a cover-up to conceal reimbursement payments made to his former attorney, Michael Cohen.

Cohen had allegedly paid hush money to adult film star Stormy Daniels to prevent her from disclosing a past affair with Trump before the 2016 presidential election. Trump has consistently denied the affair and pleaded not guilty to the charges, according to CNN.

Despite the legal proceedings,

Trump, the GOP frontrunner for the 2024 election, criticised the case outside the courthouse, dismissing it as a political ploy to hinder his electoral prospects. "This is not a crime. This is just a way of hurting me in the election because I'm leading by a lot, leading by numbers that nobody's ever seen before," Trump said, despite polls indicating a closely contested race between him and President Joe Biden.

As the trial looms, Trump expressed a preference for campaign activities over courtroom appearances, highlighting his desire for delays.

He emphasised the challenges posed by legal distractions while actively participating in the electoral process.

Simultaneously, another legal battle in Georgia has added to Trump's legal woes. In an election subversion case, a hearing is underway to determine whether Fulton County District Attorney Fani Willis should be disqualified. Trump and co-defendants argue that Willis engaged in an improper romantic relationship with the special prosecutor, Nathan Wade, leading to financial benefits for the district attorney, according to CNN. ANI

UNITED NATIONS

CHINA'S permanent representative to the UN Zhang Jun on Thursday underscored the critical role of international cooperation in tackling the multifaceted challenges posed by terrorism.

Addressing the Security Council meeting on counter-terrorism, Zhang advocated for adopting the correct approach and a firm political will in the fight against terrorism.

"The broad scope of terrorist activities, their complex organizational networks, and

the frequent movement of personnel make it challenging for any single country to address and eliminate them independently," Zhang noted.

He called on the international community to combat all terrorist organizations and individuals designated by the Security Council by embracing a "shared, comprehensive, cooperative, and sustainable security concept", supporting the UN in its pivotal coordinating role in global counter-terrorism efforts, and fully implement the relevant resolutions of the Security Council, the

Chinese envoy urges global cooperation against terrorism

General Assembly, and the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

Zhang firmly rejected "any double standards," opposed "selective counter-terrorism," and condemned the politicization and instrumentalization of counter-terrorism issues.

He also emphasized the importance of focusing on key areas and further optimizing resource allocation.

The envoy highlighted the concentration of terrorist forces in Afghanistan, where

groups like ISIL-K, referring to Islamic State's Afghanistan branch, and the East Turkestan Islamic Movement (ETIM), are collaborating, not only jeopardizing Afghanistan's security but also threatening regional peace and security.

"The international community must remain highly vigilant, unite to combat all terrorist forces, and prevent Afghanistan from becoming a hub for terrorist organizations once again," he said.

He called attention to the

dire terrorism situation in West Africa and the Sahel, attributing the severe conditions to inadequate counter-terrorism capabilities.

He urged the UN and the international community to align with the needs of African countries, provide more substantial resource support, and assist African nations in enhancing their legislative, judicial, and law enforcement capacities, and improving "counter-terrorism effectiveness."

Moreover, the envoy

stressed the necessity of taking comprehensive measures to address the "root causes" of terrorism. "Security measures alone are insufficient to eradicate terrorism," he said.

Zhang highlighted the significance of resolving hotspot issues politically "to prevent terrorist groups from exploiting conflict situations," promoting sustainable economic and social development to break the vicious cycle of "poverty breeding terrorism" and "terrorism leading to poverty," and focusing on youth

education and employment to deter young individuals from being swayed by terrorist organizations.

He said China has consistently prioritized and actively engaged in international counter-terrorism cooperation, aiding developing countries, particularly those in Africa, to bolster their counter-terrorism capacities through bilateral and multilateral channels, and supporting UN counter-terrorism entities through the China-UN Peace and Development Fund. Xinhua

Ex-FBI informant charged with lying about Joe Biden and his son

WASHINGTON

THE US special counsel leading a criminal probe into President Joe Biden's son, Hunter Biden, said a former FBI informant was charged with lying about the pair's alleged involvement in business dealings with Ukrainian energy company Burisma Holdings.

In a statement on Thursday, Special Counsel David Weiss said a federal grand jury had indicted Alexander Smirnov, 43, on charges of making a "false statement" and "creating a false and fictitious record" in relation to an FBI probe. Smirnov faces a maximum penalty of 25 years in prison if convicted.

Burisma and Hunter Biden's role at the company have been heavily scrutinized following unproven claims from Republican former President Donald Trump and others that Democrat Joe Biden improperly tried to help his son's business interests in Ukraine. The White House has denied the claims.

Smirnov was arrested on Wednesday at Harry Reid International Airport in Las Vegas, Nevada, after his arrival in the US from overseas, Weiss said.

It was not immediately clear whether Smirnov had an attorney.

The indictment unsealed on



US Attorney David Weiss, leaves the interview before members of the House Judiciary Committee, Nov 7, 2023, in Washington. AP

Thursday appeared to deal a blow to the Republican accusations that the US president profited from his son's business in Ukraine.

"For months we have warned that Republicans have built their conspiracies about Hunter and his family on lies told by people with political agendas, not facts," Hunter Biden's lawyer, Abbe Lowell, said in a statement. "We were right and the air is out of their balloon."

In December, the Republican-controlled US House of Representatives voted to formally authorize an ongoing impeachment inquiry into the US president. Some Republicans at the time referenced Hunter Biden's prior role at Burisma to say they were "mighty suspicious of folks from the president's family making tens of millions of dollars in professions in which they had no experience."

Separately, a source said on Thursday

that Robert Hur, the US prosecutor who produced a politically explosive report that raised questions about Joe Biden's memory, will testify in March to a House committee playing a lead role in the chamber's impeachment inquiry into the president.

Hunter Biden sat on the board of Burisma from 2014 to 2019. For part of that time, his father was US vice president under former President Barack Obama.

Smirnov had claimed he spoke to the owner to Burisma in 2017 about the energy company's efforts to buy a US firm.

