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Jafo tells new PS to relate well with subordinates Page 3

Miner donates breathalysers to police Page 6

NHC demolishing flats to pave way for new project Page 6

Police arrest 30 over NSSF benefits bid, by forgeries

By Guardian Reporter

THIRTY people including officials of financial institutions have been placed under arrest in Dar es Salaam on allegations of forging deaths, retirement and sickness to access benefits from the National Social Security Fund (NSSF). SACP Jumanne Muliro, the city's special zone police commander, told journalists yesterday that the arrests were made in collaboration with NSSF officers from last December to the past week.

The suspects were found with fake documents like sickness forms, certificates and employment dismissal letters used to claim benefits from NSSF, he said. Those arrested include Diocress Kahwa (35), a Mbezi resident teaching at St. Maximilian primary school, along with 11 others working at a private security firm, G4s who sought pensions from NSSF while still working, he said. Others are Gregory Rweikiza (44) a Goba resident and Carolina Mushi (37) residing at

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Finance ministry permanent secretary Dr Natu El-Maamry Mwamba (R) and French Development Agency country director Celine Robert pictured in Dodoma city yesterday signing documents on a grant agreement for Euro 34.86 million (about 96.47bn/-) meant to support the implementation of Kakono hydropower project in Kagera Region. Photo: Correspondent Ibrahim Joseph

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Yanga, Dodoma Jiji FC battle for Federation Cup quarterfinal berth Page 19

Is Jürgen Klopp entering a bold new age of psychological warfare?

French agency, AfDB linking up for new Kakono power project

It should facilitate answering to the needs of three to four million people, increasing by around seven percent the population's electricity service coverage level

By Polycarp Machira, Dodoma

THE government and the French Development Agency (AFD) yesterday signed a grant agreement for euro 34.86m (96.47bn/-) for the Kakono hydropower project in Kagera Region. Celine Robert, the AFD country director, said after a brief signing ceremony in the capital that the grant delegated by

the European Union (EU) will support the implementation of environmental and social management plans and other works associated with the 87.8MW hydropower plant. The project is conducted by the Tanzania Electric Supply Co. (TANESCO), already disbursed with a \$ 281m loan from AFD and the African Development Bank (AfDB).

She said that Tanzania's energy mix is currently based mainly on thermal power plants (gas-fired) and hydropower, with considerable untapped renewable energy potential, including hydropower. It should be mobilized in order to meet the country's growing electricity demand while taking a low-carbon path, she stated, affirming that to support this trajectory, development partners are financing the Kakono project as it increases renewable generation. It also reduces hydrological risk with a dam located on a new watershed less affected by droughts, the director noted, highlighting that the project involves an upgrade of the Kyaka substation and a

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Treasury, PPRA finalising rules for procurement law

By Guardian Reporter, Dodoma

THE Treasury in collaboration with the Public Procurement Regulatory Authority (PPRA) is in the final stages of preparing revised public procurement regulations in order to align them with the Public Procurement Act 2023. Amin Mcharo, the PPRA director of capacity building and advisory services, said this here yesterday in a review of PPRA work for the past three years, where he affirmed that the new law has created a friendly environment in ensuring value for money in public

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TCB allocates 300bn/- for small businesses

By Carlos Banda

The Tanzania Commercial Bank (TCB) has allocated 300bn/- to finance 2,000 small businesses countrywide for promoting employment creation and economic growth. This was said yesterday by the bank's Chief Executive Officer Adam Mihayo during the brief meeting with journalists in Dar es Salaam.

Full story on Page 13

UNLOCKING ACCESS TO FINANCE FOR YOUTH FINANCIAL EMPOWERMENT



Shariff Ali Shariff, Minister of State in the Zanzibar President's Office-Labour Economy and Investment in Zanzibar (front row centre) and Craig Hart, Mission Director to USAID/Tanzania (front row 3rd right), launch the Youth Access to Finance Roadmap. Zanzibar on March 27, 2024.

Youth Access to Finance Roadmap, funded by USAID through the Feed the Future Tanzania Imarisha Sekta Binafsi (Private Sector Strengthening) Project, serves as a comprehensive framework outlining the essential steps, strategies and measures required to access finance, with a specific focus on opportunities for youth entrepreneurs. Sharif Ali Shariff, Minister of State in the Zanzibar President's Office (Labour Economy and Investment), said: "The Youth Access to Finance Roadmap has come at the right time. This road map is a critical aspect of ensuring greater financial inclusion for our young people. With adequate access to financial resources, youth can access loans and capital to establish and grow businesses, making access to finance a crucial pillar of the entrepreneurship ecosystem."

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Police arrest 30 over NSSF benefits bid, by forgeries

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Upanga and employed by Stanbic Bank. She is alleged to have forged sickness certificates to access pension.

Still others are Michael Mpogolo (38) and Sabato Thomas (27) both residents of Madale Mivumoni on the outskirts of the city, forging documents of Servas Tesha and Korodias Shoo, both Geita Gold Mine employees and now deceased, he stated.

"All the suspects will be taken to court as soon as possible to answer cases facing them," he said, appealing on the general public to "refrain from forgery as it is illegal."

Asked by this newspaper about the death of a lawyer who was killed in a land dispute that happened a few days ago in Skanska, Tegeta area in Dar es Salaam, the zonal

commander said that investigations were being pursued.

Similarly, during the January to March period there were more than 200,000 incidents of road traffic offences where drivers of 173,190 vehicles and 48,534 motorcycles were involved.

Of them, 89 drivers were taken to court and 60 fined for drunk driving, while 759 motorcycle drivers were convicted of exceeding passengers, he said.

He warned motorists and other road users to take precautions during the festive season as the police will be out in operations during the season.

The police are determined to ensure that security is beefed up in all areas of Dar es Salaam including in prayer houses, apart from streets and residential areas, he added.

French agency, AfDB link up on new Kakono power project

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new 39 km 220kV transmission line, while providing capacity building support for TANESCO.

This Kakono project is fully in line with international climate objectives and will support Tanzania in its energy transition to reduce the carbon intensity of the power sector, she stated.

It will reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 216,065 tonnes of carbon dioxide per year and comply with the best international environmental and social standards, she said.

It should facilitate answering to the needs of three to four million people, increasing by around seven percent the population's electricity service coverage level, she further noted.

"Therefore, it is expected to have a major impact on the economic development of this rapidly growing zone, which lies at the heart of the Great Lakes region," she asserted.

"Upon completion of the hydropower facility will boost industrial projects and spur growth not only in Tanzania but also in neighbouring countries, strengthening the leading position of Tanzania at the regional level," the director affirmed.

The project is a milestone in the government's pursuit of Vision 2025 for the energy sector, she said, underlining the close collaboration

between agencies co-financing this project.

It involved a euro110m soft loan from France (AFD), a euro 34m grant from the European Union and a \$161.47m soft loan from the AfDB and is part of the EU global gateway initiative.

Dr Natu El-Maamry Mwamba, the Treasury permanent secretary, said the objective of the project is to increase on-grid energy production using least cost source which is hydro, to address electricity deficits in north western regions.

She said it will replace the use of fossil fuels where costly diesel power generators are often used to supplement grid supply or improve the quality of supply to avoid prolonged blackouts.

She affirmed project completion for 2026 and its commissioning in December 2028 when its supply attains the projected level.

The project is in line with the third five year plan, with the theme of building a competitive and semi-industrial economy for human development, underlining that the energy sector is among top priorities of AFD and the EU.

From the electricity supplied to consumers, the project will create employment opportunities, levelled at upwards of 1,000 temporary jobs during the implementation phase, and 100 permanent jobs when in operation, she added.

OVER TZS 30 BILLION COMMITTED TO STRENGTHEN PRIVATE SECTOR YOUTH INSTITUTIONS IN TANZANIA

From Page 1

The Feed the Future Tanzania Imarisha Sekta Binafsi Project awarded grants to private sector associations and institutions as part of an overall 30 billion/- investment to strengthen the private sector in Tanzania. This initiative aims to improve the business-enabling environment for investment and expand economic opportunities for youth. Private sector institutions that have received grants include:

1. The Association for Zanzibar Social and Economic Empowerment (AZSEE) to empower youth to access business opportunities in Zanzibar.

2. The Popular Inspiring and Relief Organisation (PIRO) to improve space and capability for youth entrepreneurs in Pemba.

3. The Tanzania Women Chamber of Commerce (TWCC) to accelerate the participation of youth enterprises in economic opportunities in the Iringa Region.

4. The Tanzania Chamber of Commerce, Industry, and Agriculture (TCCIA)-Morogoro to unblock technical and information barriers to youth-led agribusinesses for growth in Morogoro Region.

5. Khebhandza Marketing Co. Ltd to facilitate climate-smart job opportunities to increase income for rural youth in the Mbeya Region.

6. The Zanzibar National

Chamber of Commerce (ZNCC) to strengthen aquaculture, horticulture, and spices value chains through the effective engagement of youth in Zanzibar.

7. Cube Zanzibar to support youth agribusiness incubation.

8. The Southern Corridor Alliance of Agriculture Producers (SCAAP) to catalyze youth employment in agribusiness in Mbeya.

9. Agriedo Hub to implement a Youth in Agribusiness Acceleration Program in Iringa Region and

10. The Empowerment of Marginalised Communities (E-MAC Tanzania) to strengthen youth business associations in Morogoro Region.

In his remarks, USAID/Tanzania Mission Director Craig Hart emphasized the importance of developing opportunities for young people to achieve the ambitious goals outlined in Zanzibar's Development Vision 2050, to transform livelihoods and eliminate poverty. In addition, these grants will support Tanzania National Development Vision 2050, and USAID/Tanzania's Country Development Strategy, whose goal is for Tanzania youth to advance the country's long-term prosperity and journey to self-reliance.

He highlighted the partnership between the Association for Zanzibar Social and Economic Empowerment (AZSEE), current grantee of the Feed the Future Imarisha Sekta Binafsi Project, and Amana Bank,



Zanzibar First Vice President Othman Masoud Othman Sharif checks shoes while going around shops along Zanzibar streets yesterday for a feel of the trend of business with Eid el Fitr celebrations just around the corner. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

Treasury, PPRA finalising rules for procurement law

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procurement.

This includes reducing tender process time, he said, citing the fact that so far a total of 29trn/- has been spent within the National e-Procurement System of Tanzania (NeST).

This involves the procurement of goods, services and construction works where until yesterday contracts valued at more than 5.14trn/- have been awarded to bidders, he said.

The law has also removed the requirement to increase the penalty for companies closed abroad, set more friendly conditions for

special groups, youth, women and the elderly in participating in public tenders, as well as increasing preferential opportunities for local companies, he elaborated.

Similarly improved is linking the entire procurement and supply chain and the use of cap prices for products and services with cap prices, he said, specifying that the new law has reduced the long queue of approvals in tender processes.

The creation and submission of public procurement evaluation reports to the president as well as setting mandatory conditions to process public tenders via an electronic procurement system is also

beneficial, he said.

It has helped in increasing transparency, efficiency and reducing chances of underhand dealings in public tenders he said, also pointing at a limit set for the use of local resources when implementing construction projects.

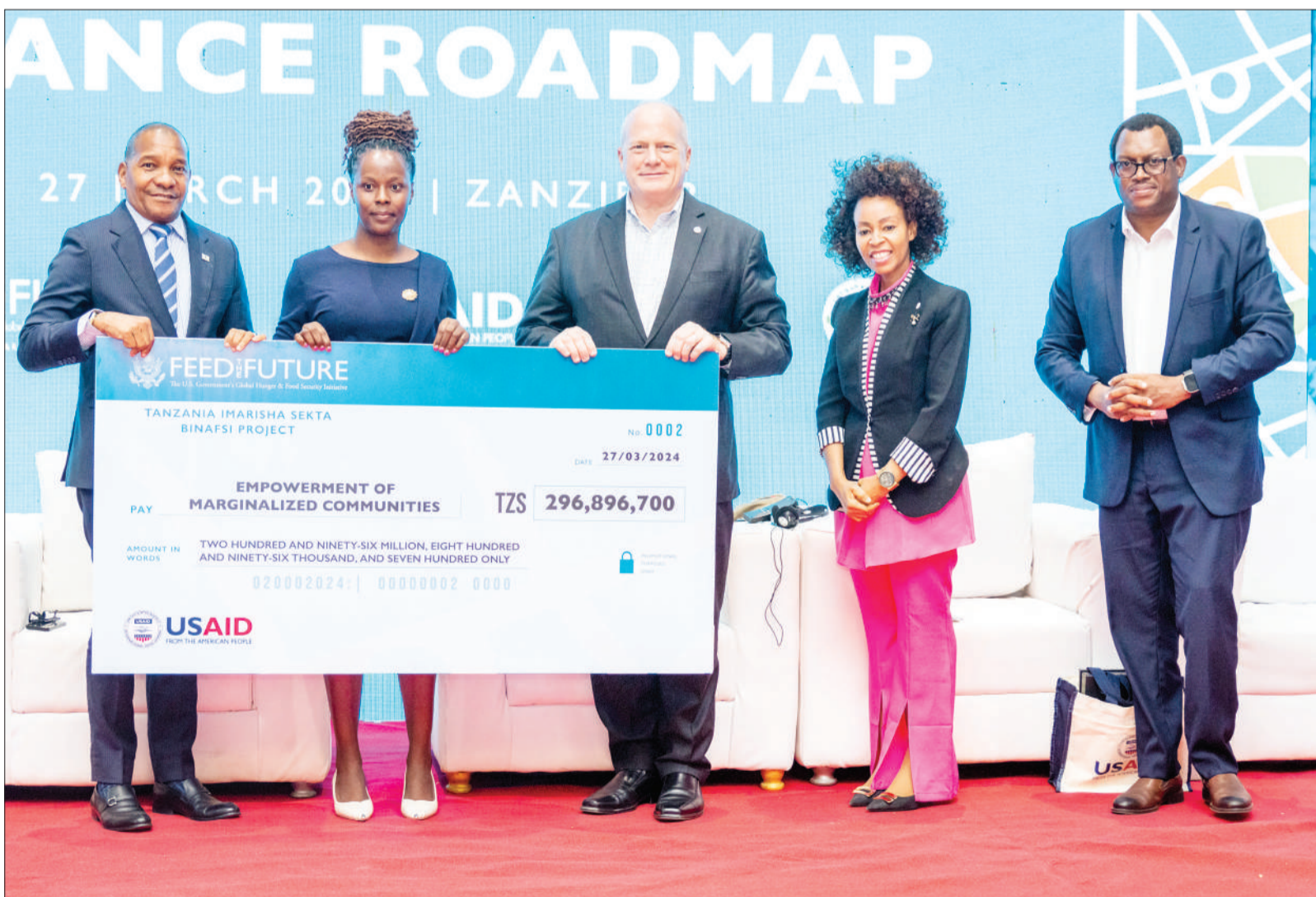
Under NeST, a total of 18,101 bidders registered, while the system has been connected to 17 government stakeholder systems to increase efficiency, save time and costs of procurement, control fraud, corruption and preventing immorality, he stated.

Until February 2024, contract awards worth 1.95bn/- had been given to special groups through

public tenders announced by procuring institutions via NeST, he said, explaining that youth groups obtained contract awards valued at 709m/-, women 1.2bn/- and the elderly got 78.3m/- worth of contracts.

Members of the public need to register in the NeST system and apply for various tenders announced by the government from time to time, adhering to conditions set before sending applications, he cautioned.

"It is also important for those who secure the tenders to implement them well and faithfully in order to be able to get others in the future," he added.



The Empowerment of Marginalised Communities (E-MAC Tanzania) received a grant of TZS 296,896,700 to strengthen youth business associations in Morogoro. Craig Hart, Mission Director to USAID/Tanzania (C); Shariff Ali Shariff (L), Minister of State in the Zanzibar President's Office (Labour, Economy and Investment); Naomi Lukumay, Project Coordinator at E-MAC Tanzania (2nd-L); Joyce Mndambi, Project Management Specialist Private Sector Engagements and Investment at USAID/Tanzania (2nd-R), and Edward Furaha, Chief of Party at Feed the Future Tanzania Imarisha Sekta Binafsi Project (R), in Zanzibar on March 27, 2024

Tanzania's first fully-fledged Islamic bank with Sharia-compliant loan packages, which provides tailored financial products, such as group financing, to address access to finance challenges faced by youth entrepreneurs. This collaboration has already enabled 140 youth entrepreneurs to access loans and financial services with Amana Bank, with support from AZSEE and the USAID/Tanzania Imarisha Sekta Binafsi project.

One youth entrepreneur shared her story: "After formalizing my business, I secured an Islamic-compliant loan of US \$398 from Amana Bank. This financial support enabled me to increase production and

improve the packaging of my tea products with durable materials. Initially, I was producing between 80 and 100 packages, and with access to the loan, I now produce over 400 packages and fulfil more orders for delivery to the mainland. Furthermore, the loan has allowed me to diversify my income by incorporating seaweed production into my business - a popular product appreciated by foreign visitors and health enthusiasts."

Through USAID, the Feed the Future Tanzania Imarisha Sekta Binafsi Project works with private sector institutions, youth-led and youth-focused institutions, and national and local government authorities

to enhance the entrepreneurial ecosystem in Tanzania, with a focus on increasing economic opportunities for private sector youth and improving the business environment for youth entrepreneurs in the agriculture and its related value chains. Since 2022, the project has reached 7,000 youth-led agribusinesses in five regions of Tanzania and Zanzibar, linked them with member associations, incubators, mentors, apprenticeships, local and international markets and access to finance, and supplied 500 youth with start-up kits.

Honorable Shariff Ali Shariff, Minister of State, President's Office—Labour Economy and Investment in

Zanzibar, expressed appreciation for the US government's support through initiatives like the Feed the Future Tanzania Imarisha Sekta Binafsi Project, which has contributed to creating an enabling environment for youth entrepreneurship and promoting economic growth.

The Feed the Future Imarisha Sekta Binafsi Project directly supports government strategies, including Building a Better Tomorrow - Youth Initiative for Agribusiness (BBT-YIA), the Agriculture Sector Development Plan II (ADSP II), the Blueprint for Regulatory Reforms to Improve the Business Environment, and the Zanzibar Development Vision 2050, among others.



Eliasenya Nnko (L), director of an elderly women's advocacy and development CSO known as WEADO, pictured at Lyabukande in Shinyanga District on Monday sensitising leaders and members of various social groups on the need to stand against traditions perpetuating gender-based violence such as child marriages and wife battering. Photo: Correspondent Marco Maduhu

Headline inflation for March stagnated at 3 pct, says NBS

By Polycarp Machira, Dodoma

THE annual headline inflation rate for the month of March 2024 has stagnated at 3.0 percent as it was recorded in February 2024, the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) has announced.

The stagnation of the headline inflation explains that the speed of price change for commodities for the year that ended March 2024 remained the same as that recorded for the year that ended February 2024.

NBS said in a statement that the overall index went up from 112.13 recorded in March, 2023 to 115.51 recorded in March 2024.

"Food and non-alcoholic beverages inflation rate for March 2024 has decreased to 1.4 percent from 1.8 percent that was recorded in February 2024," reads the statement.

On the other hand, annual inflation rate for all items without food and non-alcoholic beverages for March 2024 has increased to 3.7 percent from 3.5 percent that was recorded in February 2024.

National Consumer Price Index (NCPI) has shown a relatively stable price movement from March 2023 to March 2024 ranging between 112.13 and 115.51. In addition,

Annual headline inflation rates over the same period have shown a stable trend that ranges between 3.0 percent and 4.7 percent.

NCPI between February and March 2024 has increased by 0.8 percent. The increase of the overall index is attributed to price increase for some food and non-food items.

Some food items that contributed to an increase of the index include wheat grains by 1.2 percent; finger millet grains (2.3), beef (4.0), sardines (5.4), fruits (2.8) and vegetables (4.7).

Others are Irish potatoes (2.3), sweet potatoes (1.4), cassava (5.7), green bananas (4.4), beans (1.9) percent and peas (1.5) percent.

Some non-food items that contributed to an increase of the index include firewood (3.4), diesel (1.6), petrol (3.0) and passenger transport by road (bus, taxi, motorcycle, train etc.) by 1.8 percent.

About other East African countries of Kenya and Uganda, the former has recorded reduced inflation rate of 5.7 percent in March 2024 down from 6.3 percent recorded in March 2024 while the latter has also recorded a stagnated rate of 3.3 percent as was recorded March 2024.

By Guardian Reporter

Relate well with subordinates to excel, minister tells new PS

MINISTER of State in the Vice President's Office (Union and Environment) Dr Selemani Jafo has advised the new Permanent Secretary in the docket Cyprian Luhemeja to work closely with staff of different cadres for him to succeed.