The indictment says that in 2020, Smirnov made false statements recounting two meetings from 2015 or 2016 in which executives associated with Burisma told him they had hired Hunter Biden to "protect us, through his dad, from all kinds of problems."

The indictment adds that Smirnov also falsely claimed Burisma executives had paid \$5 million each to Joe Biden and Hunter Biden when the former was vice president so that his son would "take care of all those issues through his dad," referring to a criminal probe of the energy company by the then-Ukrainian prosecutor general.

Burisma also played a central role in Trump's 2019 impeachment over his alleged efforts to pressure Ukraine to investigate the Bidens and help him win reelection. A Republican-majority Senate later acquitted Trump.

'West seeking to create instability in South Caucasus'

BISHKEK



THE West is seeking to create instability in the South Caucasus region and obstruct the Armenia-Azerbaijan settlement process, Russian Security Council Secretary Nikolai Patrushev (pictured) said, addressing a security council secretaries' meeting on Afghanistan in Bishkek, capital of Kyrgyzstan.

"We can also see the Westerners' desire to create instability in the South Caucasus and obstruct the Armenian-Azerbaijani settlement process, which has led to a rise in tensions in the related regions," he pointed out.

On February 12, Azerbaijan's State Border Service said that an Azerbaijani border guard had suffered wounds in a shelling attack launched from Armenia. On the morning of February 13, the service announced that an Armenian combat post had been destroyed in "a revenge operation" carried out in response to the shelling. In turn, Yerevan said that four of its soldiers had been killed.

Addressing a cabinet meeting on February 15, Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan stated that the armed incident on the border with Azerbaijan was the result of Baku's destructive policy. He also accused Azerbaijan of planning to launch large-scale aggression against Armenia. However, the Azerbaijani Foreign Ministry rejected the Armenian prime minister's allegations as unfounded and intended to raise tensions in the region.

Agencies

Yemen's Houthis claim missile attack on British ship

SANAA

YEMEN'S Houthi group on Thursday claimed responsibility for attacking a British ship in the Gulf of Aden with several missiles.

Meanwhile, the US and British forces on Thursday conducted new airstrikes on Yemen's Red Sea port city of Hodeidah, the Houthi-run al-Masirah TV reported.

Speaking about the attack on a British ship in the Gulf of Aden, Yahya Sarea, the Houthi military spokesman, said in a statement that they had carried out a military operation against the British ship - Lycavitos, while it was sailing in the Gulf of Aden. The statement was aired by the group's al-Masirah satellite TV channel.

The Houthis launched several missiles that hit the ship "directly and accurately," according to Sarea.

The Barbados-flagged ship Lycavitos was sailing in the Indian Ocean to the east of Aden when it was hit by a missile strike, said a Yemeni government coast guard official who required anonymity.

Preliminary information in-

dicated the vessel sustained minor damage from a fragment that struck the diesel generator's pipe, causing a diesel leak, the official said. All crew members were unharmed in the incident.

Earlier in the day, the UK Maritime Operations Authority said it received a report of an explosion around 85 nautical miles east of Aden. The ship's captain reported that the crew members were all safe as the ship headed toward its next port.

"We will continue to attack Israel-linked ships or those heading to Israeli ports in the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden until the aggression on Gaza stops and the siege on the Palestinian people is lifted," Sarea said in the statement.

"We are in the process of taking further military measures in response to the American-British aggression on our country and confirming our practical position to support the Palestinian people," he added.

US and British forces airstrikes hit the area of al-Jah in the district of Bayt al-Faqih, south of Hodeidah, and the Al-Jabanah area in the northern part of the port city, the report said, without providing more



In this image provided by the UK Ministry of Defence, RAF Typhoon FRG4s are prepared to conduct further strikes against Houthi military targets in Yemen, from RAF Akrotiri, Cyprus, Feb 3, 2024. AP

details.

Since last November, Yemen's Houthi group has been carrying out attacks in the Red Sea

and Bab al-Mandab Strait on ships linked to Israel, in a move to show its solidarity with the Palestinian Islamic Resistance

Movement (Hamas) fighting with Israeli forces in the Gaza Strip since last October.

Xinhua

Kenyan university holds Chinese dragon exhibition to foster cross-cultural ties

NAIROBI

AN artistic exhibition aimed at showcasing different aspects of the Chinese dragon was held on Thursday at Kenyatta University, Kenya's second oldest public university.

The day-long event, titled the Dragon Design Exhibition, featured more than 40 artworks and was organized by Kenyatta University's Confucius Institute in partnership with the Shandong Institute of Arts and Crafts.

Gracing the exhibition of murals, paintings and drawings, which presented various aspects of the Chinese dragon, were faculty members, students and members of the public. Zhou Xiaodong, the Chinese director of Kenyatta University's Confucius Institute, said the exhibition, which took place against the backdrop of the Spring Festival, would help showcase the richness of Chinese culture to the local people.

He said that 2024 is the Year of the Dragon, or the Year of the Loong, which, according to Chinese folklore, symbolizes luck, prosperity and greatness, noting that the exhibition is timely to help boost cross-cultural understanding. "We arranged this exhibition with the Shandong University of Design and Art. We invited the best designers in China to create these works," Zhou said. "From this exhibition, we aim to deepen ties to the culture of Chinese Loong for Kenyans. Our students have learned about this culture in the classroom, but they have never seen the actual works."

Xinhua

Why did US House Republicans impeach homeland security chief over border crisis?

BEIJING

ONE week after a failed impeachment vote, the Republican-held U.S. House of Representatives on Tuesday narrowly voted to impeach Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas, making him the first cabinet member to be impeached in nearly 150 years.

Mayorkas was impeached for "willful and systemic refusal to comply with the law" in enforcing border policy and for breaching public trust.

"Alejandro Mayorkas deserves to be impeached, and Congress has a constitutional obligation to do so," House Speaker Mike Johnson said in a statement after the vote.

Why did House Republicans push to impeach the homeland security secretary over the crisis at the southern border? What does this impeachment mean? What will happen next?

WHY IMPEACHMENT?

Immigrants have long tried to cross the U.S. southern border in search of a new life in the United States.

Last December, the number of people arrested illegally crossing the border from Mexico into the United States

reached a record high -- nearly 250,000. In fiscal year 2022, the U.S. Border Patrol encountered 2.2 million illegal border crossings.

Illegal immigrants are flooding the southern border of the United States, and the number of illegal crossings far exceeds the capacity of border officials to handle them, sometimes leading to the temporary closure of border crossings.

The surge of illegal immigrants has also had an impact on inland areas of the United States far from the border. Illegal immigrants heading to Democratic "sanctuary cities" such as Chicago, New York, Boston and Denver have strained city services there, prompting Democratic officials there to urge the Biden administration to take action.

Republicans blame it all on "dereliction of duty" by Homeland Security Secretary Mayorkas and say he needs to step down because of it.

They have frequently berated Mayorkas at hearings the House Homeland Security Committee has held on the border crisis since last year. Republicans in the U.S. House of Representatives say Mayorkas is not detaining enough illegal immigrants while implementing a humanitarian parole pro-



US Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas has long been a target of House Republicans

gram.

They criticized the program as a violation of immigration laws by bypassing Congress and allowing in people who would otherwise not be eligible to enter the United States. So all of this adds up to a protracted border crisis that has reverberated across the country. Republicans believe it was entirely Mayorkas' fault and warranted his impeachment.

WHAT DID MAYORKAS AND HIS SUPPORTERS SAY?

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) described the vote on Tuesday as advancing "without a shred of evidence or legitimate Consti-

tutional grounds." Republican legislators claimed that Mayorkas had not fulfilled his duties.

However, both the Department of Homeland Security and congressional Democrats have dismissed the efforts to impeach Mayorkas as politically driven maneuvers.

Mia Ehrenberg, a spokesperson for the Department of Homeland Security, said in a statement Tuesday that the impeachment was done "without a shred of evidence or legitimate Constitutional grounds." Calling the impeachment effort "bad politics and bad policy," Tom McClintock, one of the three Republicans who

voted against the impeachment, stressed that House Republicans were attempting to overstep boundaries by advocating for Mayorkas' removal from office for implementing President Joe Biden's border policies.

Democrats and many of their legal experts argue that this is an issue for voters to decide, not an issue that meets the level of "high crimes and misdemeanors" required to impeach a cabinet official.

Biden on Tuesday slammed the House Republicans who voted in favor of impeaching Mayorkas, arguing that "history will not look kindly" on them, calling the two articles of

impeachment filed against the DHS chief "baseless" in a statement released by the White House.

The president argued that GOP lawmakers backing Mayorkas' impeachment would be better served passing legislation that would give his administration "the tools and resources needed to address the situation at the border."

WHAT WILL HAPPEN NEXT?

The U.S. Senate is expected to head to trial later this month after House Republicans impeached Mayorkas.

But the threshold for Senate conviction is much higher than for House impeachment. While the House of Representatives needs only a simple majority to pass impeachment, the Senate must have an absolute two-thirds majority to convict.

Mayorkas said he is ready to defend himself in the Senate if it comes to a trial. In the meantime, he says he is focused on his job now and won't be distracted by politics.

House Republicans have attempted to leverage Mayorkas' impeachment to address their concerns regarding Biden's border policies. However, Republicans also played

a role in killing a bipartisan agreement on border security and foreign aid.

The Senate introduced a \$118-billion-U.S.-dollar bipartisan border bill on Feb. 4 that was believed to overhaul the asylum system with tougher standards and faster enforcement and give the president new powers to deport immigrants immediately when the immigration department is overwhelmed by too many asylum claims.

The bill will also increase funding by 20 billion dollars for border issues. The bill includes a new emergency authority that would allow the Department of Homeland Security to "shut down" the border if there are too many migrants trying to cross.

U.S. House Majority Leader Steve Scalise said the Senate border bill, which includes a major overhaul of the country's immigration system, will not even receive a vote in the House.

House Speaker Mike Johnson said that he would not submit the Senate bill to the House of Representatives for deliberation in its current form. He said the bill will only continue to allow a large number of illegal immigrants to enter the United States.



Golden State Warriors guard Klay Thompson (11) scores against Utah Jazz guard Keyonte George (3) during the first half of an NBA basketball game Thursday, Feb. 15, 2024, in Salt Lake City. (AP Photo)

Warriors ride Thompson's big game off the bench to 140-137 victory over Jazz

SALT LAKE CITY

KLAY Thompson came off the bench for the first time since his rookie season to knock down seven 3-pointers and score a season-high 35 points, leading the Golden State Warriors to a 140-137 victory over the Utah Jazz on Thursday night.

Thompson was a reserve for the first time since March 11, 2012. Rookie guard Brandin Podziemski replaced him in the starting lineup and finished with 13 points, eight assists, and six rebounds.

"You can do two things: You can put or you can get out there and respond," said Thompson, who became the sixth Golden State player to surpass 15,000 points. "I thought I did the latter very well tonight."

Coach Steve Kerr had a discussion with Thompson on Thursday morning where he informed him of the change in the starting lineup. Kerr acknowledged Thompson wasn't thrilled with the decision and that fueled what turned out to be his best offensive performance in an up-and-down season.

"It's been a tricky season for him and for us," said Kerr, who earned his 500th victory as Golden State's coach. "It's not as easy to do what Klay did five or six years ago for him. I think this could be a good balance to get the best out of Klay and to get the best out of our team."

Draymond Green chipped in a season-high 23 points for the Warriors. Andrew Wiggins added 19 points and seven rebounds. Stephen Curry had 16 points and 10 assists.

Thompson scored 17 points in the Warriors' 84-point first half, but they needed a missed 3-pointer by Collin Sexton to hold on for their eighth win in 10 games.