Speaking at an event to welcome the PS in Dodoma yesterday, Dr Jafo said both senior and junior staff members have experience, expertise, discipline and knowledge that can help Luhemeja in carrying out his duties.

Dr Jafo argued that top

government officials cannot register any meaningful success if they do not work closely with those they lead.

He also asked the staff to continue working with determination, discipline and dedication because on their part as leaders they have planned to ensure that they continue to improve working

environment as well as protect the interests of the employees.

He asked the heads of department and units to continue working together, to strengthen cooperation and relationships to ensure success continues to be achieved in the office.

In the past three years, of the government achieved a number

of successes in strengthening the union and sustainable conservation of the environment, he said.

"A total of 15 contentious issues of the union have been resolved and in the area of environment, the office in collaboration with stakeholders has continued to increase funds to implement conservation projects," he said.

He urged workers to maintain unity, peace, love and solidarity so as to succeed in implementation of various activities, including strengthening of the union and sustainable conservation of the environment. "In March this year, I completed three years in this office and together we have brought remarkable success that continues

to bring praise and respect to our leader, Vice President Dr Philip Mpango who is the first adviser to the President," he said.

Luhemeja thanked minister Jafo for the welcome and the advice he gave and promised to work on them.

The meeting was attended by high-ranking officials in the Office of the Vice President, including Deputy Permanent Secretary (Union) Abdallah Hassan Mitawi, Deputy Permanent Secretary (Environment) Christina Mndeme and Director General of National Environment Management Council Dr Immaculate Sware.

Nipashe MWANGA WA JAMII The Guardian www.ippmedia.com

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We would like to announce to all our customers and public on Basic Tariffs (Tariff customer pay when not registered to bundle/package) for public awareness.

LOCAL BASIC TARIFFS

Category	Price
Onnet (Halotel-Halotel)	10 Tsh/Dk
Offnet (All networks)	20 Tsh/Dk
SMS	5 Tsh/SMS
Data (MB)	9.35 Tsh/MB

INTERNATIONAL TARIFFS

VOICE INTERNATIONAL TARIFFS

Call Category (Zones/Groups)	Price(Tsh/Min)
Zone 1: USA, UK, India, China, Canada, Australia, Japan, South Korea, Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia	450
Zone 2: REST of EUROPE, Kenya	750
Zone 3: Rwanda, South Africa, Zambia, UAE, Oman, Haiti, Peru	840
Zone 4: Cameroon, Zimbabwe, Malawi, Uganda, Congo DRC, Mozambique	1,000
Zone 5: Burundi	1,350
Zone 6: Rest of the world	2,700
Zone 7: Satellite Networks	13,800

INTERNATIONAL SMS TARIFFS

Category	Price (Tsh/SMS)
International SMS	95

Bundle Nature	Validity	Price (Tsh)	All Networks (Min)	Halotel-Halotel (Min)	SMS	Data (MB)
VOICE BUNDLES						
Voice	Daily	350	25			
Voice	Daily	500		110		
Voice	Daily	500	60		60	
Voice	Daily	1,000	180		60	
Voice	2 Days	1,000	160		25	
Voice	Daily	700	10	Free every first 5 mins		
Voice	Weekly	1,500	180		150	
Voice	Weekly	2,500	350	50	150	
Voice	Weekly	3,000	450		150	
Voice	Monthly	4,000	400	50	50	
Voice	Monthly	5,000	550	650	100	
Voice	Monthly	10,000	1,600	1,600	150	
Voice	Unlimited	500	20			
SMS BUNDLES						
SMS	Daily	100			200	
SMS	Weekly	500			2000	
SMS	Monthly	1,000			10,000	
INTERNET BUNDLES						
Internet	Daily	350				170
Internet	Daily	500				245
Internet	Daily	1,000				490
Internet	Daily	2,000				985
Internet	10 days	2,100				1024
Internet	Week	1,000				490
Internet	Week	2,000				985
Internet	Week	3,000				1475
Internet	Week	5,000				2460
Internet	Week	10,000				4925
Internet	Monthly	10,000				4920
Internet	Monthly	20,000				9850
Internet	Monthly	30,000				14780
Internet	Monthly	50,000				24600
Internet	Unlimited	500				200
COMBO BUNDLES						
Combo	Weekly	2,000	55		20	850
Combo	Weekly	2,500	20		20	1150
Combo	Weekly	3,000	100		30	1250
Combo	10 Days	3,100	150	20	300	1024
Combo	Monthly	10,000	280		50	4000
Combo	Monthly	20,000	400		100	8500
Combo	Monthly	50,000	600		200	22000

NGO tells parents: Keep watch over children during festivities

By Guardian Reporter

THE Zanzibar Chapter of the Tanzania Media Women's Association, (Tamwa-Zanzibar) has appealed to parents to monitor movements of their children during and after Al-Fitr festivities for safety following a rise in incidents of gender based violence (GBV) in the isles.

Dr Issa Mzuri, Tamwa-Zanzibar Director said the association was delighted to join the general public in celebrating the festive season but also ensuring the safety of children.

"Recently, we have witnessed an increase in GBV and other acts of violence from 1,360 incidents in 2022 to 1,954 incidents in 2023, representing an increase of 43.7percent, according to a report from the Chief Government Statistician," she said.

She said the report also shows that the majority of the victims of the incidents are children, accounting for 83.7-percent.

The association emphasized the importance of increasing efforts to reduce GBV acts by being close to and monitoring the movements of

children.

"We also recognize the importance of preserving and upholding Zanzibar's cultural values, especially in terms of attire and behaviour to ensure the safety of our children," she said.

"This holiday season provides a unique opportunity to uphold these values and keep our community on the right track," she said.

The association urged members of the public to take responsibility to ensure safety and wellbeing of children and the society as a whole.



Small trader Amina Salum, who deals in the retail sale of fried sea fish, prepares sardines for frying near her residence at Kipunguni in suburban Dar es Salaam yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Sabato Kasika

Muslims urged on need to be charitable during Ramadhan

By Correspondent James Kandoya

TRANSPORT minister Prof Makame Mbarawa has encouraged Muslims to be more charitable by feeding fasting people, especially the needy.

Prof Mbarawa said this on Monday this week in Dar es Salaam in an iftar and dua organized by the Tanzania Railways Corporation (TRC) for transport stakeholders.

He said that feeding fasting people during iftar and dinner is a spiritual act according to Islamic tradition and teachings.

He said a person who provides iftar and dinner receives as many rewards as the fasting person receives without any reduction in the reward of the fasting person.

"We have organized an iftar to our esteemed customers and stakeholders to strengthen relations, solidarity and union," he said.

He advised people who have the capability to strive to feed those who are fasting, in particular poor people who live in villages and urban slums.

Prof Mbarawa said that the government has massively invested in the transport sector, including the construction of Standard Gauge Railway (SGR) and renovation of Metre-Gauge Railway (MGR).

He said the government has also procured rolling stocks such as electric locomotives, electric freight wagons, coaches and multiple units.

"We invite foreign and local investors to come and invest in our new railway when operations commence in the next three months," he said.

He expressed gratitude to the participants and conveyed his best wishes to the whole Muslim community on the culmination of the holy month of Ramadhan.

TRC Director General Masanja

Kadogosa said that the iftar was organized for the staff, transport stakeholders, government officials and religious leaders.

He said iftar reminds all people who fast to consider those who have nothing by feeding them.

The holy month of Ramadhan is the 9th month in the Islamic lunar calendar. It is a month of fasting, worship, service, communal gathering, and spiritual development. Fasting during Ramadhan is one of the five pillars of Islam.

Muslims believe that in A.D. 610, the angel Gabriel appeared to Prophet Muhammad and revealed to him the Quran, the Islamic holy book. That revelation, Laylat Al Qadar—or the "Night of Power"—is believed to have occurred during Ramadhan and Muslims fast during that month as a way to commemorate the revelation of the Quran.

Three Tanzanian peacekeepers killed and as many hurt in DRC

KINSHASA

THREE Tanzanian soldiers were killed and as many wounded when hostile mortar fire landed near their camp in the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) said on Monday.

They were part of a Southern African peacekeeping force deployed in December last year to help government troops battling M23 rebels in the ongoing conflict in the restive eastern DRC.

The force includes soldiers from regional military heavyweight

South Africa, Tanzania and Malawi.

It was reported that the mortar attack took place last Thursday and that a ceremony to honour the dead was held at SADC headquarters in the provincial capital, Goma, on Monday.

SADC also said that a soldier from South Africa had died in a hospital while being treated for unspecified health problems. The force suffered its first losses in mid-February when two South African soldiers were killed by mortars at a camp about 20 kilometres from Goma.

A Congolese security source, who asked not to be named, said the

Tanzanian casualties happened at the same camp.

The DRC, the UN and Western countries accuse neighbouring Rwanda of supporting the rebels in a bid to control the region's vast mineral resources, an allegation Kigali denies.

The eastern part of the DRC has been plagued by violence from local and foreign armed groups for nearly 30 years.

After several years of dormancy, the mostly Tutsi M23 group took up arms again in late 2021 and has seized large swathes of North Kivu province.

NHC demolishing flats in Dar to pave way for new project

By Correspondent Joseph Mwendapole

THE National Housing Corporation (NHC) has begun demolishing its 16 flats in Dar es Salaam's Kariakoo area to pave the way for implementation of a joint venture project with private companies worth 27bn/-.

In the demolition work that started recently, a total of six flats have already been demolished after NHC partners obtained construction permits from Ilala Municipal Council and relocated the former tenants.

On January 29 this year, NHC signed contracts with the partners in front of Minister of Land, Housing and Human Settlement Development Jerry Silaa at NHC offices in Dar es Salaam for the construction of modern residential and commercial buildings.

Muungano Saguya, NHC Public Relations and Communication Manager, told this paper yesterday that as soon as the partners get permits for the remaining 10 flats, they will start demolition of the buildings after giving the tenants a one-month notice to prepare to relocate.

He said that there was no conflict between NHC and the former tenants of the demolished flats because they had discussed the matter and agreed on notice period.

"According to the law, if you want to construct a building, you are obliged to apply for a permit from the relevant authority and show the type of building you want to build and only after getting the permit can you start the demolition exercise to implement your project," he said.

He said that all the tenants who occupied the flats have no complaints as they had agreed

that they will be given priority to return to the buildings once they are completed within two or three years.

"We agreed with our tenants that before the project gets a construction permit, they will continue to stay in our buildings but when the permit is issued, they are given an additional one month to prepare to leave the area and when that grace period ends, the partner can start demolition to implement the project," he said.

Speaking at the signing ceremony of the agreement on January 29 this year, minister Silaa commended NHC for the major reforms made as the construction is expected to increase the number of tenants from the current 190 to 2,011.

He said that there are 72 houses in the project areas but after construction, the number will increase to 225 which is three and half times the number of houses.

Director General of NHC Hamad Abdalah Hamad said construction activities were expected to start immediately after the 16 buildings were demolished because the issue of tenants was already resolved.

He said the project is expected to have a total of 2,011 tenants (1,258 shops and 753 residential houses) compared to the current number of 190 tenants (118 shops and 72 residential houses).



...there are 72 houses in the project areas but after construction, the number will increase to 225 which is three and half times the number of houses



Georgia Mutagahywa (2nd-R), Corporate Communications and Country Liaison manager with Barrick Gold Corp., pictured in Dar es Salaam yesterday presenting modern breathalysers to Dar es Salaam Special Zone Road Safety Committee chairman Mohamed Bahashwan. It was assistance meant to boost road safety by moving to curb drunk driving. Looking on are Kinondoni Regional Police Commander Mtatiro Kitinkwi (L) and the Dar es Salaam Special Police Zone Traffic Officer William Mkonda. Photo: Correspondent

Miner donates breathalysers worth 100m/- to police

By Guardian Reporter

BARRICK Gold Corporation has donated alcohol testing equipment for drivers worth 100m/- to police.

The donation is part of the mining company's campaign dubbed 'Journey to Zero' meant to encourage the society to pay attention to road safety at all times.

Kinondoni Regional Police Commander SACP Mtatiro Kitinkwi said that the support of modern alcohol testing equipment has been given at the right time when the force is continuing with strategies to

detect and deter drunk drivers who are a major source of road accidents in the country.

"We thank Barrick for continuing to be among the main stakeholders in supporting road safety campaigns in the country and we hope that these devices will be used properly so that the intended goal of controlling drivers using excessive alcoholic beverages is achieved," he said.

He said that the police force through its traffic department will continue to provide moderate drinking education to drivers to

ensure that many accidents caused by drunkenness are eliminated, calling on various stakeholders to support the efforts as the issue of safety affects every citizen.

Georgia Mutagahywa, Barrick corporate communications and country liaison manager, said that the support is a continuation of the miner's 'Journey to Zero' campaign which aims to promote health and safety for its employees and all other stakeholders in the society.

"Our Journey to Zero campaign aims to ensure that all employees of the company are safe when

they are at work until they return home; so, we have made sure that this campaign goes beyond the boundaries of the company to ensure that the whole society is safe and that is why we continue to support the government through police force to fight the challenge of road accidents," she said.

"Barrick believes that these modern alcohol testing devices handed over to the police will help identify drivers who drive vehicles while drunk and take legal action to reduce the number of road accidents."

By Guardian Correspondent, Mtwara

MORE than 100 women traders from various districts in Mtwara Region have been trained on principles, procedures and laws governing doing business in the East African market.

Speaking here recently, Mtwara Regional Administrative Secretary, Nanjiva Mzungu said the training helped the traders understand what to do to penetrate the bigger regional bloc.

The two-day training was organized by Tanzania Women's Chamber of Commerce (TWCC) and sponsored by Trade Mark East Africa-a multi-purpose donor-funded, not-for-profit aid for a trade organization established to support growth of trade in East Africa.

Women traders trained on ways to access EA market

"The training sought to enable participants to compete internationally in selling their products. So, I am confident that the participants are now ready to compete in the competitive regional trade," said Mzungu.

Mwajuma Ankonu, TWCC board director said the training was aimed at ensuring that traders sell products that enter the African market.

"These traders have been taught the procedure, rules and regulations as well as how their products are supposed to enter the East African market," she said.

Ismael Laizer, quality control officer with Tanzania Bureau of Standards in Mtwara Region said that they made various efforts in providing education to traders using different methods, including exhibitions so that they know the steps they should follow to get quality logos.

Kokuhaisa Rwabizi, business officer in the Ministry of Industry and Trade, said that they provide training to enable traders to take advantage of the opportunities that the government has created by entering into agreements with other African countries to trade freely.



Traders based at Dodoma city's Machinga open market collect garbage yesterday for onward removal to Chidaya dump, some distance away. Right is Dickson Kimaro, head of Dodoma City Council's environment and hard waste control unit. Photo: Correspondent Peter Mkwavila

THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA
TANZANIA COMMUNICATIONS REGULATORY AUTHORITY
ISO 9001:2015 CERTIFIED



PUBLIC NOTICE

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

The Tanzania Communications Regulatory Authority (TCRA) is a government entity responsible for regulating the electronic and postal communications sector in the United Republic of Tanzania (URT). It ensures that communication services, including telecommunication and internet, broadcasting, postal and courier services, adhere to established rules and regulations to maintain fairness, efficiency, and reliability across the country. TCRA executes informed decision-making through rigorous research in collaboration with stakeholders.

In that light, TCRA invites researchers specialised in applied research from within the URT and internationally to submit their study proposals. The proposals should correspond directly to the five (5) focus areas of the legal and regulatory framework of the telecommunications and internet sub-sector, the legal and regulatory framework of the postal and courier sub-sector, consumer satisfaction, customer satisfaction and new emerging technologies. For more details on the focus areas, requirements, evaluation criteria, and application submission mode, please check our website: <https://www.tcra.go.tz>.

Submission of applications

All proposals and curriculum vitae of the applicants must be submitted to the Director General in soft and hard copies on or before **30th April 2024 at 16:00 hrs EAT** through e-mail: research@tcra.go.tz

Issued on **10th April, 2024**

Dr. Jabiri K. Bakari
DIRECTOR GENERAL

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Leaders recommend canals to end perennial floods in Kilosa

By Guardian Correspondent, Morogoro

THE government has set aside 1.3bn/- for implementation of disaster management projects, part of which leaders hope will be used for construction of drainage systems and canals to address floods that affect Kilosa District in Morogoro region every year.

Speaking during a visit to the area yesterday, Kilosa MP Prof Palamagamba Kabudi said the government has set aside funds for improving infrastructure in the area.

He said the move will be a game-changer and a relief to the people of Kilosa who have been affected by floods for many years even when it is not raining in the area.

"I commend the government for setting aside funds to address the matter including drainage systems, this will help us address floods which wreak havoc in the district," he said.

He said geographically Kilosa district is surrounded by mountains which make it difficult to avoid floods as water does not find outlets.

"Now history is going to be written after the government allocated

more than 1.3bn/- to build modern canals in dangerous areas" he said.

Speaking about the district's strategy to overcome the floods, acting district manager for the Rural and Urban Roads Agency (Tarura) Wiston Munyaga said that the money will build canals to divert water from various rivers that cause floods to enter human settlements.

Mvumi Ward councillor Shaban Malingo said that the floods that occur in the district have been costing people's lives as well as their properties.

He said that the district with a unique history in the country has been affected by floods due to being surrounded by mountains and big rivers which made it difficult to avoid floods since the colonial times.

Kilosa is an old town with a unique history in Tanzania. The town was founded in 1909 under German rule during the construction of the central railway and was promoted under British colonial rule in 1926.

There are many who have lost their lives, properties including homes due to the floods and the residents here said that it has become normal for them to prepare for the worst during the rainy seasons.

Mwanza RC calls upon government officials, journos to work together

By Correspondent Wilhelm Mulinda, Mwanza

MWANZA regional commissioner Said Mtanda has urged government officials in the region to provide all needed cooperation to journalists to enable them implement their duties smoothly.

According to him, journalists have a big contribution in catalysing development in a nation.

Mtanda made the call yesterday here at the dialogue on blue economy and photo exhibitions organized by the Tanzania Media for Maritime and Fisheries Development (TMFD).

He said that he was aware of the challenges facing journalists, noting that government institutions should treat journalists equally as they do their workers.

"I do not want to hear that journalists have been harassed or mistreated in whatever way when discharging their duties. Therefore, they should be left to work without disturbance as they have an important contribution to the country's development," he said.

He thanked TMFD for implementing initiatives to promote growth of the fisheries sector, especially in the blue economy.

With the fisheries sector making a big contribution to food security, it is also a source of income for a large number of people in the country and government revenues as well, he said.

He pointed out that it is good news for journalists to establish a non-governmental organization, noting that it will have a big significance in the fisheries sector that he said contributes seven percent of the region's income.

The RC said that he wants only people with development issues to go and see him in his office and not otherwise as he has no room to listen to words that have no meaningful content.

"People who come to my office should have words that stimulate development and not conflicts or enmity in the community," he said.

According to him, journalists also have the responsibility to accelerate peace and tranquillity by using their pens to unite people and bring about development.

Earlier, Managing Director of Myfish Tanzania, a company dealing with cage fishing in Mwanza, Elpidius Mpanju, encouraged Tanzanians to invest in the fishing as there is big potential in the ocean, lakes and rivers.

Mpanju said that in the past there were abundant fish stocks of different species in the ocean, lakes and rivers in the country but they have now declined meaning that the only way to combat the challenge is fish farming.