Golden State made at least 20 3-pointers against the Jazz for the second time in four days after going 20 of 42 from the perimeter. The Warriors overcame 13 turnovers that led to 29 Utah points.

Sexton led the Jazz with 35 points and nine assists. Rookie Keyonte George added a career-high 33 points while making a career-high nine 3-pointers. Lauri Markkanen finished with 20 points while John Collins tallied 18. They had 13 rebounds apiece.

Utah lost its third consecutive home game and fourth straight overall despite shooting 22 of 49 from 3-point range.

After trailing by 18 points to start the fourth quarter, Utah made it a

one-possession game in the final two minutes. Markkanen and Sexton each made a pair of baskets to fuel a 13-2 run that cut Golden State's lead to 138-137 in the final minute.

Markkanen missed a potential go-ahead corner 3 and Collins grabbed the offensive rebounds but threw the ball away with 3.1 seconds left. Curry made two free throws with 2.4 seconds remaining before Sexton missed a good look on the final play.

"Always tough to lose a close one," Markkanen said. "We've got a lot of work to do as a team and individually."

Utah and Golden State combined to make 29 3-pointers in the first half alone. The Warriors went 15 of 26 from long distance while the Jazz shot 14 of 28.

Thompson made four baskets over the final three minutes of the first quarter. Then the Warriors took over entirely in the second quarter.

Podziemski scored 13 points during the period to help Golden State surge in front. He and Curry bookended a 14-4 run with 3-pointers to put the Warriors up 65-53.

Golden State totaled 48 second-quarter points - a season high for both the Warriors and a Jazz opponent.

Thompson stepped up his dominance after halftime, totaling 18 points in the third quarter alone. He made five baskets - including four 3-pointers - over a four-minute stretch to help Golden State extend its lead to 120-102 entering the fourth quarter.

"For the majority of our game, the defense just wasn't physical enough," Jazz coach Will Hardy said. "Klay Thompson got away from us, especially in the second half. He made some tough ones."

Meanwhile, in Memphis, Tenn., Ziaire Williams and GG Jackson scored 27 points apiece, and the Memphis Grizzlies held on for a 113-110 victory over the Milwaukee Bucks on Thursday night in the last game for both teams before the All-Star break.

Vince Williams added 18 points, 12 rebounds and seven assists for Memphis. Ziaire Williams' points were a career high.

"It feels good," Ziaire Williams said of the win over the No. 3 team in the Eastern Conference. "Proud of this team. We've been fighting our (tails) off every game. It's good to see. One man falls down, and another one steps up. We're just having fun."

City giants in mid-season blues on better squad, title

By Correspondent John Kimbute

As the busy mid-season break ended and Premier League sides returned to the pitch, preliminary judgments are being made over who is likely to lift the title this year, and equally important, which side has a more impressive squad after the midseason break.

Along with the contention for the title, there are still final group matches for the CAF Champions League, where neither side is assured of making it to the quarter-finals. That would be a problem to ensure our slots in next year's tourney.

For one thing, the Msimbazi Street side had a more problematic first half of the Premier League, especially with the derby fiasco and changing the technical bench well ahead of time.

They scouted around for a well-respected coach in the ranks of the African club championship, and then lost two players, one being a dependable striker who went back to TP Mazembe and onward to Al Ahly, Tripoli. That is Jean Baleke, while not much is being heard of Moses Phiri, if he is at home or elsewhere as players move more frequently or easily within sub-region club sides.

One surprising feature of the incoming half-season is that the movements of the players are still making plenty of commotion in the two city rivals' ranks, first because fortunes tend to change when players move to higher-ranked club sides.

Thus in sports talk show whispering there are impeccable reports that city sides are rivaling one another to sign the top-ranked former Jangwani Street



Fiston Mayele (Agencies)

player, Fiston Mayele, for the simple reason that he has much less playing time at the Pyramids FC side in Cairo.

As Jangwani Street received well over 1bn/- for his departure, they aren't in the hunt for his signature, but the other major city sides appear to be sending signals.

How that situation is related to psychological or nerve warfare between the player and Young Africans SC fans is unclear, as the player has a habit of posting things that later come back to haunt him when his side loses.

He once taunted Mamelodi Sundowns that they well get nothing when visiting Pyramids, and when his side lost, Mamelodi star Mokoena reminded him in a post that soccer is played on the pitch and not on social media. Pundits say that this kind of posting is habit-

ual with the Congolese star and is working overtime because of difficulties with Pyramids.

Things are such that the failure of Pyramids FC to use the player in a regular way, given his superstar status in Dar es Salaam, may alter the picture of his stay in the torrid Egyptian capital, as two city giants are maneuvering for his signature, especially if he would be available on loan basis for the rest of the season, or perhaps at the end of the season.

Players take sitting on the bench differently, but while most fans are skeptical that Simba SC or Azam FC can actually obtain the player on loan and lord it on his erstwhile supporters, the mood is a bit positive. Why should the player sound out against Young Africans' fans on his troubles, unless there is a different group of fans he wishes to cultivate or encourage their leaders on this?

This sporadic Mayele issue has coloured the atmosphere in the city where the three and especially the big two are comparing their squads for the second round of the Premier League, where the Jangwani Street side has for a while looked confident it can hold to the lead, and there is little more about which fans are insistent.

Yet on at least two occasions on their delayed league matches the side appeared to have just scraped through, not exactly reassuring that there is a winning streak or ability that is reflected in each counter. But the good thing is that the Msimbazi Street squad isn't any more convincing, and is in a way having to play cohesively, better.

Still, those who follow a bit closely the performance of the

two sides in the past three or four matches, as the African Nations Cup finals winded down and key players were coming back, see the integration of new players at Simba as more vivid.

One or two players have scored twice in as many matches and they have just started playing for the side, while from the other side, where a center forward has just been signed to take up the Mayele slot that others have failed to fill to actual satisfaction, appears to be in need of more time.

There was also the signing of ex-Simba player Augustine Okrah the way Jonas Mkude came in as well, whether it was actually for strategic purposes or chiefly to have usable, dependable substitutes.

In that case, the mood is positive for the Jangwani Street side as they still hold right at the top, but if the Msimbazi Street side keeps making progress while some doubts are starting to be raised among the fans on the performance of the Jangwani Street technical bench, seeing the league outcome as a straight line from where things stand as the moment could be deceptive.

Nothing is gained yet and everything depends on the momentum that a side maintains, where the capacity of the squad is critical for the coach to come up with the right skills.

That is why it matters that Young Africans have by and large maintained the ability to lead but their squad is catching up less in terms of skills from the coach than their rivals, at least on the basis of what pundits are saying.

And to this mixture, adding Mayele on the other side of the balance spells disaster.

Yanga coach urged to work on squad weaknesses

By Correspondent Cheji Bakari, Tanga

YOUNG Africans head coach Miguel Gamondi faces a challenging task of seeing to it the outfit's forwards make the most of scoring chances.

The NBC Premier League defending champion struggled to garner good results in its recent two outings in the top flight, managing a 0-0 draw with Kagera Sugar and later registering a hard-fought 1-0 victory over Dodoma Jiji FC.

Kagera Sugar hosted Young Africans at Kaitaba Stadium in Kagera, whereas Dodoma Jiji FC took on the side at Azam Complex Stadium in Dar es Salaam.

Some domestic soccer fanatics, most of whom are Young Africans' followers, were adamant the Argentinian should improve the squad's forward line so it could successfully torment opponents' defenses.

The fanatics said in an inter-

view that signs that Young Africans might either lose or settle for a draw in recent clashes were already in view, adding the Jangwani Street outfit's midfielders and strikers have of late lacked creativity.

They said that Gamondi has extra work to make sure that the team successfully opens up opponents' defenses.

The fans moreover stated the tactic should work on shortcomings, which were observed when the team took the pitch, so the side can excel in the remaining fixtures of the first phase.

"It was either do or die match for Kagera Sugar, which was seeking to make sure it either wins or garners a draw to crawl out of the relegation zone," Ausi Mpelembe, one of the fanatics, noted.

He continued: "Gift Fred (Yanga's center-back) made some mistakes that allowed Kagera Sugar's striker Obrey Chirwa to

make forays into Yanga's defensive zone."

Mpelembe stressed: "Although he and fellows Dickson Job and Khalid Aucho addressed the flaws, Gamondi has to do something so that Fred cannot repeat the mistakes."

The top flight's 12th-round match witnessed Yanga recording the first draw since the 2023/24 NBC Premier League season kicked off.

As for Kagera Sugar, it was a potential game for the club, with the outcome helping it move to the 13th position in the league table.

Under assistant skipper Dickson Job, left back Nickson Kibabage, and central defensive midfielder Aucho, Yanga played well defensively but, offensively, the outfit was found wanting.

Midfielders Pacome Zouzoua, Maxi Nzengeli, Shekhan Ibrahim, and forward Clement Mzize had their attempts cleared

by Kagera Sugar's defenders and midfielders.

The other supporter, Madale Mohammed Kilo, noted the two games were difficult for Yanga because the outfit's forwards and midfielders lacked creativity - which could have helped them open up the opponents' defense.

The supporter disclosed: "Opting for powerful, long-range attempts could be a solution, for example, once Gamondi substituted Nzengeli, Ibrahim and Mzize for Kennedy Musonda, Mahlatsi Makudubela, and Joseph Guede the substitutes' impact was in view."

He revealed: "Musonda and Guede, for instance, attempted headers that were saved by Kagera Sugar's goalkeeper Ramadhan Chalamanda. In the clash against Dodoma Jiji FC, much as Yanga was the tie's host, there was the same problem."



Youth showcase their talents in playing football during a training session at the Jakaya Kikwete grounds in Dar es Salaam on Thursday. PHOTO: CORRESPONDENT JUMANNE JUMA

Klinsmann the coach has never scaled the heights he did as a player

SEOUL

JURGEN Klinsmann was one of the greatest strikers of his era, but the German's managerial career has never reached the same heights.

The 59-year-old was sacked on Friday as South Korea coach following their exit in the semi-finals of the Asian Cup last week.

South Korean fans and media were never convinced when Klinsmann was appointed a year ago and lambasted him for his managerial record, failing to move to the country and even the fact he smiled in defeat.

Klinsmann repeatedly told the doubters to trust him and banked it all on taking the country to their first Asian Cup crown since 1960.

But a talented side boasting Asia's best player in Son Heung-min were convincingly beaten 2-0 by surprise packages Jordan in the last four in Qatar last week.

It later emerged that the Tottenham star and skipper was involved in a bust-up with teammate Lee Kang-in, the Paris Saint-Germain player, on the eve of the game.

Following the defeat to Jordan, Son said he felt sorry for Klinsmann, given the flak he had received from day one.

"I was deeply touched by how he took care of the players without showing any sign of frustration and never giving up until the end," said Son.

Klinsmann remained affable and polite with the media, even when asked following South Korea's exit whether he would quit.

He refused to jump, but has now been pushed instead.

For his detractors, Klinsmann's ill-fated spell in charge will be more evidence that he was never cut out to be a coach.

As a prolific striker, Klinsmann almost won it all at international and club level.

He won 108 caps for Germany, scoring 47 goals, and helped his country to World Cup glory in 1990. He was also a European champion.

Klinsmann lifted the German title with Bayern Munich and was a UEFA Cup winner with Bayern and Inter Milan.

In contrast, his only silverware as a coach is the continental Gold Cup with the United States more than a decade ago.

His stunning success as a player saw him take over as Germany boss immediately after retirement and with no managerial experience.

They reached the semi-finals of their home World Cup in 2006 and Klinsmann won plaudits for instilling an attacking style of play.

AFP

'No hiding' for Bayern as Leverkusen threaten to pull away

BERLIN

BAYERN Munich could be as many as eight points behind league leaders Bayer Leverkusen when they travel to Bochum tomorrow after one of the club's worst weeks in recent memory.