I do not want to hear that journalists have been harassed or mistreated in whatever way when discharging their duties. Therefore, they should be left to work without disturbance as they have an important contribution to the country's development

S/N		DESCRIPTION	FEES AND CHARGES		S/N		DESCRIPTION	FEES AND CHARGES	
			TZS	USD				TZS	USD
1	Monthly Maintenance	SA	2,000.00	2	17	Loan/Advances Related Charges			
2	Non Maintenance of Minimum Balance	CA	6,000.00	4	i	Processing Charges	Upto 5 Mio -	21,200.00	
3	Account Statement Charges	SA-Monthly	-	0		5Mio to 10 Mio -	169,500.00		
		SA-Interim	1,500.00	1.5		10 Mio to 25mio -	339,000.00		
		CA-Monthly	Free	Free		25 mn to 500 mio -	1.28%		
		CA-Interim	1,500.00	1.5		>500mio--*	1.06%		
4	Cash withdrawal	SA-Up 25M	Free	Free		Upto 5,000 -	\$85.00		
		SA-Over 25M	0.26%	Free		5000 to 10,000 -	\$170.00		
		SA-Up to \$2K		0.60%		Upto 20,000 -	\$255.00		
		SA-\$2K-\$5K		0.60%		20,000 to 500,000 -	1.28%		
		SA-Over \$5k		0.60%		>500,000--*	1.06%		
		CA-Up to 25 M	Free	Free	ii	Documentation Charges	Upto 100 MILLION	FREE	
		CA-Above 25M	0.26%	Free		>100 Mio (-Min 300,000)	0.26%	FREE	
		CA-Up to USD 5K		0.60%		Upto 50,000	0.26%	FREE	
		CA-\$ 5K-\$10K		0.60%		>50,000 - (Min 150)	0.26%	0.26%	
		CA-Above \$ 10K		0.60%					
5	Cash Deposit Charges	SA-Up to 25M	Free	Free	iii	Upfront fee on Term Loan	Upto 5Mio -	21,200.00	
		SA-Over 25M	0.22%	Free		5 Mio to 10 Mio -	169,500.00		
		SA-Up \$5K		Free		10Mio 25mio -	381,400.00		
		SA-Over \$5K		0.50%		25 mn to 500 mio -	1.53%		
		SA-small currency (\$1 to \$20)		10.00%		>500mio--*	1.28%		
		CA-Up to 50M	Free	Free		Upto 20,000 -	\$255.00		
		CA-Over 50M	0.22%	Free		20,000 to 500,000 -	1.53%		
		CA-Up to \$10K		0.50%		>500,000--*	1.28%		
		CA-Over \$10K		10.00%		Upto 100 Mio -	21,200.00		
		CA-small currency (\$1 to \$20)		10.00%		>100 mio -	42,400.00		
6	Balance Confirmation Certificate	SA	12,800.00	10	iv	Inspection Charges	Upto 100 Mio -	\$22.00	
		CA	21,200.00	13		Upto 50,000	\$43.00		
7	Account Closure Charges	SA	20,000.00	20	v	Credit Reference	Upto 50,000	101,700.00	\$43.00
		CA	50,000.00	50	vi	Pre-payment penalty	Calculated as %age pre-paid amount in the case of takeover of liability by other bank/lenders	2.00%	2.00%
8	Activation of Dormant Account	SA	Free	Free	18 Guarantees (Local & International)				
		CA	Free	Free	i	Bonds & Guarantees	per quarter (Min TZS 75,000)	1.02%	1.02%
9	Stop Payment Charges	SA	Free	Free	ii	Bonds & Guarantees with 100% Cash Margin	per quarter (Min TZS 75,000)	0.43%	0.43%
		CA	35,000.00	28	19.1 Import Letter of Credit (per qtr of Part thereof)				
10	Cheque Return Charges/Dishonoured Cheque	CA-Inward	50,000.00	50	i	Opening commission	commission Min \$ 200	NA	
		CA-Outward	50,000.00	50	ii	LC amendment	Commission Min \$50 max 350	NA	1.02%
11	Cheque Clearing Charges	CA-Inward	1,300.00	1	iii	Swift charge for LC opening		NA	0.34%
		CA-Outward	Free	Free	iv	Swift charge for other message/amendments		NA	\$34.00
12	Ledger folio charges per folio (40lines per)	SA	Free	Free	v	Extensions - Commissions	commission Min \$ 200	NA	\$34.00
13	Cheque book Charges	CA-50 Leaves	42,000.00	27	vi	LC cancellation charges	commission Min \$ 200	NA	1.02%
14	Mobile Banking				vii	Non payment of Bills on due date	Till Payment	NA	1.02%
i	Withdrawal Charge	Upto 100,000	1,700.00	N/A	19.2 Export Letters of Credit (per quarter or part thereof)				
		101,000 to 200,000	2,600.00	N/A	i	Advising commission		NA	\$119.00
		401,000 to 600,000	4,300.00	N/A	ii	Confirmation	Commission Min \$150	NA	0.43%
		601,000 to 999,000	6,800.00	N/A	iii	Negotiating bills under LC	Commission Min \$75+courier-interest	NA	0.43%
ii	Funds Transfer/Mobile Wallet	Upto 100,000	500.00	N/A	iv	Reimbursement claim paid	Commission Min \$75	NA	0.43%
		101,000 to 250,000	900.00	N/A	v	Extensions - LC	Commission Min \$200	NA	1.02%
		251,000 to 500,000	1,700.00	N/A	vi	Collection of Export LC	Commission Min \$75+courier-interest	NA	0.43%
		501,000 to 1,000,000	4,300.00	N/A	vii	Amendments		NA	\$64.00
		1,001,000 TO 10 Mn	8,500.00	N/A	20 Other disclosures				
15	Locker Rent-Yearly	Small	296,700.00	N/A	i	Base or Prime Lending Rate		16%	10%
		Medium	508,500.00	N/A	ii	Maximum spread		5%	5%
		Big	635,600.00	N/A	iii	Penal Interest			
16	Remittances				a.	For non compliance on Terms of Sanction	Rate per year over regular rate of interest	3%	3%
i	TISS	Any amount per 1	TZS 8,450.00	TZS 8,450.00	b.	For Overdrawing/Excess drawing due to non payment of interest/installment/charges	Rate per year over regular rate of interest	5%	5%
					vi	Deposit Rates			
ii	E Remittances	Upto USD 1000 or Eq. TZS	17,000.00	\$ 9.00	a.	Current account		N/A	N/A
		1001 to 5000	20,400.00	\$ 11.00	b.	Savings bank deposit		3.00%	1.00%
		5001 to 10000	40,700.00	\$ 22.00	C. Fixed Deposits Rates				
		10,001 and above	84,800.00	\$ 43.00		Up to TZS 50 M (up to USD 50,000)			
iii	Swift Outward	Upto 5,000	NA	\$ 39.00		30 -90days	3.50%	1.50%	
		5,001 to 10,000	NA	\$ 51.00		91-180days	4.50%	2.25%	
		above 10,000	NA	\$ 77.00		181-364 days	5.50%	3.25%	
iv	Swift Inward	Upto 5,000	NA	\$ 11.00		1 year and above	8.00%	3.75%	
		5,001 to 10,000	NA	\$ 16.00		2 Years and Above	8.00%	4.00%	
		above 10,000	NA	\$ 26.00		TZS 50 M-100M (USD 50,000 -USD 100,000)			
HEAD TREASURY AND TRADE FINANCE			08-Apr-24			30 -90days	4.50%	2.25%	
GM-CREDIT			08-Apr-24			91-180days	6.50%	3.25%	
HEAD BUSINESS OPERATIONS			08-Apr-24			181-364 days	7.50%	4.00%	
						1 year and above	8.50%	4.75%	
						2 Years and Above	9.50%	5.00%	

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Warnings on toxic chemicals relentless, but to what effect?

A meeting on the implementation of the national action plan on sustainable production, use and disposal of chemicals and other toxic materials was once held in Dar es Salaam. It was just one of many such.

The event saw experts serving as resource persons lead other participants in deliberating on environmentally safe ways of getting rid of the materials.

Many had their focus on fake electronic and plastic-based goods, most of them imported, and how they are usually disposed of.

Going by the way the deliberations went, it was clear that there were many people knowing precious little about how to handle problems and challenges associated with the use of materials with inherent potential to cause havoc on the environment.

Some still saw - and see - ordering that the suspicious goods be transported back to their respective countries of origin as a much better option than burning or burying them because, in any case, most such items never really break down and rot away and will therefore for long remain a health hazard.

Among the agencies represented at the talks were the Cleaner Production Centre, Fair Competition Commission, Tanzania Food and Drugs Authority and Tanzania Bureau of Standards.

All were largely in agreement with the Environment Directorate in the Vice President's Office that it was of vital importance to produce and consume or otherwise make use of goods and services that responded to the people's basic needs and led to a better life while cutting on the use of toxic materials and the emission of toxic waste and other pollutants.

There was one notable reservation, though, and this was in relation to why there was much greater interest in diagnosing the problems than in

recommending solutions when the disposal of hazardous waste has been at the centre of numerous legal and other battles.

One environmentalist says dealing with the issue would be a much less daunting challenge if people cared to remember that every household contributes to the accumulation and disposal of hazardous waste in the form of things like cleansers, paints, batteries or motor oil.

He adds that each person has options available to him or her for reducing dependency on hazardous materials, including simply cutting on use and ensure more careful disposal.

It is noted that many labels on containers have precise precautionary information on contents and ways to handle, store, use, recycle, reuse and safely dispose of toxic waste.

Experts have time and again warned that it was a NO-NO-NO to dump hazardous materials on the ground, to burn them or dispose of them down the kitchen sink unless one is sure that they can safely be disposed into the sewer system.

Yet how often do we care to use latex gloves when handling waste or to wrap empty containers in several layers of newspaper before disposing of them alongside household refuse as a way of preventing environmental contamination and reactive potential? We commonly flush pesticides, herbicides, oil paints, paint cleaners, and oil and transmission fluids into the water system while adding motor vehicle batteries to household garbage, yet this is another NO-NO-NO!

Doubly judicious purchase, use, storage and disposal of necessary chemicals can greatly reduce the negative environmental impact of these materials.

To many people, this is time-tested expert advice. But shall all of us heed it? When, if at all? Do we have the ability and willingness to do so? How many of us?

UN agencies want UHC but can't fund SDGs to the limit

MANY people may think that universal health care is a new idea mooted by governments out to ensure that everyone has access to quality health care services.

But it is becoming increasingly clear that it is actually United Nations agencies that have reached a consensus on that aspect.

The reason is not far to seek, as they are working hard to realize the 17 global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by the year 2030, and as matter stand, they will not be much to show by the 'deadline'.

There are doubtless areas where genuine advances are visible, but the gains are soon lost outside sustainable funding as they aren't generated by Africa's own healthcare capacity.

Earlier, it was the country offices of the World Bank that was asserting that African governments should scale up access to quality healthcare for all citizens in a bid to reduce access gaps especially for the poor.

However, now this is echoed by the World Health Organization. The global health agency is concerned with the continent's disease burden, and has just made a World Health Day (April 7) appeal on the matter.

The agency says that Africa requires bold political choices tied to legislative and policy reforms to realize universal health coverage agenda, with UHC top of all of the continent's agenda.

The WHO's Africa Region director says that the agency knows that many in the region still need help with access to quality essential health services owing to largely to unfulfilled rights.

This affirmation of health care as a constitutional right is sort of a novelty in policy literature, as few countries in the world have UHC in the strict sense

of the term.

The US made a great effort in that direction under President Barack Obama but never completed it, while during the 1960s to the 1980s Tanzania had free medical care except if one went to a private hospital.

The UN is not discussing that option at all, only pushing for universal health care. The world body notes that Africa's disease burden is compounded by protracted crises such as conflicts, climate change impacts, food insecurity and epidemics.

These ills aren't uniformly experienced around the continent, but the idea that Tanzania is peaceful enough and so should have UHC by compulsion is largely only a UN priority.

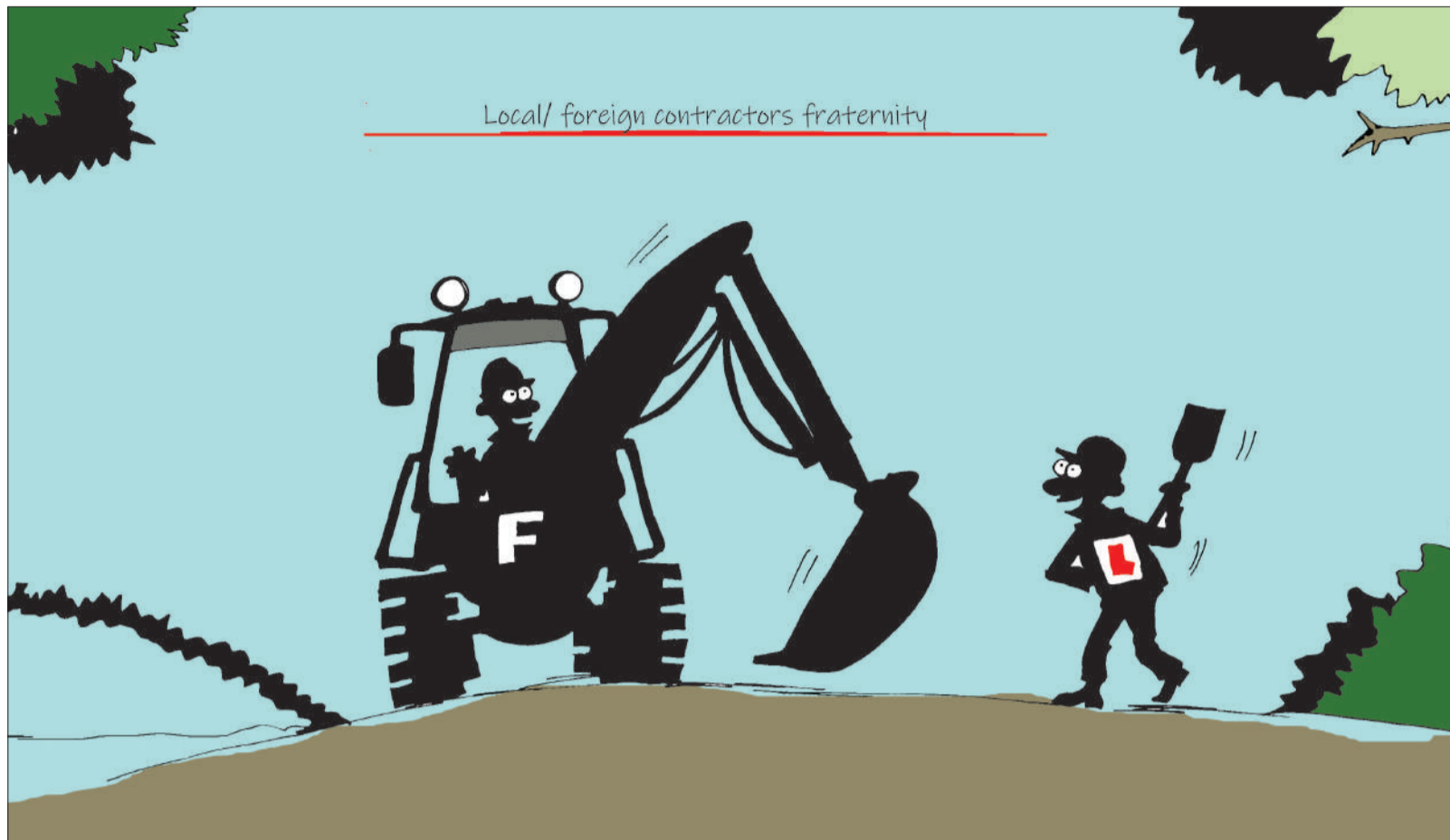
Interestingly, this comes at a time when it might be that financing for the realization of the SDGs is likely no longer available in amounts as generous as obtained previously.

The idea that universal health insurance is easier than the free provision of a range of basic types of essential drugs when people still pay for most other needs is unclear; it is as if UN agencies excise medical care from personal cash use to aid the poor.

Whatever is being said about UHC and its ambition to make healthcare universal by having someone paying for someone else is hard to realize; paying 0.3m/- for a house of six is not acceptable as realistic costing.

Only basic drugs can be budgeted for and remove payments at dispensary and health centre level and basic drugs and certain treatments at district level.

The rest is governed by 'cost sharing' and insurance based on employment, or private policy. What is basically at issue should not be distaste for free medical care and a penchant for hyper-insurance for all.



UN staff warned against public comments on the raging devastating conflict in Gaza

By Thalif Deen

THE deadly six-month-old Israeli-Hamas war, which has claimed the lives of more than 32,000 Palestinians in Gaza and over 1,200 in Israel, has sharply divided the world with vociferous protestors on both sides of the conflict.

But the United Nations is no exception with some of the estimated 35,000 staffers—both in New York and UN affiliates worldwide—have been increasingly vocal, mostly on social media, critical of either Israel or Hamas.

As international civil servants, UN staffers are not expected to participate in political protests and demonstrations or express political views in public or against any UN member state.

In June 2020, the UN advised staff members not to participate in the nation-wide public demonstrations in the wake of the controversial police killing of an African-American, George Floyd.

The reason: public displays of support for the protest movement would undermine the world body's reputation for impartiality.

But Secretary-General António Guterres reversed course informing staffers that there was "no ban on personal expressions of solidarity or acts of peaceful civic engagement, provided they are carried out in an entirely private capacity."

This time around, Guterres has been openly critical of the killings by Hamas, and also more strongly, on the killings of civilians by Israel, while human rights organizations have accused Israel of genocide and using starvation as a weapon of war by cutting off food supplies to Gaza.

In a circular to staffers, titled Guidance on Personal Communications last month, the UN's Department of Global Communications (DGC), says recent global events, including "the crisis in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory, are deeply upsetting and a matter of grave concern to all of us".

"While it is understandable that many of us feel compelled to share views about the events that are unfolding, including in personal fora such as social media, we must be mindful at all times of our rights and duties as international civil servants, which require us to act independently and impartially."

"Please take a moment to familiarize yourselves with the policies on the Status, basic rights and duties of United Nations staff



members; outside activities; and the guidelines for the personal use of social media. Your attention is also drawn to the "2023 Guidance on Political Activities" issued on iSeek by the UN Ethics Office".

Accordingly, "we should frame any public communications on the current crisis in the Middle East, as well as other political matters, including through the personal use of social media, in a manner that is consistent with the position of the Organization and the statements of the Secretary-General".

Samir Sanbar, a former UN Assistant Secretary-General (ASG) and head of the Department of Public Information, told IPS UN Secretariat staff are international civil servants who are contracted to discharge their functions and regulate their conduct in line with the position of the Secretary-General.

On the current situation in Gaza, he said, Secretary-General Antonio Guterres stood at the borders of Gaza drawing attention to the tragic humanitarian sufferings, while UNICEF representatives spoke publicly about starvation and suffering of innocent civilians.

Thousands of staffers in U.N. related agencies staff, particularly UNRWA were killed trying to offer food, shelter and medical care for needy children.

Sanbar pointed out that U.N staff, including heads of Departments, habitually reflect General Assembly and Security Council resolutions, including those indicating the "inalienable rights of the Palestinian people".

Discussing pressing issues with the staff, discreet internal consultation and creative teamwork would help, said Sanbar, who served

under five different Secretaries-General.

An Associate Press (AP) story last January, cited the Geneva-based advocacy group UN Watch, reporting that a deputy chief of UN Women's peace and security office, had endorsed 153 posts on social media since Hamas' Oct. 7 attacks in southern Israel that exposed her partisan views about the war in Gaza.

In a letter to staffers on UN Day 24 October last year, Guterres said the UN Day comes at a time of sorrow and anxiety for everyone. The situation in Israel, the Occupied Palestinian Territory and the wider region is on the brink, "and we are all fearful of what the next days and weeks will bring."

"The conflict is marked by immense human suffering and heartache. I know many of us have family, friends and loved ones in the region and are experiencing this tragedy in a very personal way," he added.

"We are all devastated and horrified by the situation of our staff in Gaza. At least 35 of our UNRWA colleagues have been killed and many more injured. Sadly, that number continues to rise. We mourn those we have lost and send our deepest condolences to their families and friends. As I told the Security Council today, I owe their families the condemnation of these and many other similar killings".

Meanwhile, the basic rights and duties of United Nations staff members are governed by the following rules and regulations:

Regulation 1.1: Staff members shall make the following written declaration witnessed by the Secretary-General or his or her authorized representative: "I

solemnly declare and promise to exercise in all loyalty, discretion and conscience the functions entrusted to me as an international civil servant of the United Nations, to discharge these functions and regulate my conduct with the interests of the United Nations only in view, and not to seek or accept instructions in regard to the performance of my duties from any Government or other source external to the Organization.

"I also solemnly declare and promise to respect the obligations incumbent upon me as set out in the Staff Regulations and Rules."

Regulation 1.2: In the performance of their duties staff members shall neither seek nor accept instructions from any Government or from any other source external to the Organization.

While staff members' personal views and convictions, including their political and religious convictions, remain inviolable, staff members shall ensure that those views and convictions do not adversely affect their official duties or the interests of the United Nations.

They shall conduct themselves at all times in a manner befitting their status as international civil servants and shall not engage in any activity that is incompatible with the proper discharge of their duties with the United Nations.

They shall avoid any action and, in particular, any kind of public pronouncement that may adversely reflect on their status, or on the integrity, independence and impartiality that are required by that status.

Staff members may exercise the right to vote but shall ensure that their participation in any political activity is consistent with, and does not reflect adversely upon, the independence and impartiality required by their status as international civil servants.

Conflict of interest Regulation: A conflict of interest occurs when, by act or omission, a staff member's personal interests interfere with the performance of his or her official duties and responsibilities or with the integrity, independence and impartiality required by the staff member's status as an international civil servant.

When an actual or possible conflict of interest does arise, the conflict shall be disclosed by staff members to their head of office, mitigated by the Organization and resolved in favour of the interests of the Organization.