Bayern were outclassed in Saturday's 3-0 loss in Leverkusen, before losing 1-0 to Lazio on Wednesday -- their first defeat in an opening leg in the Champions League last 16 since 2012.

Speaking afterwards in Rome on Wednesday, England captain Harry Kane said "we're in a difficult spell, there's no hiding that."

A "frustrated and angry" Bayern coach Thomas Tuchel said he was "at a loss" to explain the "huge drop in performance" in the second-half.

For Bayern fans, the statistics make for sorry reading. Famed for reacting when stung by a poor result, Bayern lost twice in a row for the first time since January 2021.

The German champions were last held scoreless twice in succession in 2015. Against Lazio, Bayern failed to register a shot on goal for the first time since 2019's 0-0 home Champions League draw with Liverpool.

Bayern have thrashed Bochum 7-0 in three of their past five meetings, but their bid to avoid three straight losses for the first time since 2015 is not as simple as it appears.

Despite sitting in 14th, Bochum have been hard to beat, losing just once at home this season.

Bochum have lost seven times all season, a better record than every team outside the top six, while they have a league-high 10 draws.

With Bayern eliminated from the German Cup by third-tier Saarbruecken, the perennial German champions are staring down a trophyless season for the first time since 2012.

Yet to win a team trophy despite a glittering career, Kane called on his side to put the "really tough week" behind them and "focus on the next challenge."

"(There are) big things to fight for still. We're not out of it. We will never give up. One game or one spark can change a lot in football and we need to try and find that..."

AFP

Palmer returns to Man City as Chelsea's star, Liverpool aim to tame Toney's Brentford

LONDON

CHelsea appear lambs to the slaughter ahead of a trip to Manchester City today as the English champions have hit top form as the business end of the season approaches.

However, Pep Guardiola's men could have ground to make up in the Premier League title race by the time they kick-off at the Etihad with Liverpool and Arsenal in action before them on Saturday.

At the other end of the table, Everton are hoping to move out of the bottom three when struggling Crystal Palace come to town on Monday.

AFP Sports examines three things to look out for this weekend:

*Palmer relishing 'weird' City return

Of the over £1 billion (\$1.3 billion) splashed out by Chelsea on new players over the past two years, only the initial £40 million outlay on Cole Palmer has yielded an undoubted hit.

The 21-year-old looked set to play a bigger part for City this season after scoring in both the Community Shield and UEFA Super Cup, but headed to London on the promise of more first-team minutes under Mauricio

Pochettino. Even in a difficult season for the Blues, Palmer has shone with 12 goals and nine assists in 28 appearances, including a late equaliser when City were held 4-4 at Stamford Bridge in November.

"I have been surprised by how well it's gone here so quickly, but I always back myself to succeed," said Palmer.

"I'm looking forward



Cole Palmer returns to Manchester City as a Chelsea player today. Agencies

Pochettino.

Even in a difficult season for the Blues, Palmer has shone with 12 goals and nine assists in 28 appearances, including a late equaliser when City were held 4-4 at Stamford Bridge in November.

"I have been surprised by how well it's gone here so quickly, but I always back myself to succeed," said Palmer.

"I'm looking forward

to going back to the Etihad. It will be strange, a weird feeling, but I'm looking forward to it and the team's looking forward to it".

Chelsea will need Palmer in top form if they are to halt the 11-game winning run that has put City in contention for another treble.

City trail Liverpool by two points and are ahead of Arsenal only on

goal difference, but have a game in hand on both their main title rivals.

"Can Bees sting Liverpool again?"

Liverpool could open up a five-point lead at the top in Saturday's lunchtime kick-off, but do not have good memories of trips to the Brentford Community Stadium.

Liverpool have failed to win and conceded three times on both their

last two Premier League visits to the Bees.

Brentford have been revitalised by the return of Ivan Toney from an eight-month ban for breaching betting rules.

Toney has scored in three of his four games since returning to help take Thomas Frank's men six points clear of the relegation zone.

But the league leaders could have their talisman back too, as Mohamed Salah returned to Liverpool training this week after suffering a hamstring injury at the Africa Cup of Nations.

Salah's return is timely for Jurgen Klopp as other key injuries have begun to pile up.

Trent Alexander-Arnold and Dominik Szoboszlai are set to miss next weekend's League Cup final after recurrences of knee and hamstring injuries respectively.

*Everton to pounce on Palace disarray?

Crystal Palace could be hauled into the relegation fight should the out-of-sorts Eagles fall to another damaging defeat at Everton on Monday.

Rumours spread on Thursday morning that Roy Hodgson was about to be sacked after a run of three wins in 19 games.

However, the club

then said a planned press conference with Hodgson, 76, had been cancelled as the former England manager had taken ill.

Palace are five points clear of the Toffees, who sit in the relegation zone.

The result of Everton's appeal against a 10-point penalty for breaches of financial rules is imminent, which could reduce or even wipe out that sanction.

Elsewhere, in the relegation battle, Luton host a revitalised Manchester United, while Nottingham Forest have to make the most of unrest at West Ham after the Hammers were thrashed 6-0 by Arsenal last weekend.

Fixtures (all times GMT)

Today
Brentford v Liverpool (1230), Burnley v Arsenal, Fulham v Aston Villa, Newcastle v Bournemouth, Nottingham Forest v West Ham, Tottenham v Wolves (all 1500), Manchester City v Chelsea (1730)

Tomorrow
Sheffield United v Brighton (1400), Luton v Manchester United (1630)

Monday
Everton v Crystal Palace (2000)

AFP

Mbappe tells PSG he plans to leave as saga draws to close

PARIS

FRANCE captain Kylian Mbappe has told officials at Paris Saint-Germain that he intends to leave when his contract expires at the end of the season, a source close to the Ligue 1 champions said on Thursday.

The 25-year-old, who arrived in Paris from Monaco in 2017, had extended his contract in 2022 until 2024 but last summer declined to activate a clause allowing him to stay another year at PSG.