By Guardian Correspondent

New UN tax convention set to enhance global financial transparency, cooperation and justice

ON 2022, African Ministers of Finance and Economic Planning met during an annual meeting where they made a recommendation that the United Nations Secretary General should start processes towards a new UN Tax Convention.

UN Tax Conventions are international treaties to which countries sign up and ratify to become bound to the treaty's provisions by international law. The draft resolution was filed by African group of ministers at the UN in Nigeria calling for negotiation of a comprehensive UN Convention on Tax.

Last year, following the adoption of the resolution toward UN Tax Convention, countries met again at the UN adopting the resolution that will now get a UN framework convention on International Corporation on tax matters.

Processes towards UN Tax Convention started in 2022 when the resolution was adopted whereas this year, stakeholders continue with processes of developing terms of reference for the convention.

Faith leaders, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), tax experts, decision makers and interfaith champions met in Dodoma Region last weekend whereas they underscored the need for the government, CSOs, Members of Parliament and experts to take part in the process towards the UN tax convention due to its importance to the countries.

Francis Kairu is the Policy Adviser at Tax Justice Network for Africa (TJNA), he stressed that no country should be left behind during the process, considering that next year's the process for developing the text of the convention will effectively start.

"Countries need to articulate issues that matters to them and make it clear that the convention makes sense for each country. Tanzania as one of the African countries should play its role by ensuring it is well represented throughout the process," Kairu advised.

The UN tax convention is of much importance for Africa due to the fact that it will address a number of challenges such as transfer pricing, ensure fair and transparent tax system, equitable standard on corporate taxation and tax justice, he added.

Dr Ntui Pansian, a Lecturer at Saint Augustine University highlighted that Africa need the tax convention since the continent has been losing a lot of its resources through different multinational companies. He said it is high time for Africa to unite with the world especially UN to ensure a smooth journey towards getting a new tax convention.

There are multinational companies with some subsidiary in the continent where transfer pricing has



Some clerics and stakeholders during a capacity building workshop on tax issues held in Dodoma city last week. Photo: Guardian Photographer

been a big problem; therefore with the UN Tax convention the challenge can be addressed.

D. Pansian added that the UN tax convention is most important because countries work together, adding that every investor in the world get a fair share thus avoiding illicit transfer of fund and wastage of African resources.

"This should be just a starting point; we can move to other conventions like accounting issues because the representation of Africans in accounting standard it is too low," said the tax expert.

Father Florence Rutahiwa from Tanzania Episcopal Conference (TEC) said the UN tax convention will address the

existing challenges of digital taxation which is currently facing most African countries.

Fr Rutahiwa added: "We highly encourage the move because the UN tax convention will end tax abuse by multinational companies."

Rev Modest Pasha, National Coordinator, Alliance Tanzania Forum at the Christian Council of Tanzania (CCT) said the UN tax convention is more useful because it will promote fairness toward developing countries.

Piusi Ngirwa, Program Officer at the Anglican Church Diocese of Morogoro said the conventions are important to African because they include provisions for exchange of in-

formation between countries, which can help combat tax evasion and promote transparency in financial transactions.

Ngirwa said tax conventions can include measures that ensure individuals, businesses and companies pay their fair share of taxes in each country where they are invested.

Having tax conventions in place can make a country more attractive to foreign investors by providing certainty and clarity regarding their tax obligations, he said, noting the convention can help to stimulate economic and development.

Hellen Massawe, Program Officer at Policy Forum said African countries need the convention as it will be a platform where countries ideas on the global tax standards will be included to the framework.

"We believe that under the UN tax convention, Africans will be able to provide their inputs on how global tax standards should be", Massawe said.

According to Tax Justice Network, for over 50 years, the international tax rules have been primarily determined by the OECD, a small club of rich countries among which are some of the world's biggest tax havens. This has brought about a global tax system that causes countries around the world to lose over \$483 billion in tax every year to corporate tax abuse and private tax evasion.

Establishing a UN tax convention would allow international tax rules to be determined through a genuinely representative process at the UN that reflects the needs of countries around the world, instead of the desires a rich and powerful few.

The Norwegian Church Aid (NCA) in collaboration with Tax Justice Working Group Tanzania (TJWG) organized a two day workshop in Dodoma to initiate Tanzania national dialogue on the need to have an international body that will give opportunities for countries in the world.

This came after the UN passed in Dec 2022 a resolution which opened a process for having a UN Tax Convention that will establish a global tax body that will safeguard countries efforts in fighting against tax abuse.

Minimising ingestion of toxic chemicals in foodstuffs

By Telesphor Magobe

THE government of Tanzania, through the Ministry of Agriculture, encourages farmers to use modern farming methods to increase crop yield, create food security and safety and sell their surplus.

Food safety involves proper preparation, cooking and preservation through which consumers are protected against ingesting food which contains toxic chemical residues, including aflatoxins. The latter are poisonous substances produced by naturally occurring moulds in groundnuts, nuts, spices, maize and sorghum and occur before and after harvesting. The presence of toxic chemical residues or aflatoxins in food beyond the tolerated amount makes it unsafe.

Good agricultural practices

If farmers are regularly trained in proper chemical application and handling and in good practices related especially to crop husbandry and chemical dealers think of the health of consumers it will minimise the ingestion of toxic chemicals. It will also minimise chances of contracting non-communicable diseases (NCDs) such as cancer, diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure, kidney failure and stroke.

Studies conducted in different countries in sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East and Europe warn of the ingestion of toxic chemical residues found in fruits and vegetables harvested without regard to pre-harvest intervals (PHIs) and maximum residue levels (MRLs).

A PHI is the minimum amount of time (also called the withdrawal period) between the last chemical application and when the crop can be harvested and used as food. It is found on the chemical label and complying with it is a legal requirement. An MRL is the highest level (concentration) of a toxic chemical residue legally tolerated in or on food or feed when chemicals are applied correctly. Adhering to PHIs and MRLs is a good agricultural practice.

Kiwango et al. (2018) in their study suggest that "overdosing and harvesting of crops before pre-harvest intervals is a possible scenario, and would result in unacceptable pesticide residues in vegetables with a subsequent increased risk of human exposure." Farmers can be tempted to harvest and sell their produce before a PHI when buyers approach them. Yet, the establishment and enforcement of PHIs and MRLs are crucial to food safety.

Ssemugabo et al. (2022) in their study used 160 fruit and vegetable samples collected from 50 farms, 50 markets, 20 streets, 20 restaurants and 20 homes and analysed them "using liquid chromatography-tandem mass spectrometry and gas chromatography-mass spectrometer for dithiocarbamates." Accordingly, they detected pesticide residues in the majority of their samples (95.6 per cent).

Monitoring and sensitisation

Their study shows the proportions of the most frequently detected pesticide residue classes were or-

ganophosphates (91.3 per cent), carbamates (67.5 per cent), pyrethroids (60.0 per cent) dithiocarbamates (48.1 per cent), neonicotinoids (25 per cent) and pesticides (23.8 per cent). The researchers recommend regular monitoring of chemical residues in foodstuffs and the sensitisation of food production and handling stakeholders to proper chemical use practices to minimise health hazards.

Studies conducted in six sub-Saharan African countries confirm that organophosphates, carbamates, dithiocarbamates, pyrethroids and neonicotinoids "are the most common pesticide residues detected in fruits and vegetables in Africa." To minimise contamination, which could have tampered with their study findings, the researchers collected fresh produce samples in sterile polyethylene terephthalate (PET) plastic containers approved as safe for food beverage contact by regulatory authorities throughout the world.

Moreover, they say that other studies conducted in two other African countries and one Middle East country revealed 33.4 per cent, 47 per cent and 40 per cent fruit and vegetable samples with pesticide residues.

Some farmers tend to use smuggled pesticides they buy at a lower price and may neither have labels with prescriptions on how to use them nor show the expiry date. Improper application of pesticide leads to chemical resistance and thus the need to use mul-

tiple pesticides. This, the researchers say, subjects consumers to a risk of ingesting multiple chemical residues.

Excessive chemical use

Kiwango et al. (2018) further say that there is "the misuse and overuse of pesticides, non-adherence to the pre-harvest interval, poor storage and disposal of pesticide containers and use of banned and counterfeit pesticides." Darko & Akoto (2008) analysed pesticide residues in tomato, eggplant and pepper from some African markets and found that dichlorvos residues were above MRLs in 48 per cent of tomato, 42 per cent of eggplant and 26 per cent of pepper.

Analysis of data from EU member states shows "European fruit and vegetables with detected per- and polyfluoroalkyl substance (PFAS) residues between 2011 and 2021 almost tripled, with a growth rate of 220 per cent for fruit and of 274 per cent for vegetables in 10 years," reports Pesticide Action Network (PAN) Europe in its report dated February 2024.

Based on this analysis PAN Europe says among "the fruits grown in Europe, 37 per cent of strawberries, 35 per cent of peaches and 31 per cent of apricots are contaminated." It also says a smaller percentage of European-grown vegetables (12 per cent) contain

PFAS pesticide residues compared to fruit and that "some vegetables are as frequently contaminated as the top-ranked fruit (chicories: 42 per cent and cucumbers: 30 per cent)."

According to PAN Europe, in 2021 the most often detected PFAS active substances in contaminated European-grown products included the fungicide fluopyram, the insecticide flonicamid and the fungicide trifloxystrobin. "The analysis is based on the list of 47 active substances used in pesticides listed as PFAS in the proposal for a universal PFAS restriction submitted to the European Chemical Agency (ECHA) in February 2023."

Imported fruits and vegetables in Europe

While the most contaminated imported fruit in Europe included table grapes (37 per cent), bananas (31 per cent) and apricots (21 per cent), the most contaminated vegetable samples included cucumbers (30 per cent), aubergines (eggplants) (24 per cent), and peppers (23 per cent) topped the list of most polluted foodstuffs.

Therefore, evidence-based research shows there is a dearth of food safety in Africa and in other parts of the world due to ingestion of toxic chemical residues as a result of excessive use and improper handling of chemicals especially in crop husbandry. However, it is possible to create food safety if farmers and chemical dealers protect the health of consumers by heeding good agricultural practices.



On April 4th, 2024, Special Seats Member of Parliament Ester Bulaya sparked fiery deliberations in the National Assembly regarding the Public Service Social Security Fund (PSSSF).

Indian and Pakistan farmers shifting to natural and regenerative farming

By Zofeen Ebrahim and Sanskrita Bharadwaj

NINE years ago, farmer Sultan Ahmed Bhatti gave up tilling the soil and using most fertilizers and pesticides on his farm in Doober Bhatian, Pakistan.

His brothers at first derided him. But soon, his first experiment with growing wheat on raised beds was a runaway success. "We produced more wheat than what we grew on ploughed, flat land," he said.

Today, researchers, climate experts, and agriculture students visit his 100-acre farm, where he grows wheat, rice, maize, sugarcane, and vegetables, to see how he is able to reap bumper crops with minimal input costs.

The magic is in the soil, says Bhatti, picking up a fistful of soil in his calloused hand. "It's all about respecting the soil that treats you so well."

Bhatti is among a small but growing segment of farmers across Pakistan and India pursuing regenerative farming techniques. It's part of a global movement to make agriculture more sustainable by increasing soil health through cutting back on chemicals, adding organic material to soil, and diversifying plants and animals on the farm.

Experts see regenerative farming as a climate solution

"Changing agricultural practices is the most straightforward way to benefit the planet's health while ensuring food security in the long term," said Francesco Caronele Zampaolo, programme director at SRI-2030, a UK-based global organization that promotes eco-friendly farming to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and enhance carbon sequestration.

Bio-agriculture scientist Dr. Farooq-e-Azam, based in Faisalabad, Pakistan, has been promoting these methods since the early 1970s. He thinks that regenerative agriculture might be the key to addressing food insecurity and reducing intensive farming's role in causing human-induced land degradation.

But there is no one-size-fits-all formula for transitioning to regenerative agriculture. It may require a different set of farming approaches depending on the soil type, weather conditions, and biodiversity. But generally, it means applying a range of techniques to restore the soil's health.

Ways of restoring the soil include adding crop residue, composted manure, and natural rock minerals, says Azam, director of the Research and Development unit at US-based Bontera BioAg.

Indian farmers turning to nature for solutions

The same is happening across the border, in India, too, where more farmers are shifting to a natural way of farming.

More than two decades ago, Samir Bordoloi quit his government job to become a farmer. Now, Bordoloi cultivates crops such as turmeric, jackfruit, papaya, and king chilies on nearly 12 acres of land in Sonapur, about 30 km from Guwahati, a city in northeast India. The once-derelict ground that Bordoloi took on lease is a flourishing food forest today.

Bordoloi uses zero tillage and no pesticides or chemical fertilizers. Among other innovative techniques, Bordoloi scatters "seed bombs" on his land and lets them germinate naturally. For example, he plucks uniform sized ripened chilies and keeps them aside for seven days.

"Then we slice and take out their seeds and cover them with a mixture made of biochar, cow dung and bamboo, which is then shaped into a ball."

Is conventional farming sustainable?

Conventional farming in India and Pakistan has taken a toll on agricultural land. Around 30 percent of the land in India is degraded, according to the National Bureau of Soil Survey and Land Use Planning. More than 50 percent of India's farmers are debt-ridden, according to the 2019 National Statistical Office, and often seek alternatives outside of agriculture, or tragically, take their own lives.

In Pakistan, almost three-fourths of the land is degraded, according to Pakistan's climate change ministry.

"Droughts, floods, deforestation, overgrazing, monoculture farming, excessive tillage, and the use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides are the most glaring causes of land degradation on both sides of the fence," said Dr. Aamer Irshad, head of programme at the Food and Agri-



Farmer Samir Bordoloi showing a tea bud as he stands amidst his tea shrubs. He cultivates various crops such as turmeric, jackfruit, papaya and king chilies on nearly 12 acres of land. Bordoloi calls himself a "compassionate farmer", and believes in zero tillage, no pesticides and chemical fertilizers.

culture Organization of the United Nations, in Pakistan.

Dr. Vinod K. Chaudhary, an associate professor of sociology at Punjab University in Chandigarh, India, who is also a farmer, said farming methods in both countries are unsustainable.

While researching sustainable farming, he came across videos on YouTube and Facebook put up by Asif Sharif, a progressive farmer from Pakpattan, across the border in Pakistan's Punjab province. "I learned plants require moisture, not water, which was the most difficult to believe, as we farmers believe in inundation."

He also learned that soil should be covered, not tilled. Chaudhary decided to try Sharif's techniques and found they worked well. Now he encourages farmers in Indian Punjab and Haryana to try them.

"The soil resets itself with this kind of farming," Chaudhary said.

Experimenting and finding solutions

Regenerative farmers are experimenting and spreading the word.

Mahmood Nawaz Shah, a third-generation progressive farmer with 600 acres of farmland in Tando Allah Yar district of Sindh province, Pakistan, has adopted regenerative agricultural techniques "through hit and trial and finding solutions" now for 25 years.

Shah controls fruit flies on his 45-acre mango orchards through pheromone traps and lets parasites that eat borers loose in the sugarcane field.

"This allows us to delay pesticide sprays as late as possible as well as increase the intervals between two sprays," he explains.

Shah also uses farmyard manure from livestock, grows peas, cauliflower, and black cumin amid 145 acres of sug-

arcane crop, and adds mineral-rich silt to his land.

"It has all been a gradual and experimental process," he says.

Dhaniram Chetia, a farmer in the village of Pengeri in Tinsukia, in India's Assam state, found an innovative way to keep insects off his harvest: He grows papaya, tomatoes, and bananas on 30 percent of his eight acres of land to feed the local birds.

"The birds eat the pests that would otherwise prey on my cash crops. I don't need to use insecticides," he says. Bordoloi in Assam says elephants have helped in turmeric farming.

"Elephants stamp on our turmeric plants, cut out the thatch and consume the green elephant grass after the rains; we barely need any labour," he added.

Does regenerative agriculture live up to the hype?

It's hard to find definitive data on regenerative agriculture. Organic farming data may come closest. India has up to 2.66 million ha of agricultural land under organic farming, according to the World of Organic Agriculture 2023 yearbook, which places India among "countries with the most organic producers" alongside Uganda and Ethiopia. However, the data given by India's department of agriculture and farmers welfare puts natural farming at just 0.65 million hectares.

In Pakistan, the area under naturally organic agriculture in the country is about 1.51 million ha, or about 6% of all agricultural land, according to the Pakistan Organic Association, while land certified to be cultivated organically is just 64,885 hectares. "The government has not realized the virtues of this kind of farming and there is a complete absence of government policies and practices, particularly for organic food regulations and certification," pointed out Dr. Hasan Ali Mughal, founder of POA.

Further, 10 percent of the landlords in Pakistan own 52 percent of the land, where they prefer to carry out monocropping of wheat and rice, said the FAO spokesperson, Irshad. He predicted that regenerative agriculture "cannot become mainstream in Pakistan" due to poor soil conditions.

But soil revival using solutions from nature takes time, says Mohammad Zaman, 47, a farmer from Tando Jan Mohammad of Pakistan's Sindh province's Mirpur Khas district. He met with some initial resistance from his father when he decided to adopt a more "natural" way of farming on their 30 acres of mango orchards in 2017. But he has, so far, spared his 400 or so mango trees from all kinds of insecticides, fungicides, and pesticides. "I sell online and I've realized there is a growing demand for chemical-free fruits among consumers," he said.

Seven years later, he is most satisfied. "I could not have chosen a better path for farming," he said, as the soil fertility is even better than when his father was farming. He also grows ber, or Indian jujube, following the same principles.

"My water application is reduced by 50 percent as the dead and live mulch cover keeps the land moist," said Zaman, who also grows sugarcane and bananas. "We broke the myth that sugarcane and bananas are water guzzlers," he said. He, however, uses fertilizer on the banana crop "sparingly" but intends to wean it off in two years.

This was endorsed by Indira Singh, lead at the School for Environment and Sustainability at the Indian Institute for Human Settlement (IIHS), in Bengaluru.

"Getting soil rejuvenation may take a little more time, but eventually, as the soil microbiomes bloom, they will see change, which will lead to a sustainable solution," she said.

Looking for larger solutions

Some would like to see more government support for regenerative farming.

Shah, currently the president of the Sindh Abadgar Board, an organisation of agriculturists in Sindh, said farmers are not being prepared for adapting to climate change and are not provided with solutions to counter those challenges.

Islamabad-based Dr. M. Azeem Khan, former chairman of the Pakistan Agriculture Research Council, agreed. The governments, he said, will need to modify existing farm equipment, build new ones, and make them available, as most small farmers cannot afford them. Further, the state will need to build the technical capacity of its extension workers, who can not only convince but also train farmers to give up their "old ways" and to let nature take its course.

"Seeing is believing; only then will farmers accept change," Khan said.

Khan said cheaper electricity, like solar, surety to procure produce, provision of timely and subsidized inputs, repair and maintenance of farm machinery, and an effective advocacy system focusing on how to move towards regenerative and environment-friendly agricultural practices would help.

"At the outset, the change may be costly," but it is possible, he said.



Sugarcane waste, which otherwise was often burned, causing greenhouse gas emissions, is used to nourish the soil at Mahmood Nawaz Shah's (right) farm.

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 KADOGO 11:00-13:00HRS BONGO HITS 13:00-14:00HRS DW RADIO 14:00-16:00HRS ZAIDI YA UMJUAVYO 16:00-18:00HRS ALIVEVUMA 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

One woman's battle to push Africa's space race

By Marco Oriunto

CAMEROONIAN scientist Marie Makuate has been at the forefront of using information harvested by satellites to help save the lives of people on Earth in emergencies, but she argues the expense of the data should spur more African countries to launch their own space hardware.

In the hours after the deadly earthquake struck central Morocco last September, the 32-year-old's phone started buzzing.

She was thousands of kilometres from the zone of destruction, but her skills analysing satellite images were vital.

"I woke up hearing message notifications of my colleagues telling me that there had been a disaster in Morocco," Makuate says from her base in the Cameroonian capital, Yaoundé.

As a geospatial expert for the NGO Humanitarian OpenStreet-Map Team, she creates maps to help emergency services navigate an unpredictable territory so that people in need can be reached quickly.

It is a job that Makuate says gives her purpose and motivation.

"I was shocked to hear about the [Morocco] disaster, but then I thought that if I mapped as much infrastructure as possible, it would help other people save lives."

Last September, her maps, derived from open-source, freely available images, became a lifeline for organisations like Médecins Sans Frontières operating in the devastated towns, which included Marrakesh.

A map of the kind that Makuate creates looks very different from the ones that most might be familiar with.

It shows an updated, high-definition view of the territory to which she and the team she leads add potentially life-saving information.

"The most important thing emergency services need to know when there is a disaster is: 'Where is the road? Where is the water? Where's a river or a [shopping] mall?'" Makuate says.