Mbappe has been widely tipped to move to Real Madrid and, according to a source close to the matter, has already entered negotiations with the Spanish giants.

"The terms of the departure have yet to be fully agreed," the source said, adding that the club and Mbappe will make an official statement "when everything is finalised in the next few months".

PSG declined to comment when contacted by AFP but it is understood that Mbappe's departure will be formally announced in a few months' time.

"PSG are focused on the future," said the source.

Mbappe will leave PSG on a free transfer but the blow to the club will be softened by an agreement they reached last summer which will see the player waive bonuses amounting to around 60 to 70 million euros (\$65.6 million to \$76.6 million).

After seven seasons at PSG, Mbappe, the club's all-time top scorer with



Kylian Mbappe

274 goals, looks set to seal a move to Real Madrid, the club that the player has dreamt of since he was a child.

Real have made no secret of their desire to bring him to the Santiago Bernabeu. In 2019, 2021 and 2022, club president Florentino Perez considered signing him, only to be rebuffed each time.

For PSG, the departure of their main star, a year after the exits of Neymar and Lionel Messi, marks the beginning of a new era of uncertainty.

Coach Luis Enrique is expected to be given the powers to shape a new, young and coherent team.

At the highest levels of the club, it has been hammered home in recent months that the priority must be the "recruitment of several players when Mbappe leaves".

- 'Youth' transformation -

PSG will, said a source close to the club, continue its transformation "towards the collective and youth".

However, Mbappe has been a prolific striker, who has scored far more than any other player this season.

He broke the deadlock again on Wednesday in a 2-0 win over Real Socie-

dad in the last 16 of the Champions League.

Mbappe also has more than 111 million subscribers on Instagram, giving PSG a wide international profile.

Mbappe last spoke on the issue of his future in early January when he insisted he had yet to make up his mind.

"I haven't made my

decision, I haven't made my choice. But we have an agreement with the president (Nasser Al-Khelaifi) which means that all parties are protected," he told French television.

Mbappe, who has 46 goals from 75 international appearances, is paid some 70 million euros a year.

As a free agent he will be able to negotiate a blockbuster signing fee on top of any salary increase.

If the 2018 World Cup winner and 2022 World Cup top scorer does join Madrid in July, he would join English sensation the 20-year-old Jude Bellingham and Brazilian strikers Rodrygo and Vinicius, one of whom would have to make way for the Frenchman.

Spanish media, meanwhile, were already anticipating the arrival of Mbappe at Real Madrid, the 14-time European champions.

- 'Another dimension' -

"Real Madrid were waiting for Mbappe to

take the first step. And he has done so," said the online edition of Madrid newspaper Marca.

For Marca, it was key that there was no repeat of past failures to lure the player to the Spanish capital.

"The story of two years ago will not be repeated, that of waiting until the month of May."

As newspaper said Mbappe's arrival "will place the club in another dimension -- in terms of advertising and in sport as the Frenchman is, without a doubt, the best player on the planet."

In negotiations, "Real Madrid has the upper hand."

According to the Spanish press, Real Madrid will not jeopardise their financial stability and if his arrival is confirmed, Mbappe will have to win over fans who have not forgiven him for his previous rejections.

"However, forgiveness will take as long as it takes for the goals to arrive," wrote Relevo.

AFP

Gwiji by David Chikoko



SPORT

Mbappe tells PSG he plans to leave as saga draws to close

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Ally Kamwe (Agencies)

Yanga now target NBC Premier League threepeat, says Ally Kamwe

By Correspondent Nassir Nchimbi

YOUNG Africans boast a successful first round in their attempt to clinch a third consecutive NBC Premier League title, according to club spokesperson Ally Kamwe.

Kamwe highlighted their achievements at the halfway mark of the season, surpassing their goals in several key areas.

"Our target was 45 points from 15 matches, and we only lost one game against Ifehu and drew one, which is a significant improvement compared to last season."

He said their offensive game has also sharpened, scoring 36 goals compared to 28 at this stage last year. Defensively, they've maintained their form, conceding the same eight goals as last season.

Even more impressive, Young Africans have recorded three dominant wins by five goals each, netting a total of 15 goals in those matches alone, he said.

Notably, their top scorer Stephanie Aziz Ki has already matched Fiston Mayele's total of 10 goals from last season.

Looking ahead, Kamwe announced they'll face KMC tomorrow with a full squad, as their team is now complete after national team duties.

"Most of our players were away for the AFCON finals, but now everyone is back, including goalkeeper Djigui Diarra, giving the coach ample options for the starting lineup," he said.

Furthermore, injured players Mahlatse Makudubela and Salum Abubakar 'SureBoy' have rejoined training, which excites the management, coaching staff, and fans who want to see all their players fit and ready to fight for the title.

In essence, Young Africans celebrate a strong first half of the season, exceeding their targets and displaying improved offensive and defensive performances.

They enter the second half with a complete squad and key players returning from injury, setting the stage for an exciting title race.

Moshi set to host maiden Lina Professional Golf Tour

(TLGU) vice president, Ayne Magombe, stated the tournament will be launched on February 28, featuring a seminar and final registration before the first event begins on February 29 and comes to a conclusion on March 3 at the club's course.

The second event, as per the statement issued by Ayne, is scheduled to take place from April 11-14 at the Sea Cliff Golf Resort and Spa in Zanzibar, while the third event has been planned for the Arusha Gymkhana Club from July 11-14.

She said the schedule shows that the fourth event will be held at the Moshi Club golf course from September 26-29, and the grand finale is scheduled to take place at the Dar es Salaam Gymkhana Club's golf course.

Ayne noted: "This esteemed tour features five tournaments across different courses, uniting the nation's professionals with 12 elite golfers boasting 5 handicaps and below, cre-

ating a Pro-Am spectacle." "Notably inclusive, the Lina Professional Golf Tour warmly welcomes amateur golfers with a handicap of 24 and below, ensuring an enriching experience for all," Ayne added.