But due to the costs associated with launching and maintaining a satellite in orbit, the images that geospatial analysts rely on can be expensive, especially when they are required at short notice, as in the case of natural disasters.

"When an emergency starts, I have to ask around our satellite partners to see who is offering the best-quality images for free."

Some satellite companies do offer free imaging for disaster-relief purposes, but help is often limited in scope and time.

"For example in the case of Morocco, we had access to images of only a specific area, and after we were done, we could not access them anymore."

Morocco does have its own satellites, but Makuate makes the case that more African countries should be sending them into space and make their output more freely available.

This is not just about emergencies. Satellite imagery can help, among other things, in boosting agriculture, analysing population changes and understanding what is happening to natural resources such as water.

"If a country has its own satellite, it doesn't have to pay for the images," says the young scientist.

Satellite images can cost up to \$25 (£20) per square kilometre - getting high-definition photographs of an area the size of Lagos, for example, would cost more than \$80,000.

Makuate has been making her case for more pan-African collaboration in front of a group of industry specialists that came together this week in Angola's capital, Luanda, for the NewSpace Africa Con-



ference.

The meeting gathered investors and experts in how space technology can help the continent.

There is huge potential in the African space sector - it is expected to be worth more than \$20bn by 2026, according to consultancy firm Space in Africa. But the vast majority of this money is coming from outside the continent - through companies who are selling services to Africans.

"Imagine if we can just take 10 percent of that share and invest it in African companies," says Dr Zolana João, the general manager of the Angolan National Space Programme.

He, like Ms Makuate, believes that greater investment within the continent will better serve African governments, which are often hampered by a lack of reliable data.

"If I can map very precisely and in quantified ways important sectors of the country, I can then relay this [data] to the government so they can reach better decision-making," says Dr João.

South Africa and Egypt are the African countries with the highest number of satellites in orbit - both with 13 each - according to consultancy firm SpaceHub Africa. By comparison, a 2022 survey published in Forbes magazine said the US had more than 3,400.

Graphic showing the number of African satellites in space

South Africa uses its satellites to monitor the impact of mining activities as well as help provide consistent internet and telephone coverage, according to Makuate. In the case of Egypt, investment in telecommunication satellites reflects the country's position as a media powerhouse across the Arabic-speaking region.

Investment aside, the most fundamental obstacle in the way of Africa's space ambition is access to education.

"That is our weakest link when it comes to implementing space programmes in Africa," says Dr João.

That is a task that Ms Makuate is ready to take on.

In 2019, she took a master's degree in Geomatics from the African Regional Centre for Space Science and Technology based in Nigeria's Osun state.

"In Cameroon there wasn't this programme, so when I came back from Nigeria I wanted everyone to know about it," Makuate says.

But attending the course also showed her how small the presence of African women in this scientific field was. "In a class of 35 we were three women, the year after they told me they had one or two women."

It was the spark that motivated her to found Geospatial Girls and Kids, an association that offers free professional training in geospatial science to young women in Cameroon and Ivory Coast.

"It's easier for us to be inspired by women than by

men because when you see women on a panel, it inspires you to do the same next time."

At the end of the course, students receive a certificate and are connected to potential employers.

Three of Makuate's students are now employed as geospatial analysts and data collectors.

She says motivating her students can be hard, but also rewarding.

"Students say I'm strict with them, but at the end of the training they are happy because I pushed them beyond their limits."

She wants to create the next generation of experts who can analyse satellite imagery, who she hopes will be able to work with data generated by equipment sent into space by African governments.

This, she believes, would benefit everyone on the continent and fit in with her own personal mission.

"Everything I do is for one purpose - impacting people's lives," Makuate says.

Global Initiative reveals huge gaps in knowledge about what we eat

WASHINGTON

A ground-breaking new paper published in Nature Food from the Periodic Table of Food Initiative (PTFI) exposes a critical gap in our scientific understanding of the foods we eat.

It unveils a meticulously curated list of 1,650 nutritionally and culturally diverse foods for biochemical analysis, of which more than 1,000 are not included in any globally recognized food composition databases. Such databases are typically used to issue dietary guidelines and to guide agricultural policies.

"A substantial portion of what humanity consumes remains a scientific mystery," said Selena Ahmed, Global Director of PTFI at the American Heart Association, which co-facilitates the PTFI Secretariat. "Not only have these foods been invisible to nutritional science, but an estimated 95percent of the biomolecules in food have escaped our analysis and don't appear on food labels. We may think we know what we're eating, but most of the time, we have limited understanding."

The 1,650 foods on the list stand in contrast to the narrowness of most human diets today. Only three main crops - wheat, maize and rice - provide almost half of global calories and are largely grown as monocultures.

The list was compiled through a global participatory process involving 40 experts from regions around the world. It represents a cornucopia of foods chosen for their contribution to the human diet, cultural relevance, diversity and innovation potential as the climate changes. Along with the American Heart Association, PTFI is facilitated by the collective leadership of the Alliance of Bioversity International and CIAT,



which contribute scientific advice and knowledge to the initiative.

"There is a pressing need for comprehensive, publicly accessible metrics that acknowledge the interconnectedness of our food, our health and our environment," said Maya Rajasekharan, Managing Director of Africa at the Alliance of Bioversity and CIAT and Director of Strategy Integration and Engagement of PTFI. "For decades, food has been viewed through a reductionist lens, often simplified to calories and essential nutrients. PTFI promises to fundamentally change this approach for the better."

"PTFI was born from a visionary and ambitious idea to create an enabling platform built around food composition. Rather than only focusing on the few commonly analyzed components of a handful of foods, our goal is to enable the mapping of the entire complex makeup of many permutations of every food on the planet in a standardized and open format. This way, the information can be universally used to benefit human and planetary health," said co-author Dr. John de la Parra, Director, Food Initiative at The Rockefeller Foundation.

Analysis is already underway on

hundreds of the listed foods, using sophisticated new technologies, from high resolution mass spectrometry to artificial intelligence, to discover the "dark matter" of food - the tens of thousands of still unknown biochemical that determine food quality and health impacts.

The PTFI list is particularly noteworthy for its breadth. Of the foods listed: 30percent are fruits; 25percent are vegetables, 8percent are nuts and seeds, 8percent are land animal products and 7percent are aquatic animal products. Others originate from fungal and bacterial species - and one is a lichen.

Some 476 foods are considered global in nature (broadly cultivated and consumed), while the others are regionally important, originating from either the Americas, Asia, Africa, the Pacific or Europe.

Today, 62percent of the listed foods are not documented in global public databases such as FoodData Central of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations database.

One of these foods - wattle seeds - come from Acacia trees native to Australia and have been used by Aboriginal communities for thousands of years. Like many of the foods on

the list, questions abound about how they impact health at different stages of life, their nutritional and medicinal qualities, and their role in the ecosystem. The list also includes 98 African crops, 56 of which are undocumented in food databases.

"Agriculture is a major contributor to climate change and the devastation of the planet," said co-author Bruce German, Chair of the Scientific Advisory Committee of PTFI and Director of the Foods for Health Institute at the University of California, Davis. "The foods we grow are driving diet-dependent diseases that are a major cause of morbidity and mortality around the world. And the only way to fix this, the necessary step, is knowing what food is."

PTFI stands out from other food databases because it curates and considers vast quantities of data on the environmental and agricultural practices that shape what is in food. By understanding these connections, PTFI can help create a sustainable food system that takes into account everything from how food is grown to the way it is processed and prepared.

"The PTFI's findings represent a clarion call for further research across the food system - from farmers to policymakers, from nutritionists to chefs, from scientists to consumers - to make informed decisions that promote diversity, sustainability, and resilience in food production and consumption," Ahmed said.

On April 23-24 in New York City, PTFI will roll out a core set of foundational resources (data, tools and capacity-strengthening measures) that researchers everywhere can access to generate detailed information on the biomolecular composition of foods from around the world and perform extensive studies using standardized methods.

E-bikes could cut smog, energy use and congestion globally

By Charles Pekow

THE global market for e-bikes is surging. These bicycles, usually equipped with pedals and an electric motor assist, are popular with consumers and commuters and are becoming part of local business delivery systems. The trend could significantly reduce particulate pollution and smog, as well as cut carbon emissions in the transportation sector.

But there are barriers. No international manufacturing standard yet exists for e-bikes. Also, transportation and charging infrastructure doesn't adequately accommodate e-bikes, especially in the developing world where electric bicycles have the potential to replace super-polluting gas-powered scooters, motorcycles and pedicabs.

Poorly made or improperly maintained e-bike batteries have developed a reputation for sometimes causing fires, exploding and even killing people, which has caused hesitation among consumers. While this safety problem is a real one, manufacturers and enthusiasts say the e-bike industry can effectively deal with it.

Some governments are offering subsidies and tax incentives to e-bike buyers, while some companies are offering deals allowing customers to trade in gas two-wheelers for e-bikes. As sales and use grow, updated bike lane construction and safety rules setting permissible e-bike horsepower, speed and size will be required.

Can simply adding an electric motor to a human-powered bicycle significantly reduce urban smog, traffic congestion and energy consumption – and even help curb climate change? Yes, but many bumps in the road must be overcome to get there.

Today's electric bicycles come in a range of two-wheeled e-bikes and three-wheeled e-trikes, varieties to meet consumer and business needs, with many millions already sold. The addition of an electric motor to the traditional bicycle's powertrain has not only expanded its range and usefulness for recreation and commuting, but propelled it into commerce, largely for making last-mile deliveries or as taxis.

Among the e-bike's advantages are that riders, combining pedal power with an electric assist, can climb steep hills, travel faster and farther. Electric bikes also allow the elderly or people with some medical limitations to ride.

But before e-bikes reach their full societal potential, the industry and the world's nations need to overcome some impediments, including manufacturing capacity, battery reliability and safety, transportation infrastructure and culture.

A growth industry comes of age. "The global electric bike market size was valued at \$37.47 billion in 2022 and is projected to grow from \$43.32 billion in 2023, to \$119.72 billion by 2030," according to Fortune Business Insights, a global marketing research company.

The COVID-19 pandemic especially accelerated demand as people moved away from using public transit, with fuel price increases also boosting demand. Growth happened everywhere, but the "Asia Pacific [region] dominated the global market, with China accounting for most of the e-bike market share," noted the research firm.

As of 2020, an estimated 130 million e-bikes were on the road in China alone. "Factors such as extensive bicycle infrastructure in developed and developing countries; including China, India and Japan; high vehicular and public transit congestion; and increasing stringency of emission regulations for gasoline motorcycles are attributed to the dominance of the [Asian] market," Fortune Business Insights wrote.

Fortune also forecast robust future growth in Europe. Major manufacturers are now building e-bikes in the U.S., Taiwan, Japan, the Netherlands, India and Germa-



Some governments are offering subsidies and tax incentives to e-bike buyers.

ny. Elsewhere, the Middle-Eastern and African e-bike market was valued at \$805 million in 2021 and is projected to grow to \$1.2 billion by 2027. Worldwide e-bike sales are expected to soar to 60 million units annually by 2025 – a trend that will rocket the industry from niche market to mainstream mode of mobility.

Good for commerce and the environment

While electric cargo bikes are already capable of replacing delivery trucks and cars in many situations, a number of factors inhibit their use, including cost, safety concerns, lack of infrastructure and limits to how far you can go on a charge, noted a 2023 study published in *Transportation Research Interdisciplinary Perspectives*.

The report found that cargo bike owners reduce auto trips by 1-4 per week by using e-bikes. Other studies cited by the report noted that while e-bikes can definitely cut greenhouse gas emissions, it's not clear by how much. On the downside, they will increase demand on electrical grids.

Bike Adviser, a U.S. website dedicated to cycling, estimates that if "Americans replaced only 8% of their short-distance car trips [of 5 miles or less] with e-bikes, we would save 44K metric tons of CO2 every day, which is equivalent to the carbon sequestered by 724,496 tree seedlings grown for 10 years." One caveat: If electric bikes are to reach their full potential as carbon emission reducers, electrical grids will need to be powered by alternative sources, not fossil fuels.

A study by New York University (NYU) suggested increased e-bike infrastructure could lower carbon emissions in the New York metro area by as much as 30% and especially help in low-income areas, considering just deliveries, let alone other uses. But there are barriers to increased use. "More distribution centers are needed to fulfill the growing needs of e-commerce activities. ... A more complete bike lane network is needed to accommodate the future expansion of cargo bike operation, and more effort is required to improve the bike accessibility of distribution centers," the NYU study concluded.

The use of cargo bikes for "last-mile" deliveries could reduce traffic and pollution, the Urban Mobility project of the European Institute of Innovation & Technology reported in November 2023. Cargo bikes are easier to park and can go where larger vehicles can't, which compensates for speeds slower than autos. "This result points towards an important finding concerning fossil-fuel driven transport vehicles, namely the likelihood that current business practices promote a high degree of inefficiency and significant levels of unnecessary emissions, noise and other risks

caused by the use of faster, larger vehicles in urban environments," according to the report, which examined transport systems in Stockholm, Sweden, and Barcelona, Spain.

While it's a given that replacing gas-powered cars and trucks with e-bikes will help clean up air pollution that seriously harms public health (including tailpipe emissions of carbon monoxide, hydrocarbons, nitrogen oxides, sulfur oxides and volatile organic compounds), it's not clear how much, as the issue hasn't been studied sufficiently.

E-bikes could be especially valuable for curbing urban air pollution in developing nations, outcompeting and replacing dirty, smog-producing two-cycle engines that run on a mix of gasoline and oil and which today power millions of super-polluting scooters, motorcycles and pedicabs. Today's gas "scooter" spews out between tens and thousands of times more fine particles and toxic gases, proportionate to the amount of fuel consumed, than even heavy [gas-powered] trucks and buses," noted a study published in the journal *Nature Communications*.

Electric cargo bikes can be used for commercial deliveries, carrying loads too heavy for a manual bike, or even to transport your pet.

Roadblocks ahead

But as mentioned upfront, bumps in the road lie ahead that could slow e-bike growth. First up are production issues. Manufacturers want to make and sell e-bikes worldwide. But there's a catch: No international agency has yet stepped up to create global standards to classify e-bikes based on horsepower, speed, size, etc.

Those manufacturing standards will be needed to sell e-bikes internationally, cautioned Ash Lovell, the electric bicycle policy & campaign director for PeopleForBikes, an American bicycle industry advocacy group. European makers are working on doing just that, she added.

Until this happens, there's also the problem of a large number of poorly constructed, unsafe e-bikes getting sold. "We've seen a huge rise in [e-bike use] over the last 10 years and what we've seen accompanying this rise is a proliferation of different types of products, both very economical or not very well made, or high-quality products inaccessible ... because of their price," Lovell noted.

Next roadblock: the need to design and build infrastructure and write rules for the road to serve an e-bike influx. Many factors must be considered, including driving regulations, traffic routes, charging infrastructure, redesigning bike lanes and load-

ing bays to accommodate cargo e-bikes, defining exactly who gets to use those bike lanes and setting up hubs where trucks can drop off cargo for last-mile e-bike delivery.

Governments have yet to recognize e-bikes as unique vehicle types that require special consideration when planning travel lanes, charging stations and parking. A study in China found that "urban planners ... need more time [to meet] the challenge of the dramatically fast bicycle electrification process. For example, although electrified bicycles have significant higher speed (up to 25-40 kph or 15.5-25 mph) than conventional bicycles (less than 15 kph or 9.3 mph), they are [currently] all classified as bicycles by the Chinese government." Those higher speeds make e-bike injuries more severe when involved in a crash, the study noted.

While bike lanes have been sprouting up on roads in wealthier nations for years now, they've generally been designed for traditional bicycles. E-bikes (or e-trikes) capable of faster speeds or pulling trailers or carrying wide loads make passing and navigating turns within standard bike lanes a problem.

E-bike riders likewise have a harder time going up and down sidewalk curbs, especially when they're not cut, reported a paper from the Urban Cycling Institute of Amsterdam, released last fall. Cargo bike users also found it more unwieldy to activate light switches on sidewalks, the institute wrote.

Transportation planners will have to catch up soon because the market is growing everywhere. The German Bicycle Industry Association estimated that next year, half of all bicycles sold in Germany will include a motor – people bought nearly 2 million e-bikes there in 2021.

What about exploding batteries?

Another industry problem involves battery safety. Several types of rechargeable batteries power e-bikes, the most common being lithium-ion, accounting for 68% of the market. Lithium batteries are more efficient, less expensive and take up less space and weight than alternatives such as lead-acid, the second-most common type, which is easier to recycle; and nickel-metal hydride batteries.

But lithium-ion batteries are currently prone to catching fire and have caused explosions and even killed people. To assure consumer safety, the world's countries will need to develop regulatory safeguards.

In the U.S., the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) is developing mandatory battery safety standards. "It will take some time," CPSC press secretary Patty Davis said. Meanwhile, CPSC told manufacturers to comply with voluntary codes UL 2849 in the U.S. and EN 15194 in Europe.

"What we're finding is there's not a lot of compliance," Davis added. "We're still seeing fires." CPSC has recalled lithium-ion batteries at least 10 times in the last four years, she said. "Until [standards] are mandatory, there will be shoddy products out there that put consumers at risk."

In March, CPSC opened a public comment period on an "advance notice of proposed rulemaking" for e-bike safety, not including battery hazards. CPSC is separately working on a project to "enhance the safety of high-energy batteries in consumer products, especially for micromobility products," according to the agency's FY 2024 Operating Plan.

Rad Power Bikes, the largest e-bike maker in North America, told CPSC, "Poorly manufactured e-bike batteries and related electrical components, which generally use lithium-ion batteries, can cause unique fire-safety challenges ... not covered by the existing bicycle standard."

The International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC) wrote the agency that the "nation's fire and emergency service is responding to multiple incidents per day involving consumer-based products (e-bikes, scooters, wheelchairs, etc.) and their batteries in thermal

runaway."

IAFC concluded, "Increased community education is needed to better explain the risks of both using the wrong battery for a piece of equipment, and the wrong charger for a specific battery. ... The next step would be to create a method for the community to safely dispose of damaged batteries and compromised devices. Another key aspect the IAFC is concerned about is the [safety of the] charging infrastructure."

An ongoing effort to make e-bikes safer and more energy efficient involves creating a self-charging battery that stores energy used when pedaled. The Solar Bicycle Project has developed a solar powered battery, but it is presently large and bulky and only offers enough power in sunny climates. Solar power could reduce the need to install recharging stops. The EU in 2023 put into force a law to ensure batteries are sustainable, safe and circular (codifying the use of less harmful materials in battery making, and assuring the collection, reuse and recycling of spent batteries).

Paying for an e-bike surge While much cheaper than cars, motorized bikes still cost more than traditional bicycles, which inhibits market growth, especially with low-income people.

The U.S. is combating that problem, with at least 52 state and local governments already instituting incentive programs to encourage residents to buy e-bikes, though legislation for a national tax credit remains stalled in Congress. Most of these incentives involve rebates, but some use vouchers to subsidize purchases, or tax credits. Some programs are capped while others employ income limits or phasedowns.

Colorado, for instance, currently offers a point-of-sale rebate of \$500-1,100. This spring, it is initiating a \$450 tax credit. Maine is starting a grant program to help low- and moderate-income residents buy e-bikes "to offset transportation that would otherwise be provided by fossil fuel vehicles." Santa Barbara, California, is loaning e-bikes so people can try them. In San Francisco, you can trade in your car for an e-bike and get some cash back (within income limits).

Tax credits don't help as much as rebates or vouchers, Lovell said, because "to wait to get a rebate until [buyers] file their taxes won't work for people who are cash-strapped."

Many subsidy programs are just getting started, so it's too early to judge their effectiveness. But an evaluation of a financial assistance program for public employees in New Zealand found the "scheme was broadly successful," with 39% of employees saying they probably wouldn't have bought an e-bike without the subsidy.

In Africa, startup company Spiro, is looking to eliminate fossil fuel-guzzling motor bikes and scooters via its innovative trade-in program, which exchanges gas powered bikes for e-bikes. Spiro, founded in 2022, has already offered trade-ins putting 10,000 e-bikes on the road in Benin, Togo and Rwanda and has a roll-out plan for 140,000 e-bikes in Uganda, and more than a million in Kenya. Traded gas-powered bikes are either scrapped or converted to e-bikes. Spiro is also helping deal with Africa's lack of charging infrastructure and plans to install 3,000 stations in Kenya alone.

Last year, the United Nations Development Programme hosted a national workshop to promote the design and adoption of an electric vehicle-sharing model in Vietnam.

A further indication that electric bikes are trending is the world's first electric scooter championship – a global Formula E electric race series originated by Lucas di Grassi in partnership with the UN Environment Programme.