The top three professionals and one elite golfer will earn a coveted chance to feature in a Dubai tournament.

The late Lina was among players making the early batch of female golfers in Tanzania, playing a sport that was dominated by non-Tanzanian males.

She broke the stigma on the green and encouraged dozens of Tanzanian women and Africans at large to play golf as a recreational and professional sport.

Lina's husband, Said Nkya, disclosed that she significantly contributed to the transformation of the renowned KOBE Golf Tournament.

According to Nkya, Lina's efforts played a pivotal role in elevating the showdown from a local event to a na-

tionally recognized competition spanning over 11 years.

Taking place annually at the year's end, the KOBE Golf Tournament marked a milestone in Tanzania's golf by pioneering the inclusion of caddies as players.

This groundbreaking decision not only expanded the pool of indigenous players but also provided an avenue for the less privileged to engage competitively.

The tournament played a pivotal role in shaping the careers of many professional golfers in the country, as it became a vital starting point for their journeys in the world of golf.

Nkya said in different periods of Lina's lifetime, she served as a committee member of the Ladies Golf Section at Dar es Salaam Gymkhana Golf Club and as the TLGU Honorary Treasurer from 2010 to 2012.

He said she also played an integral role in ensuring the sustainability and integrity of the union and was a founding member

of the Pink Panther Group which plays social tournaments every Friday in Dar es Salaam.

She mentored and guided fellow women, living true to the very nature and essence of the sport of golf. She also represented the national women's golf team during the All Africa Competition and the Zambia Ladies Open held in Zambia in 2006.

She also enjoyed sharing her knowledge and experience in golf freely as she traveled all over the world, playing golf on various courses, including the famous ancient golf course in St. Andrews, UK - alias Home of Golf - where golf was played for the first time.

"A mother, grandmother, and wife, late Lina left her footprints on the greens and fairways of the Tanzanian golf scene. She will, forever, be remembered for her charm, charisma, integrity, and forthrightness," Nkya disclosed.

By Guardian Correspondent

THE inaugural Lina Professional Golf Tour has been slated for February 29 to March 3 at the TPC Club's golf course in Moshi.

The 72-hole Stroke Play tournament, exclusively for Tanzanian professionals and amateur golfers, has been introduced to commemorate the late Lina Said Nkya, also known as 'Mother Golfer', who passed away in Moshi on January 19, 2021.

Tanzania Ladies Golf Union

By Correspondent Seth Mapoli

SIMBA Sports Club's impressive run in the NBC Premier League has found a silent hero in Che Malone Fondoh.

The Cameroonian defender, seemingly unfazed by the pressure, has stepped up admirably in the central defense, solidifying the backline of the Msimbazi Street side.

Malone initially partnered with Henock Inonga Baka, but the DR Congo international's national team call-up for Afcon 2023 created a void.

Despite Inonga's absence in various crucial matches, including league encounters and the Azam Federation Cup, Simba remained impenetrable.

The team went on to claim a 1-0 win against Mashujaa FC, thrash Tabora United 4-0, a draw 1-1 with Azam FC in the Dar es Salaam derby and a 1-0 win against Geita Gold in matches played at the CCM Kirumba in Mwanza before winning 1-0 against JKT Tanzania on Thursday, and all with only conceding a single goal.

This defensive resilience continued even in Inonga's absence.

Malone's consistent presence throughout these fixtures is a testament to his composure and adaptability.

He seamlessly integrated with various partners, including Kennedy Juma and Hussein Kazi, showcasing his leadership and communication skills.

Since Inonga's departure, the overall defensive quality has arguably even improved. In five league games without Inonga, Simba conceded only once, in a 1-1 draw with Azam FC.

Notably, they scored a combined eight goals against Mashujaa, Tabora United, Azam, Geita Gold and JKT Tanzania, demonstrating their offensive prowess alongside their defensive solidity.

Che Malone emerges as Simba's defensive pillar amidst Inonga's absence



Simba SC striker Freddy Michael Kouablan battles for the ball with JKT Tanzania players during their NBC Premier League match at Major General Isamhyo Stadium in Dar Salaam on Thursday. Simba won 1-0. PHOTO: JUMANNE JUMA

This impressive run can be largely attributed to Malone's dedication and skill. He has earned the trust of coaches, starting with Robertinho Oliveira and now Abelhack Benchikha, and continues to impress with his unwavering focus on improvement.

His ability to organize the defence and adapt to different playing styles have made him a crucial asset for Simba.

While Inonga's return remains to be seen, Malone has established himself as a pillar of Sim-

ba's defence.

His calm demeanor, leadership qualities, and adaptability promise an exciting future for both the player and the club.

With a commendable tally of wins and minimal defeats, Simba's consistent display of skill and determination has solidified their position near the top of the league table.

Their formidable record attests to their competitive prowess and serves as a testament to the team's commitment to excellence on the field.

Flexibles by David Chikoko

WHAT'S THE ANTONYM FOR THINK TANK?



TONIGHT @ 9:00

5 EATV MONDAY

11:00 DADAZ
12:00 KIPENGA XTRA
13:00 Zote Kuntu
13:30 Kali Za Wana
13:55 Dondoo Za Michzo
14:00 SKONGA (r)
14:30 Planet Bongo (r)
15:00 Funguka
15:30 Akili & Me
15:55 Dondoo Za Michezo
16:00 Zote Kuntu
16:55 Dondoo Za Michezo
17:00 SSELEKT
17:55 Kurasa
18:00 Kali Za Wana
18:30 #HASHTAG
19:00 EATV SAA I
20:00 DADAZ (r)
21:00 5SPORTS
22:00 Zote Kuntu
23:00 Kurasa
23:05 EATV SAA I (r)

5Sports
The week's local and international sporting events as well as in-depth analysis of the biggest sporting highlights of the week are covered on 5sports.

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05:00 Supa Breakfast
09:00 MAMAMIA
12:00 Kipenga Xtra
13:00 Planet Bongo
16:00 EA Drive
19:00 Kipenga
21:00 The Cruise

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