Sure, sustainability and carbon cuts are desirable, but the thrill of racing e-bikes at speeds topping 60 mph is bound to attract buyers too.

Despite all the roadblocks, the future looks bright for electric bikes.



Electric cargo bikes can be used for commercial deliveries, carrying loads too heavy for a manual bike, or even to transport your pet.

BUSINESS

NICOL stock price reaches all-time high during opening of the week

By Mnaku Mbani

NICOL shareholders' paper wealth, is continuing to grow further, after the collective investment scheme's share price on the Dar es Salaam Stock Exchange (DSE) reached all-time high during the opening of this week.

The DSE market report shows the company's share price closed at 750/- on Monday, an increase of 50 percent, compared to 500/- recorded at the beginning of the year and 170/- five years ago.

"This uptrend is a testament to the investment company's stellar performance in the year 2023," said Ammi Mwamunyi, financial market specialist at Core Securities.

In his weekly market synopsis published on the Daily News, the specialist said during last year, the investment company's total investment income surged by 33 percent, primarily propelled by investment income, which constituted 54 percent of total and interest income, representing 46 percent.

"NICO financial well-being is intimately connected with the ebbs and flows of Tanzania's banking sector, largely due to its substantial holdings in NMB Bank. Consequently, the fund's performance is directly impacted by the sector's fluctuations," he explained.

However, he said the current fund's price valuation is significantly lower than its Net Asset Value (NAV) per share, which stands at 2,255/-, suggesting a pronounced undervaluation in the market place.

"The marked discrepancy between NICOL's trading price and NAV, together with the fund's record of consistent dividend payout for the past three years, render NICOL an attractive investment for those seeking leveraged participation in NMB shares," he asserted.

Commenting on the development yesterday, NICOL Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Erasto Ngamilaga stated; "It has a big meaning to us, because we are continuing to implement our diversification strategies, specifically on government bonds and real estate which offer us promising returns".

"For investors who are trying to find a place to invest, they see huge prospect for NICOL considering that our net asset value is by far higher due to ongoing investment including the real estate whereby we purchase the Milambo property last year, of which its income is guaranteed," he said.

He said NICOL has also invested in other areas in real estate sector, of which have also started to generate returns, which increase prospect of growing the fund's investment income.

"We have also invested at least 35bn/- on the long term government debt instrument (bonds), which assure future dividends for our shareholders," he said.

"But prospective and existing shareholders are also looking on our portfolio on banking industry, specifically our 5 percent stake on NMB Bank. When the bank grows, the value of our stake is also growing, giving an assurance of shareholders' returns."

He said NICOL has also offloaded the non-performing investments including the Meat Company in Dodoma and Fish processing company in Mwanza, of which were draining the fund's incomes and have remained with only best performing investment, where they are continuing to invest.

Other targeted investment portfolios, according to the CEO include agriculture and warehouse.

"One of the most important is that we have also reduced our expenses. Our previous spending was too high and we have managed to scale it down due to visionary members of our board of directors, who have enabled these achievements as promised during our shareholders meetings," he added.

The Dar es Salaam Stock Exchange (DSE) daily market report shows during the opening trading session of this week, NICOL counter (NICO) recorded the transaction of 28,040 shares valued 20.97m/- traded at a price ranging from 700/- to 770/- per share in 12 deals.

The share price closed at 750/-, compared to the opening price of 700/-, which boosted its market capitalization to 46.23bn/-.



NICOL Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Erasto Ngamilaga



Bank's earnings per share up by 65 percent in 2023

By Guardian Reporter

PEOPLE'S Bank of Zanzibar (PBZ) earnings per share jumped by 65 percent to 165/- last year, compared to 100/- recorded in 2022, thanks to increased profitability.

The bank audited financial statements for the year ended in December 31st, 2023 published yesterday shows net income after income tax amounted to 51.3bn/- compared to 30.6bn/- earned in 2022, driven by growth of interest and non-interest incomes.

Interest income during the reported year amounted to 100.5bn/- compared to 71.2bn/- recorded in 2020, while non-interest income increased to 38.3bn/- compared to 32.4bn/- respectively, which translated into operating income of 74bn/- from 44bn/- respectively.

The growth of interest income resulted from increased lending, which amounted to 1.04trn/- last year, which is equivalent to 65.23 percent of total deposits from customers, other banks and financial institutions, compared to credits valued

802bn/- issued during the year 2022.

The statements show that the bank has also managed to maintain the lowest rate of Non-Performing Loans (NPLs) at 2.47 percent in 2023, which is lower than the industrial rate of 4.3 percent and regulatory benchmark of 5 percent.

According to the statement, the increase of non-interest income resulted into expansion of income from foreign currency dealing and transaction gains, fees and commission, doubled dividend income and other operating income.

The bank's total assets amounted to 2.06trn/- last year compared to 1.4trn/- in 2022, driven by an increase of cash, balance with Bank of Tanzania (BoT), balance with other banks and financial institutions, investments in government debt instruments and loans.

Balance with BoT grew sharply to 469bn/- in 2023, from 69bn/- in 2022, while balance with other banks and financial institutions went up to 189bn/- compared to 134bn/- respectively.

The statements show that total liability also grew by 50 percent to 1.8trn/- compared to

1.2trn/- respectively, due to increased customer deposits mobilization which amounted to 1.6trn/- from 960bn/- mobilized in 2022, and special deposits amounted to 106bn/- from 95bn/- recorded in 2022.

The bank which provides both sharia compliant and conventional banking services also managed to grow its capital based to 191bn/- last year, compared to 146bn/- recorded during the previous year.

The increase of the bank's capital resulted from improvement of retained earnings, profit account and doubling of other capital account. During the reported period, the bank also managed to increase the number of branches to 31 from 29 in 2022, which resulted into an increase of employees to 485 from 479 reported in 2022.

By Correspondent Valentine Oforo, Dodoma

SIDO to help entrepreneurs in tapping export markets

THE Small Industries Development Organisation (SIDO) in Dodoma region has embarked on a constructive program to impart the entrepreneurs in the region with the best skills which will enable them to producing products suiting international markets standard.

Attracting small and larger scale entrepreneurs, the robust program is working to enable the targeted groups to fully tap and benefit a from the vast prestigious market opportunities available in the international and regional markets.

In an exclusive interview to The Guardian yesterday, Crispin Kapinga, SIDO's Trade Development Officer observed that the government has already worked to un-

lock potential opportunities for local traders to market their locally-produced products at the various red-carpet markets.

"The current challenge is how local entrepreneurs can produce products that meet standard to enable them to penetrate, compete and fetches good number of purchasers in the regional and global markets," he said.

In efforts to empower the entrepreneurs, Kapinga explained that the organisation, SIDO, is working to train them over how to get useful information over the products that attracts huge demand in the markets.

"We're also giving them with key tips over market linkages, and ways on how to produce prestigious items from available local

resources," he said.

He insisted that the government has signed the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) agreement, the vital development which has unlocked and exposed Tanzanian goods into wider international markets.

AGOA has been at the core of US economic policy and commercial engagement with Africa, and it provides eligible sub-Saharan African countries with duty-free access to the US market for over 1,800 products, in addition to the more than 5,000 products that are eligible for duty-free access under the Generalized System of Preferences program. As part to create further friendly busi-

ness doing environment and opportunities, he expressed that the government has also worked to allow the local traders and entrepreneurs to take part in the Africa Continental Free Trade Area (ACFTA).

"The ACFTA is the world's largest free trade area bringing together at least 55 countries of the African Union (AU) and eight (8) Regional Economic Communities (RECs) to create a single market for the continent," he observed.

He insisted, if trained effectively, the small-scale entrepreneurs across the country can produce high-standard products which can penetrate onto the mentioned markets to fetch lucrative profits.

"This efforts," he said, "Calls joint intervention from different like-minded institutions from both, private and public sectors in order to assure the indigenous entrepreneurs are benefiting accordingly from the expanded markets, the development which will automatically boost the nation's income in terms of foreign currency gains," he expounded.

SIDO was established in October 1973 as a parastatal organisation for the general purpose to develop the small industry sector in Tanzania.

It was expected to fulfill a very wide range of functions, from policy formulation to direct support to industries, to hands-on involvement in the establishment of SMEs in both rural and urban areas. See SIDO Vision, Mission and Objectives.

TCB allocates 300bn/- to small businesses

From page 1

During the first quarter of this year TCB recorded a net profit of 10bn/-, driven by the stable growth in revenue across all business segments as well as the balance sheet.

"Our steady growth is fuelled by our commitment to excellence and our relentless pursuit of customer satisfaction. We are a bank that takes time to listen to our customers and put effort in understanding their needs," he said.

Mihayo explained; "With revenue soaring by 30 per cent, we have once again demonstrated our resilience and capability in navigating dynamic market con-

ditions. Our customers' trust and confidence with us remain steadfast as evidenced by the increase in customer deposit. Furthermore, our commitment to fostering economic growth is evident in the rise of customer loans."

Mihayo said the total expenses incurred during the quarter stood at 43.2bn/- marking a 6.1 per cent increase than the 40.7bn/- incurred in the first quarter of 2023, while total expenses rose marginally by 2.5bn/- from 26.5bn/- at the end of the first quarter of 2023 to 26.8 bn/- as at the end of the first quarter of 2024.

"We want to implement a strategy that is focused on driv-

ing operational efficiencies and progressively manage our cost to income ratio downwards despite the marginal increase for this period," he said.

Mihayo said the bank's record of profitable growth was a result of continuous prioritization of the value and sustainable growth of the micro, small and medium-sized businesses in the country, adding that, TCB has leveraged on digitization of banking solutions to offer efficiency, convenience, and ease transaction ability.

"The strategic direction coupled with ongoing digitization strategy has brought TCB closer to its customers than ever before to allow them to conduct bank-

ing services at a place of their convenience, fostering a relationship of trust between the bank and its customers," he said

Mihayo also said that TCB's banking network grew by almost four-fold during the past four years from 1,854 in 2020 to over 6,000 in 2023.

"The number of UmojaSwitch ATMs will go up from 250 in 2020 to 281 in 2023. During the same period, TCB also started to acquire and issue VISA cards.

Umoja Switch has formed a partnership with NMB and as of Q1-2024, there are 750 NMBATMs connected to Umoja Switch. This brings the total number of Umoja Switch ATMs to 1031 in Q1-2024," he said.



Adam Mihayo, CEO of Tanzania Commercial Bank

Struggling with scarce, costly clean water in Dar city

BY FRANCIS KAJUBI

GOD created water as the world's free resources for all living organisms, although some humans can't get the precious liquid without dipping into their pockets.

Unless those who live closer to the river, lake or other fresh water sources, where water is accessible for free and plenty; but living in urban area, it is impossible to get such a privilege.

In Dar es Salaam, the city of up to six million residents, water is a scarce and expensive commodity to most of the households. Sometimes, water turns deadly, especially during rain seasons, which are associated with floods.

The city, which is surrounded by salty Indian Ocean water on the East, useless for any domestic use, rather than swimming or fishing; access for clean and safe fresh water for drinking and other household use, is unpredictable and costly.

The supply of fresh water in Dar es Salaam city is provided by both public and private suppliers (registered and non-registered), charging different prices on different quantities, which caused instability of prices, an outcry of consumers.

The city residents say they are currently incurring skyrocketing of unregulated prices of clean water, mostly supplied by unregistered vendors, scattered across the streets of the city.

Sometimes, these suppliers are posing health-risks to the majority of water buyers, as they don't know where water is obtained. Responsible authorities bask in success while taxpayers demand reforms.

Rose Mziwanda (36), a mother of two daughters, resident of Luguruni suburb, on the outskirts of the city said that her family consumes at least five buckets of 20 liters each of water on a daily basis for domestic uses.

Each 20 liters package of water she buying from street water vendors daily cost her 200/-, which translates into a daily spending of 1,000/- a 30,000/- a month. When there is water rationing from the public city water authority, the price doubles.

"I sometimes buy water from my neighbor who has drilled his own well. It cost me 100/- for a 20 liters bucket," said Mziwanda.

She owns a 1,000 liters plastic tank for harvesting rainwater that she can consume for a maximum of only ten days.

She asserted that in case she is well-off during dry seasons, she pays 15,000/- to the Dar es Salaam Water Supply and Sanitation Authority (DAWASA) bowers for being supplied with the 1,000 liters.

Mziwanda revealed that the plastic tank is most useful to her during rain seasons, but during dry seasons, it cost her 45,000/- a month to fill in water.

"Access to clean and safe water is our basic right as citizens. I wonder if the government really cares about us. Access to water shouldn't be a business for earning people profits but a basic social service," said Mziwanda.

The small scale entrepreneur blamed that at the time water rationing is high in the city, government primary school pupils are forced to bring gallons of water from homes for watering flowers.

She said during the dry seasons, her two daughters carry five liters of water gallons each to school twice a week.

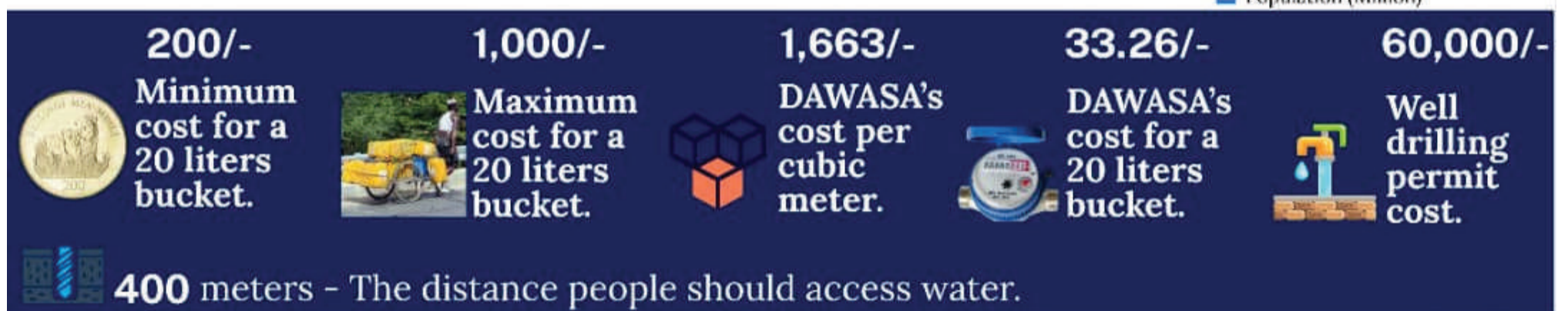
Gladness Kambi (35) Kipunguni resident said that when the cost of living is getting worse as days pass by, costs for access to safe water is even making life harder.

Everlasting Lyaro, DAWASA's Acting Head of Communication Department, said that currently there isn't water rationing in Dar es Salaam.

According to her, clean and safe water supply in the commercial city has reached 93 percent of all over five million residents.

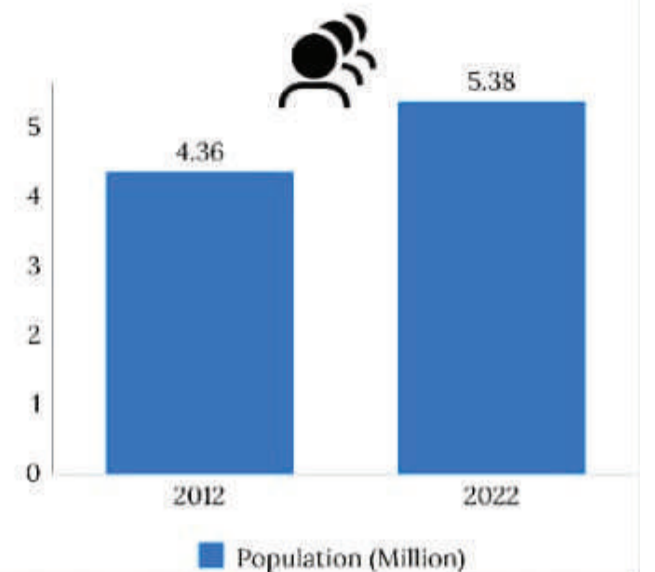
"There is no single place in Dar es Salaam which is not supplied with clean and safe water. All distribution infrastructures are in

Water Distribution in Dar es Salaam



Source: Dar es Salaam Water and Sewerage Authority (DAWASA), National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), The Guardian.

Dar es Salaam Population.



good condition. Places like Luguruni might be facing a shortage due to geographical features," said Lyaro.

The National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) Population and Housing Census results 2022 shows that the city's population increased to 5,383,728 in 2022 from 4,364,541 in 2012.

ACT Wazalendo Water Sector Spokesperson, Yasinta Awiti said that in the past three consecutive years the water ministry budget ratio to the central government's total budget dropped to 1.7 percent in 2023 from 2.2 percent in 2021.

"On the way forward the government should increase the current budget that stands at 756.21bn/- by five percent. It should also allocate a special subsidy for water management authorities to smoothly observe their duties," said Awiti.

The writer of this piece has learned that Article 8 (l) (b) of the Constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania 1977 highlights responsibilities of the government to the people as it states: "The primary objective of the government shall be the welfare of the people."

However, Article 9 (D) (i) of the ruling party Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM) Manifesto for 2020/25 states: "The party shall ensure that the government speed up connection of clean and safe water to 85 percent in rural areas and over 95 percent in urban come 2025."

Makurumla Ward CCM Secretary Omar Suleiman, in Ubungo district, said that the party's manifesto targets have been met at the national level since 2022.

"There's still a challenge to access clean and safe water in Makurumla but it's available at least four days a week. Infrastructure for water connectivity is a challenge though I am sure that will be addressed before 2025," said Suleiman.

Bakari Kimwanga, Makurumla Ward Councilor, said that for a Kimamba street resident in the ward to access water, they must walk to Mtambani street of Mzimuni Ward in Kinondoni district which is one kilometer away.

"In Makurumla people do pay a minimum of 200/- for a 20 liter bucket. Water kiosks have been invaded and fenced for other activities that we don't know," said Kimwanga.

According to him, DAWASA operates under the ministry of water instead of district councils where councilors could hold accountable officials in terms of budget allocation and implementation of projects.

Paschal Linyamala, Majohe Ward Councilor in Ilala district admitted 80 percent of the ward's residents use water fetched from drilled wells. He said DAWASA water taps can go beyond a month without water and hardly supply water for seven days non-stop.

"Water from drilled wells is not safe. You may find that the well is drilled at a place where five years ago there was a pit latrine," said Linyamala.

The Water Resources Management Act No. 11, 2009 states that after assessment by the water authority, a person shall be granted a well drilling permit for both domestic consumption and major water projects.

In Dar es Salaam, the permit for drilling a well for domestic purposes fetches 60,000/-. DAWASA issues the permit alongside another 100,000/- annual fee for water consumption.

For major water projects, the approval of the National Environmental Management Council (NEMC) is required for environmental and social impacts.

Kuruthumu Mnyete (30) Jitegemee suburb resident in the city said that DAWASA bowers sell a 20 liter bucket at 500/-.

"Access to water is a daily struggle here. The ward councilor has said he has no powers over DAWASA operations," said Mnyete.

According to DAWASA's current water pricing rates, a Dar es Salaam resident whom it supplies water pays 1,663/- per cubic meter and 33.26/- per a 20 liters bucket.

Dotto Yotham (32), Tabata Kisiwani resident said that at the highest point of water rationing in Dar es Salaam a 20 liter bucket cost him 1,000/-. He consumes three buckets a day.

"The price is most likely to pile up as the rationing persists. There must be people who benefit from the water crisis in Dar es Salaam," said Yotham.

Nassoro Yahaya, Project Manager, Ileje Environmental Conservation Association (IECA) argued that the water crisis is not only for Dar es Salaam residents but also affects people living in the upcountry.

For instance, he said, the majority of government primary and secondary schools are not connected to clean and safe water taps.

He said girls in schools face a challenge not only of sanitary pads but lack of water to clean their bodies when in menstrual cycle period.

"People shouldn't be walking over a kilometer from their homes in

search of water for domestic consumption," he recommended.

The National Water Policy 2002 states that the government shall lay down infrastructure that will enable people to access clean and safe water in a distance that doesn't exceed 400 meters.

Nehemiah Nnko, Medical Doctor at Magu District Hospital in Mwanza Region said that contaminated water and poor sanitation are linked to transmission of diseases such as cholera, diarrhoea, dysentery, hepatitis A, typhoid and polio.

"Inappropriately managed water and sanitation services expose individuals to preventable health risks," said Nnko.

Tanzania Water and Sanitary Network (TAWASANET) Chairperson Engineer Herbert Kashiilillah, said that water is life and sustains the economy.

"The government bears the duty of making sure that water is protected, conserved appropriately and governed through equitable allocation," said Kashiilillah.

He cautioned the government to take into consideration the rapid growth in population with long term plans that also targets at containing climate change effects.

"I suggest that the best way forward is for the government to embrace public-private partnership investments if the water crisis is to be addressed in Dar es Salaam and the whole country," said Kashiilillah.

The Tanzania Gender Networking Programme (TGNP) had prior to this year's Water Week commemoration conducted a one month survey on access to clean and safe water in Dar es Salaam, picking Ilala, Kinondoni and Ubungo districts as areas of the survey.

The survey involved 100 interviewed respondents from the three districts who were required to respond on four questions: Is clean and safe water supplied in your area of residence?

For Ubungo district respondents 21.4 percent said water is available but not clean and safe while 78.6 percent responded that there wasn't water supply.

The second question was what are the sources of water in your neighborhood? 21 percent said from the streams, 13.7 percent said no permanent source, 14.2 percent said from neighbors, 51.1 percent said they fetch water from taps and drilled wells.

The third question was what time do you spend in search of water? 42.8 percent said it takes four hours, 28.5 percent said it is within 100 meters from home,

71 percent said three to ten minutes mostly from rain, and 21.6 percent said it takes 30 minutes.

The fourth question was what are the social groups mostly affected in search of water? 71.4 percent said women are most affected 7.1 percent said elders, 7.1 percent said men and 14.4 percent said children.

The TGNP survey results showed that interviewed respondents from Ilala and Kinondoni districts had almost the same opinions as those of Ubungo.

Salome Kondo (28) Manager Mumbai Lodge at Gongola Mboto suburb said that when water rationing is high in the city, she buys a bucket of water at 1,000/-.

According to her, hot in the city forces guests who book in for a sleep to consume at least 100 liters which is equivalent to five buckets of 20 liters each.

"The lodge has 20 rooms. A guest pays 15,000/- per night which makes a sum of 300,000/-. If every guest consumes 100 liters it means 100,000/- is wasted in buying water. There are two plastic tanks of 2,000 liters each but the reserved water doesn't last 12 days," said Kondo.

She asserted that during water rationing she pays up to 150,000/- a week for laundry but when DAWASA's water is well supplied she spends 60,000/- by paying on per cubic meter which fetches 1,700/-.

"During water rationing profits in this business are cut by 40 percent because this goes to buying water mostly from street vendors and sometimes DAWASA bowers," said Kondo.

The Ministry of Water budget speech for 2023/24, states that the Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Agency (RUWASA) has been allocated 19.43bn/- for construction of nine dams in rural areas of nine districts through Force Account.

RUWASA will also implement another 1,546 village water projects valued at 500.34bn/-.

It states that access to clean and safe water in rural areas has increased to 77 percent as of December 2022 from 70.1 percent in December 2020.

In urban areas the access has increased to 88 percent from 84 percent of the corresponding periods.

The ministry, before July this year planned to cut down water losses rate to 25 percent from 48 percent and has allocated 1bn/- in addressing the challenge.

The Controller and Auditor General (CAG) report for 2020/21 states that between 2018 and 2021 water management authorities lost revenues worth 399bn/- in water losses.



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WORLD

TOTAL SOLAR ECLIPSE:

North Americans
celebrate with cheers,
music and weddings

NIAGARA FALLS, New York

THROGS of skywatchers across North America gazed upward at a blackened sun in the midday dusk on Monday, celebrating with cheers, music and matrimony the first total solar eclipse to darken the continent in seven years.

From a Mexican beach resort close to where the eclipse made landfall to the banks of the Ohio River and farther north beyond the roaring cascades of Niagara Falls at the US-Canadian border, spellbound crowds reacted to the sight of "totality" with jaw-dropping expressions of awe and joy.

In Russellville, Arkansas, a town of roughly 30,000 residents near the state's only nuclear power plant, almost 400 couples tied the knot by the shadow of the moon in a mass wedding event dubbed "Elope and the Eclipse".

At least two weddings and one marriage proposal were known to have taken place among roughly 2,000 people who assembled at Niagara Falls State Park despite overcast skies.

The dreary weather subdued the experience until clouds momentarily parted to reveal the last 30 seconds of totality, and the crowd went wild, cheering and shouting. "It's so beautiful."

As the skies began to brighten again, a band played out the retreating lunar shadow with a rendition the R.E.M.'s 1992 hit song Man on the Moon.

Across the river in Niagara Falls, Ontario, 309 people - some from as far away as Singapore and London - came dressed up as the sun, setting a new world record for the largest group to wear solar costumes in one place, contest organizers said. The previous record was set in 2020 by 287 participants in China.

Shadows and light

Where clear skies prevailed, observers along the direct path of the eclipse were treated to the rare spectacle of the moon appearing as a dark orb creeping in front of the sun, briefly blocking out all but a brilliant halo of light, or corona, around, the sun's outer edge.

It was first total eclipse to sweep across a large swath of North America since 2017, and will be the last one visible from the contiguous United States until 2044.

As totality unfolded at a campground in North Hudson in upstate New York, hundreds of people shrieked with excitement.

"Oh my God!" some said, as the air cooled and automatic outdoor lights on a nearby building flicked on, fooled by the darkness.

Mexico's beachside resort town of Mazatlan was the first major viewing spot for totality. Thousands in solar-safe eyewear perched on deck chairs along the coastal promenade, and an orchestra played the Star Wars movie theme as skies darkened under the approaching lunar shadow.

The crowds burst into cheers, applause and whistles when the eclipse reached totality.

The period of totality, lasting up to 4-1/2 minutes depending on the observer's location, was ushered in by a number of other eerie eclipse effects. Some stars twinkled at midday as dusk abruptly descended, sending temperatures dipping and faint waves of "shadow bands" flickering over the landscape. Birds and other wildlife sometimes fall silent and still.

Eclipse fans traveled from far and wide hoping to glimpse the phenome-



Samantha Palmer (left) and Gerald Lester watch a total solar eclipse before getting married during an event on Monday in Trenton, Ohio. AP

non somewhere along the "path of totality" stretching 4,000 km from Mexico's Pacific Coast through Texas and across 14 other US states into Canada. The moon's shadow exited continental North America in Newfoundland.

A partial eclipse, in which the moon obscures only a portion of the sun, was visible across most of the continental United States outside the path of totality, where weather permitted.

Lourdes Corro, 43, said she traveled 10 hours by car to reach Mazatlan, Mexico, for an event widely considered one of nature's greatest wonders.

"The last one I saw was when I was 9 years old," Corro said. "There are a few clouds but we can still see the sun."

'Complete sensory experience'

Overcast skies across much of the United States added an extra challenge for many.

Laura and Brian Uzzle awaited the eclipse on the banks of the Ohio River between Indiana and Kentucky on Monday after cloudy forecasts prompted the Denver-based couple to abandon initial plans to view it from Texas and book last-minute flights and rental cars several hundred km away.

Laura Uzzle, 56, said she was excited to experience the eclipse by a riverbank teeming with birds and insects.

"Even the wildlife changes," she said. "It's a complete sensory experience."

The surge in eclipse enthusiasts taking to roadways in Indiana prompted the state police to announce it was shutting down highway rest stops once they reached capacity and kept them closed for the duration.

At up to 4 minutes and 28 seconds, Monday's total eclipse surpassed the

duration of the 2017 event, which lasted upwards of 2 minutes and 42 seconds. According to NASA, solar eclipse totalities can range from 10 seconds to about 7-1/2 minutes.

Monday's total eclipse rolled through more densely populated regions than seven years ago, a corridor averaging 185 km wide encompassing such major cities as San Antonio, Austin and Dallas, Texas; Indianapolis, Indiana; Cleveland, Ohio; Erie, Pennsylvania; and Montreal, Quebec.

About 32 million people in the United States live within the path of totality, with federal officials having predicted another 5 million people would travel to be there.

It took about 80 minutes from the moment the moon first began to cover the sun to the moment of totality, then another 80 minutes to complete the process in reverse.

The last remaining bit of brilliant sunlight before totality creates a "diamond ring effect," with a single bright spot glaring from one side of the lunar shadow while the sun's corona still encircles the rest of the moon.

Some suggested the experience might have a lingering effect on human social behavior, if only temporarily.

In Burlington Vermont, where hotels were booked months in advance, Mayor Emma Mulvaney-Stanak said the thousands of visitors who gathered in her city exuded the mood of a midsummer festival.

"It was a really chill vibe. People were appreciating the momentousness of the occasion," Mulvaney-Stanak, who was sworn into office on April 1, told reporters afterward.

Asked if she believed the communal experience might help heal some of society's festering political and social divisions, the mayor said: "I really think it will." **Agencies**

Russia, China agree that any meetings on
Ukraine without Moscow futile – Lavrov

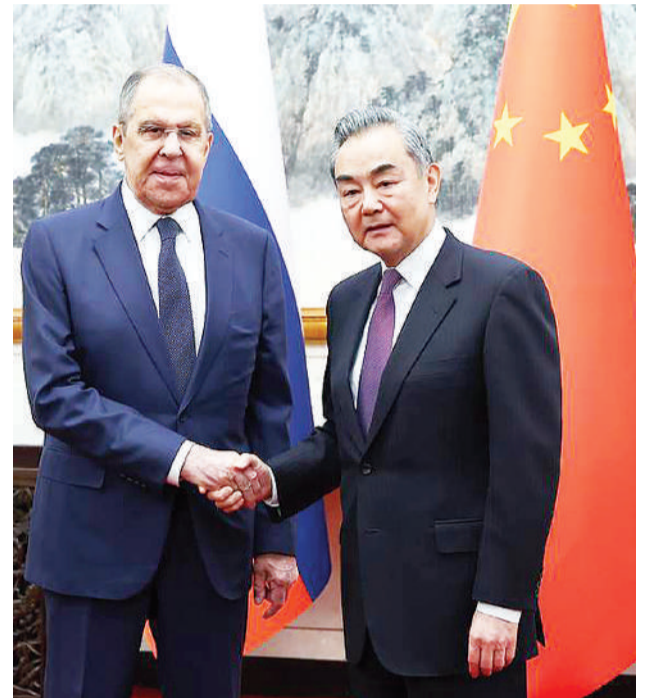
BEIJING

RUSSIA and China agreed that any meetings on Ukraine ignoring Moscow's interests are futile, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said at a news conference with his Chinese counterpart, Wang Yi.

"We discussed the current situation around the Ukraine crisis," Lavrov said. "We and our Chinese colleagues supported the conclusion that any international meetings that ignore Russia's position while promoting the so called peace formula of [Ukrainian leader Vladimir] Zelensky and are therefore disconnected from reality are futile," he added.

Moscow is grateful to Beijing for its unbiased and balanced position on Ukraine as well as for the willingness to play a positive role in resolving the crisis by political and diplomatic means, Lavrov said.

Commenting on the 12-point peace initiative on Ukraine proposed by China last year, Russia's top diplomat lauded the plan for addressing the root causes behind the Ukraine conflict, "primarily in the context of ensuring indivisible security, including in Europe and the world over."



Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov (L) and Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi

Thanks to PM Modi: Victim of October 7
attack lauds Indian support for Israel

RE'IM KIBBITZ

AS the Israel-Hamas war completed its six months, Moran, a survivor of the October 7 attack, conveyed appreciation towards India and its people for their steadfast support during a challenging period.

Moran's words reflect the profound bond shared between the two nations in times of adversity.

"I see the Indian support that started much before, years before October 7 and after October 7," Moran expressed, highlighting the enduring nature of India's solidarity, adding, "Thanks to Prime Minister Modi, all over the media. And we know that India is a true friend of Israel."

Moran's gratitude extended beyond governmental assistance, acknowledging the compassion and friendship displayed by the Indian populace. "I think it's not just the Indian government.

Thanks to the Indian people, who have always been and continue to be a good friend of ours," Moran added, emphasising the collective support from India.

Acknowledging India's role in amplifying Israel's voice globally, Moran added, "Our voice cannot be everywhere. Everywhere. And we know that the Indian people are taking care of everything we need."

"Thank you very much to the government, but for the people as well," Moran expressed, encapsulating the depth of gratitude towards India's unwavering support.

Israel's Ambassador to India Naor Gilon too has said India has been very strong against terrorism from the first moment. He said that Israel is appreciative of the Indian government's support since Hamas launched the attack on October 7.

In an interview with ANI on January 30, Gilon said that Israel has received "incredible support" from Indian people amid the conflict between Israel and Hamas.

Speaking about India's stance on the Israel-Hamas conflict, Gilon said, "India was very strong against terrorism from the first moment. Prime Minister Modi, on the afternoon of October 7, already came out with a very strong condemnation. We are much appreciative of the Indian government for its support from that time on."

ANI

WHO chief calls for protection of health care facilities in conflicts

GENEVA

THE head of the World Health Organization on Monday called for health care facilities and personnel to be protected from targeted violence during conflicts.

Speaking at a panel discussion at WHO's headquarters in Geneva, Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus (pictured) said that damage to health care facilities and their staff has become the norm, as seen in Gaza, Sudan and Ethiopia.

Tedros' remarks came in the wake of deadly attacks on aid workers by Israel, which have sparked international outrage and condemnation. The violence puts an added strain on health systems which are already overwhelmed, and leads to psychological trauma for vulnerable patients, the WHO chief said.

More than 1,400 attacks on health care centers have been documented in the last year, leaving 742 people dead and causing over a thousand injuries, according to statistics provided by the United Nations' health agency.



Hospitals and medical personnel should be sacrosanct during conflicts, in line with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, emphasized UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Volker

Turk at Monday's talks.

Meanwhile, in areas free of conflict, global warming has exacerbated droughts and floods, damaging health and livelihoods, Turk warned.

Xinhua

JERUSALEM

THE Gaza Strip still faces the risk of escalation after six months of heavy Israeli strikes as the Israeli military's latest pullout of all ground troops except for one brigade may be "tactical," analysts and experts said.

The withdrawal on Sunday occurred when the current round of the Israel-Hamas conflict entered its 6th month. It came amid a worsening humanitarian crisis in Gaza, ongoing tensions on the Lebanese-Israeli border, and the possibility of Iranian retaliation following the attack on the Iranian consulate building in Damascus.

Despite this, the crisis in the region is far from over, as Israel is still preparing for a ground invasion in the southern Gaza city of Rafah and a possible es-

Gaza conflict far from over amid Israel's 'tactical' withdrawal

calation on its northern border with Lebanon, analysts have said.

According to Israeli media reports, the only troops remaining in Gaza are the Nahal Brigade under the Israel Defense Forces (IDF), which was tasked with the Netzarim Corridor, an east-west passage through the strip built by the Israel Defense Forces.

The passage splits the territory into two sectors, serving as a conduit for aid into northern Gaza and preventing the return of displaced civilians from the south to the north of Gaza.

Hossam Talib, a Syrian political analyst, told Xinhua that Israel pulled out its troops under mounting international and

domestic pressure. Internationally, the United Nations Security Council resolution passed on March 25 and the killing of seven World Central Kitchen workers by Israeli airstrikes in Gaza earlier this month have put Israel under increasing pressure, including from its allies.

Domestically, protests calling for a hostage deal and early elections have recently intensified. An analysis by Israel's Haaretz newspaper pointed out that the two main goals of the military operation in Gaza, including eliminating top Hamas officials and rescuing Israeli hostages, have not been achieved yet. Hamas leader in Gaza Yahya Sinwar and Mohammed Deif, commander of the

faction's Al-Qassam Brigades, are still on Israel's most wanted list. Meanwhile, only two Israeli hostages have been rescued since the temporary truce in late November.

During a tour on Sunday at the IDF's Southern Command, Israeli Defense Minister Yoav Gallant said that forces leaving Gaza were preparing for "follow-up missions," including in Rafah, the last Hamas stronghold in Gaza.

IDF Chief of Staff Herzi Halevi announced on the same day that the military operation against Hamas was "far from" over, vowing to reach senior Hamas officials sooner or later. Yonatan Freeman, an international relations expert at the

Hebrew University of Jerusalem, told Xinhua that the withdrawal marks the IDF's entry into the third phase of the operation in Gaza, which focuses mainly on pinpoint operations based on specific intelligence rather than a high kinetic level with large numbers of ground troops.

Egyptian researcher on Arab and international affairs Mostafa Amin noted that Israel is repositioning and redeploying its troops while preparing to "re-establish displacement areas for those in the south and later evacuate the city of Rafah to launch a military operation."

"The complicated preparations will take some time, as Israel needs to coordinate with

Egypt and the United States and evacuate more than one million people, said Yoel Guzensky, a senior researcher at the Israel Institute for National Security Studies.

Another possible factor leading to the sudden withdrawal could be the situation along the Israeli-Lebanese border.

Lebanese Hezbollah, a militant group considered by Israel as a "proxy" of Iran, has been exchanging fire with Israel since October to show support for the Palestinian people.

After the alleged Israeli airstrike on the consular building of the Iranian embassy in Syria earlier this month, Iran vowed to retaliate.

Analysts believe the retaliation could be in the form of more rocket launches by Hezbollah from Lebanon.

The IDF announced on Sunday night that it had completed another phase of war preparedness, centering on "operational emergency storages for a broad mobilization of reservist and regular troops when required."

"U.S. Senator Chris Coons, a close ally of President Joe Biden, told FOX News on Sunday that the withdrawal of IDF troops was a "tactical decision" in light of the threat of a "real attack" from Hezbollah or "direct attack" from Iran. Syrian political analyst Mohammad al-Omari also noted that Israel is redeploying its troops, especially in the north, in response to possible Iranian retaliation.

Why does China-Europe Express Rail expand so fast and become more efficient

BEIJING

A freight train loaded with containers of goods was departing from China's northern city of Shijiazhuang to the European city of Belgrade, capital of Serbia, in late March.

The train marks the launch of a new route of the China-Europe Railway Express, also the first direct rail line connecting the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region with Serbia.

The China-Europe Express Rail transport service has witnessed tremendous expansion since its launch in 2011 and has provided transport and logistics support for Belt and Road cooperation over the years. What has contributed to its evident growth?

REMARKABLE PROGRESS

The China-Europe Express Rail served as a safe and reliable rail line linking Asia and Europe, transporting over 50,000 types of goods, including automobiles, spare parts, clothing, cereals, wine, coffee beans, and timber.

According to China State Railway Group Co., Ltd., by the end of February 2024, the railway service connects 120 Chinese cities with 219 cities across 25 European countries, making it one of the main transport arteries between China and Europe.

The service has expanded steadily in the first two months of this year, with the number of trains reaching 2,928 in January and February, a year-on-year increase of 9 percent.

It also transported approximately 317,000 twenty-foot equivalent units (TEUs) of goods during the first two months of this year, up 10 percent from last year.

SAFE SOLUTION

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the China-Europe Railway Express has proven itself to be a more secure and stable way of cargo transportation as it was less affected compared with other transportation solutions like ships and planes.

Businesses have preferred to choose the railway to transport large quantities of goods and cross-border e-commerce parcels.

Metrans, a major logistics company in Europe, launched its first China-Europe train service in 2017. It



This photo taken on Jan. 15, 2024 shows the load-transfer yard of the Horgos Port in Horgos, northwest China's Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region. Xinhua

now has 20 container terminals across Europe.

"We see the significant importance of cargo going from China by rail, that is why we bought the terminal in Malaszewicze, Poland in January 2022, which is very much connected to the Silk Road and we started to boost the connection to China via Malaszewicze," said Martin Koubek, director of the Silk Road and CIS division of Metrans.

The China-Europe Express Rail is also less vulnerable to extreme weather or geopolitical tensions, thus better ensuring the unimpeded flow of international industrial and supply chains.

"The railway to Europe is a viable alternative and we are seeing increased

demand for that route," Marco Forgone, director general at the Institute of Export & International Trade told South China Morning Post in an interview.

Michael Aldwell, head of sea logistics at Kuehne & Nagel, told the Financial Times in March that there was "more demand" to move goods from Asia to Europe by rail under current circumstances, adding that "high-value cargo has always been popular on that route."

INCREASED EFFICIENCY

In recent years, the China-Europe Express Rail service has continued to be more efficient. Today, it takes only about 10 days for a train to travel from China's northwestern city of Xi'an to Duisburg

in Germany, two days less than the time it took in 2023.

Julija Sciglaite, RailGate Europe's chief business development officer, told CNBC in February that the company uses the China-Europe Express Rail to transport its products as the journey time is "significantly better" than the sea route.

"Along the routes of China-Europe Express Rail, customs clearance and inspection have become increasingly convenient, the business environment at entry ports has been continuously improved, and rules and regulations related to cross-border transport have become more standardized," said Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning at a press conference on Feb. 29.

The Alataw Pass and Horgos Port, two major railway ports in the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region in northwestern China, have optimized the procedures and expanded port capacity to promote transport efficiency along the route.

In 2023, the stopover time of China-Europe freight trains at these ports was reduced to 6 or 8 hours, said Yan Huapeng, an official at the Alataw Pass.

The China-Europe Express Rail service is also developing beyond rail, with the introduction of integrated sea-rail transport routes.

A shipment of electric water heaters was delivered from Thailand to Germany about a month ago through multiple transport solutions, passing through Laos, Vietnam, and China.

The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), of which the China-Europe Express Rail is a flagship project, is a blueprint that every nation needs in an age of "uncertainty and disruption," said an article published in January in American magazine Foreign Policy, adding that the BRI represents what all countries should do in their own national interest.

India is growing fast; many things that it needs can be found in Australia: Australian envoy Philip Green

NEW DELHI

EMPHASISING the future of India-Australia relations, Australia's High Commissioner to India Philip Green said that the countries' relationship is "buoyant," adding that for the first time in our history, both nations are strategic partners with "very strong strategic alignment."

Australian envoy Philip Green was addressing a plenary session of the Australia-India Skill Partnership Summit on Monday in New Delhi.

"India and Australia's relation is buoyant. Australia and India have been friends for a very long time," he said.

He further stressed, "But I think there are three underlying drivers. For the first time in our history, we are strategic partners with very strong strategic alignment. We both care a lot about what's going on in our region and want to find ways to make it better."

Secondly, Green emphasised that India is growing at a fast pace, but many things that it needs can be found in Australia.

"We are complementary economies. India is growing fast, but many of the things that it needs, the energy, the minerals, the critical minerals, and the skills that India needs for the next phase of its growth, can be found in Australia," Australian envoy Green said.

ANI

China strives to build world-class business environment

WHAT can a sound business environment create?

As the first large chemical production base in China operated solely by a foreign company, BASF's Verbund site in Zhanjiang, south China's Guangdong province has experienced rapid development.

Its first batch of production facilities started to be built in 2020, and this January, its thermoplastic polyurethane plant was put into operation.

Such rapid progress is attributed to the government's efforts to improve market access and provide solid policy support, said an executive of BASF.

"We had a global project that required certifications from over 10 departments, which would normally take at least a month to complete. However, thanks to the efforts made by the local government, we obtained these documents in three days," said an executive of a private enterprise in east China's Zhejiang province, expressing appreciation for the government's responsiveness and assistance in solving the enterprise's problems.

A sound business environment is a prerequisite for unleashing the potential for economic growth and stimulating market vitality; optimizing business environment is key to boosting the confidence of entities and expanding opening-up.

China has continuously strengthened the construction of a market-oriented, law-based and internationalized business environment, to enhance its attractiveness to domestic and foreign factors of production.

Serving as a vital connection between the Silk Road Economic Belt, the 21st-Century Maritime Silk Road, and the Yangtze River Economic Belt, the New International Land-Sea Trade Corridor (ILSTC), which runs through the western part of China, is rapidly expanding.

In recent years, China has attached great importance



A self-employed individual receives business licenses at a government service center in Yuquan district, Hohhot, north China's Inner Mongolia autonomous region, March 7, 2024. [People's Daily Online/Ding Genhou]

to optimizing its business environment, and it has seen a significant rise in its global ranking in this regard.

For instance, the country implemented a regulation on optimizing the business environment; the Communist Party of China Central Committee and the State Council issued the Opinions on Accelerating the Construction of a Unified National Market; China released an action plan to steadily promote high-level opening up and make greater efforts to attract and utilize foreign investment.

Recently, a series of measures have been implemented, sending a clear signal that China remains firmly committed to expanding high-level opening-up and continuously fostering a world-class business environment. These efforts include launching five new measures to facilitate entries of foreigners, revising the national negative list for foreign investment, and accelerating the implementation of 24 measures to stabilize foreign investment.

Optimizing business environment is not just about offering "favors," but more importantly, building "trust." Stable expectations come from a convenient, efficient,

stable and transparent business environment featuring fair competition, as well as credible policy measures.

That's why some companies would rather bear higher land and labor costs than accept subsidies and incentives to operate in regions with relatively backward business environments.

A 2023 survey on business environment conducted by the All-China Federation of Industry and Commerce, which covered 10,000 private enterprises, indicated improving satisfaction of private enterprises with the improvement in China's business environment.

These enterprises also showed expectations for further optimization of the business climate in China.

Currently, various regions in China are taking concrete measures to provide fertile ground for the growth and development of all kinds of business entities, promptly addressing their urgent concerns and expectations, and maintaining the stability and continuity of pro-business policies.

Beijing proposed to make optimizing business environment a top priority, with an aim to build better the brand of "Beijing

Service." Striving to learn businesses' experiences and feedback, Shanghai has revised its action plan for improving business climate for 7 times. Wuhan, central China's Hubei province, held a citywide conference on optimizing business environment, proposing to resolutely eliminate implicit barriers to market access.

Facts have proved that a favorable business environment can provide solid support for the development of all kinds of business entities.

China is resolutely committed to comprehensively deepening reform, implementing practical measures, and making every effort to optimize the business environment, so as to continuously boost market confidence and stimulate market vitality.

People's Daily

Africa moves to use space technology to aid development

LUANDA

AFRICA will soon be blessed with the establishment of the African Space Agency (AfSA) in hopes of using space technology to aid African development, African Union (AU) Commissioner for Education, Science, Technology and Innovation Mohammed Belhocine said in a recent interview.

"The AU space policy mandates the creation of an African space agency. We have taken steps over the past year and this year to ensure the establishment of this agency."

Member states have discussed and decided that it will be based in Cairo, Egypt," Belhocine said. He clarified that the preparations for the establishment of the AfSA are 90 percent complete, with an organizational structure approved by member states.

The African Space Council, which is responsible for coordinating AfSA activities, and guiding continental space policy and resource allocation, comprises 10 members from the five African regions.

"We are not yet fully established, but progress is being made rapidly. It will take a few months to be officially established, with some recruitment tasks still needing to be completed," he said.

Due to technological advancements, the benefits in areas such as Earth observation, navigation and connectivity are becoming "obvious to everybody."

With the miniaturization of satellites, the cost of satellites is decreasing. Interest in space science and technology in African countries is growing stronger, with more and more countries beginning to invest in space through bilateral agreements, said the AU envoy.

"When the AfSA is fully operational, I'm sure more countries will be interested in space." The AU commissioner also emphasized that the main principle of African space policy is the peaceful use of space resources. "We are very interested in the potential of space technology to contribute to sustainable development in Africa."

Numerous applications are related to security, food security, navigation, connectivity, early warning systems for disasters, and more," he said. "For example,

satellite-based Earth observation provides valuable information, and accessing this information is becoming more affordable.

That's why more countries are investing in this," Belhocine said during the NewSpace Africa Conference 2024, which concluded Friday in Luanda, Angola's capital.

The event gathered 400 delegates, including representatives from space agencies, officials from more than 24 African countries, and 28 prominent institutions or companies from the global space industry.

He mentioned that the satellite industry in African countries benefits from international cooperation. Major global space players such as China are important partners for African countries in this field.

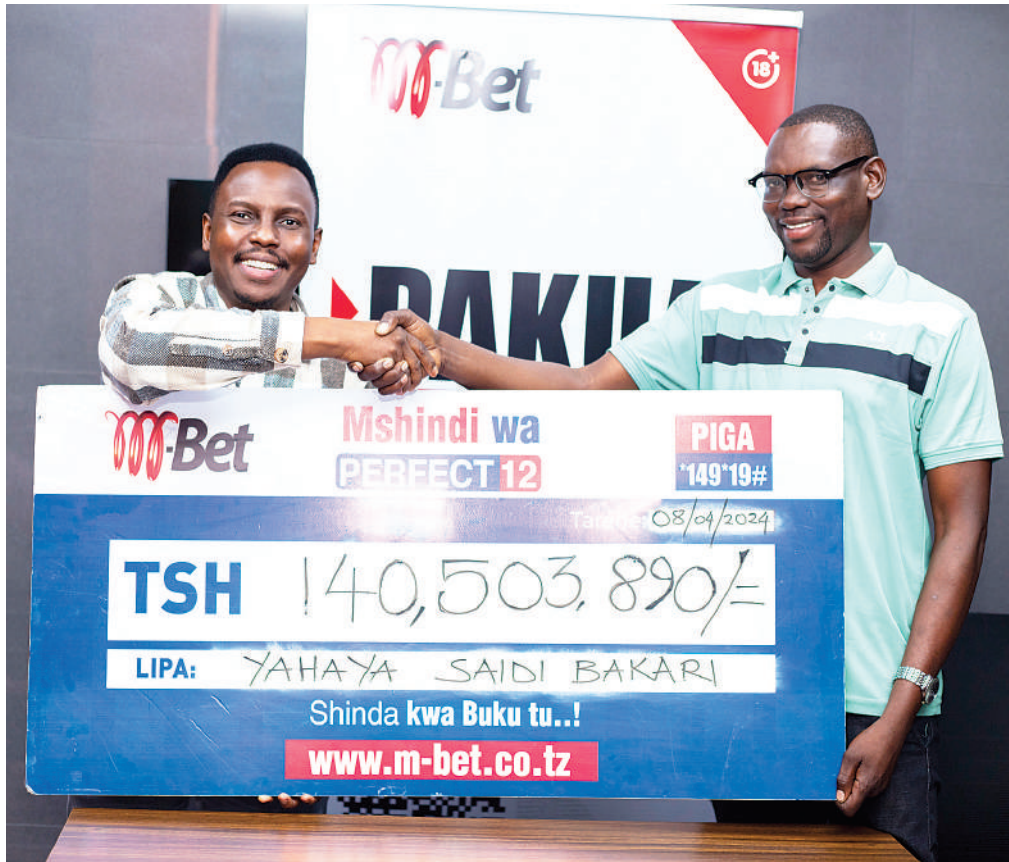
In the interview, he specifically mentioned cooperation with China, noting that the AU has a "very good relationship and cooperation" with China in education, science, technology, and aerospace.

"I visited China just last year for education, science, and technology, and I was very impressed with China's development. We are preparing a memorandum of understanding to enhance our exchanges and collaboration at the African Union level, and I hope there is interest from both sides in space cooperation," he said.



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SPORT



M-Bet Tanzania's Marketing Director, Allen Mushi (L), hands over a dummy check to 'Perfect 12' draw winner Yahya Bakari, at an occasion that took place in Dar es Salaam recently. Bakari laid his hands on a cash prize of 140,503,890/- after precisely predicting soccer games that were held in various leagues in the world through the betting game. PHOTO: CORRESPONDENT

Singida resident wins betting game

By Guardian Correspondent

TANZANIAN football fan, Yahya Bakari, has pocketed 140,503,890/- after predicting precisely 12 encounters played in various leagues in the world through the 'Perfect 12' betting platform coordinated by M-Bet Tanzania.

The betting firm moreover launched a new campaign, termed 'M-Bet Likes You', which will enable various winners to attend the final match of the 2024 European Championship (2024 UEFA Euro) which has been set to start from June 14 to July 14.

Bakari, who resides in Singida, said he was delighted to win a large amount of money, adding he had never expected it in his life.

He said he is a small business owner, and the win will enable him to increase his capital and educate his children.

Bakari disclosed: "I did not have a large capital, but through the money I won, I will be able to increase my capital and also educate my children."

He said his victory was not easy as he faced difficulties, especially in predicting the Chelsea versus Manchester United match results, in which Chelsea won 4-3 during the added-on time.

"I couldn't watch the match, which had me predicting Chelsea to win, because they were playing at home. While I was walking, I was told that

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I couldn't watch the match, which had me predicting Chelsea to win, because they were playing at home. While I was walking, I was told that Manchester United were leading and it was during the added-on time

Manchester United were leading and it was during the added-on time," Bakari stated.

"I thought I had lost my bet because of only one match, but when I returned to check the results, I saw that Chelsea had won. I was very happy because then I knew that I was among the winners," he said.

Allen Mushi, M-Bet's Marketing Director, congratulated Bakari for becoming one of the millionaires and urged Tanzanians aged 18 and above to try their luck by betting with M-Bet.

Mushi said M-Bet has proved to be a house of winners and millionaires, as several Tanzanians have won significant amounts through the firm's betting games.

Meanwhile, the company has launched a new campaign, known as 'M-Bet Likes You', in which the grand prize consists of tickets for witnessing the 2024 UEFA Euro final match slated for July 14.

Mushi said participants are required to place their bets with M-Bet, and football fans, who will receive likes starting at 1,000 on the social media platforms, will win the M-Bet-sponsored trip to Germany.

He explained that there is no specific number of winners for the campaign because even if they reach 1,000, they will go to watch the final.

"All you have to do is bet with M-Bet on our various games. Besides watching the final match of the 2024 UEFA Euro, you can also win a modern television, smartphone, laptop, and a safari trip to wildlife parks like Serengeti. I urge football fans to seize this opportunity," Mushi revealed.

SPORTS

Lessons learned and road ahead for Simba SC and Yanga amidst CAF CL elimination

By correspondent Seth Mapoli

THE weekend of April 5-7 brought a wave of disappointment to Dar es Salaam as it witnessed Tanzania's football powerhouses, Simba SC and Young Africans SC, alias Yanga, crashing out of the 2023/24 CAF Champions League last eight.

Both were eliminated from the prestigious club tournament on the continent, losing to Egypt's Al Ahly and South Africa's Mamelodi Sundowns.

While both Tanzanian teams displayed valiant efforts, their journeys ended in the quarterfinals, leaving fans yearning for continental glory.

Simba SC's exit was particularly heart-wrenching. Having faced a 1-0 loss at their home turf, the Benjamin Mkapa Stadium, hope flared for a historic upset against the 11-time CAF Champions League winner, Al Ahly.

However, their dreams were dashed in the second leg, falling 2-0 at the Cairo International Stadium.

This marks the fourth time in six years Simba SC has been unable to reach the coveted semi-final stage.

Yanga's elimination was equally frustrating. After two goalless draws against Mamelodi Sundowns of South Africa, the fate of the tie was decided by a penalty shootout, which ultimately went in favor of the South African giants.

While the disappointment is undeniable, it is important to acknowledge Yanga's impressive run in last season's CAF Confederation Cup, where they reached the final before falling to USM Alger.

This dual elimination begs the question- what can these Tanzanian giants learn from their recent setbacks, and what needs to be done to ensure future success in the CAF Champions League?

Lessons Learned

One glaring issue that plagued both Simba SC and Yanga throughout their CAF Champions League campaigns was their profligacy in front of goal.

Across both home and away fixtures, Yanga managed a mere 11 total shots, with so far three having been categorized as big chances.

Similarly, Simba SC's attacking prowess faltered, failing to convert any of the four clear-cut opportunities created in both encounters.

A prime example lies in the missed opportunities by key players such as Clement Mzize for Yanga and Kibu Denis for Simba SC.

Despite being presented with clear-cut chances, their inability to capitalize on these golden opportunities underscored a critical deficiency in clinical finishing.

In the case of Yanga, Mzize's failure to convert two clear chances robbed his team of potential glory.

Conversely, Simba SC's Denis squandered opportunities that could have altered the course of their matches.

These missed chances not only highlight individual lapses in concentration but also expose a collective inability to capitalize on crucial moments.

The lesson here is clear- proficiency in front of goal is non-negotiable at the highest level of continental



Simba SC's winger Saidi Ntibazonkiza (R) vies for an aerial ball with Al Ahly's defender when the squads met in a 2023-24 CAF Champions League last eight's second leg tie held in Egypt last weekend and saw Al Ahly command 2-0 win. PHOTO: COURTESY OF SIMBA SC

competition.

Both clubs must prioritize precision and composure in finishing, honing their attacking instincts through rigorous training and strategic preparation.

Moreover, fostering a mentality that thrives under pressure and relishes in converting opportunities into goals is paramount for future success in the CAF Champions League.

Moving forward, Simba SC and Yanga must address this glaring deficiency, whether through player development, tactical adjustments, or mental conditioning.

Only by rectifying their shortcomings in front of goal can they aspire to conquer the continental stage and realize their ambitions of CAF Champions League glory.

Strength in Depth

Both Simba SC and Yanga rely heavily on their star players. Injuries or suspensions to key figures can significantly disrupt team dynamics and expose weaknesses.

Building a strong squad with capable backups is crucial for navigating a demanding tournament like the CAF Champions League.

Mentality Matters

The ability to perform consistently under immense pressure is a hallmark of continental champions.

While Yanga showed glimpses of this in their first-leg draw over Sundowns, they were unable to replicate it in the return fixture.

Yanga, despite a strong defensive display against Sundowns, lacked the cutting edge to convert their chances.

Developing a winning mentality and the ability to handle high-pressure situations will be vital for future success.

Tactical Nuance

Facing seasoned African teams requires tactical flexibility and adaptability. Both Simba SC and Yanga seemed somewhat predictable in their approaches.

Investing in coaching staff who can analyze opponents, develop game plans, and make crucial tactical adjustments during matches will be key.

Experience Matters

The experience gap between Tanzanian clubs and established giants like Al Ahly and Sundowns is undeniable.

While Simba SC and Yanga boast talented young players, navigating the continental stage requires seasoned veterans who can guide their teammates through tough moments.

Recruiting experienced players, especially those with a proven track record in continental competitions, could provide a much-needed boost.

The Road to Future Glory

Beyond acknowledging their shortcomings, concrete steps need to be taken by both clubs and Tanzanian football as a whole to bridge the gap and

compete at the highest level:

Investing in youth development- building a strong talent pool is essential for long-term success

Simba SC and Yanga need to invest in robust youth academies with qualified coaches who can nurture raw talent and develop players specifically for the rigors of continental football.

Improved Infrastructure

Modern training facilities with state-of-the-art equipment play a crucial role in player development and injury prevention.

Tanzania needs to invest in infrastructure that meets the demands of modern football, allowing players to train at the highest level.

League Development

A stronger domestic league will provide a tougher proving ground for Tanzanian clubs. Investing in the Mainland Tanzania Premier League by attracting sponsorships, improving officiating standards, and creating a more competitive environment will push these teams to a higher level before they reach the continental stage.

Data Analytics and Scouting

Utilizing data analysis and targeted scouting can be game-changers. Investing in these areas will allow these clubs to identify and recruit talented players who can specifically address their weaknesses and tactical needs.

The recent elimination of Simba SC and Yanga from the CAF Champions League is a stark reminder of the work that needs to be done for Tanzanian clubs to compete consistently at the continental level.

However, with introspection, strategic investment, and a collective effort, the future of Tanzanian football in Africa appears bright.

The hunger for continental glory is evident in Dar es Salaam, and with the right approach, Simba SC and Yanga can turn disappointment into a springboard for future success.

Simba SC faces defensive overhaul as key players eye exit

By Correspondent Seth Mapoli

SIMBA SC, currently vying for both the NBC Premier League and CRDB Federation Cup titles, faces a potential defensive overhaul next season.

While head coach Abdelhak Benchikha prioritizes immediate success, reports indicate star defenders Henock Inonga and Che Malone are seeking new pastures.

Inonga's rumoured departure has been simmering for some time, with FAR Rabat, a Moroccan club led by former Young Africans SC head coach Nasreddine Nabi, reportedly interested.

Now, Che Fondoh Malone has also emerged as a potential absentee, having reportedly informed his inner circle of his desire to leave.

Malone, who signed a two-year contract this season after arriving from Cameroon's Cotonsport, reportedly aspires for 'bigger things' before hanging up his boots.



Simba SC's head coach Abdelhak Benchikha (2nd R) congratulates his outfit's defenders, Henock Inonga (L), and Che Fondoh Malone following the completion of one of the side's 2023-24 CAF Champions League clashes which took place in Dar es Salaam.

The ambitious defender seeks a 'big club' and believes next season will see him don a new jersey.

"I won the league twice in a row with Cotonsport," Malone reportedly told a certain sports channel in a recent interview.

"I craved a fresh challenge. Progress is my motivation in football, not stagnation," the center-back noted.

"Discipline and hard work are the only miracles in football. Simba SC is another chapter, but my ultimate goal is to be a top club globally. Playing for a giant club is my dream," he revealed.

When approached about the rumors, Simba SC's Information and Communication Manager, Ahmed Ally, emphasized the team's current focus on upcoming matches, including the CRDB Federation Cup clash against Mashujaa FC, which took place on Tuesday.

Decisions regarding player registration and departures, Ally explained, will be made by the coach

to build the squad he envisions for next season.

"The coach handles all registrations, he'll decide who stays and who leaves, based on his vision for the team next season. Let's prioritize the upcoming games before delving into that." Ally stated when questioned about the situation.

While the potential departures of Malone and Inonga could see Simba SC recoup significant transfer fees, estimated at no less than 600m/- apiece, the club would face the challenge of finding suitable replacements in the transfer market.

Simba SC must navigate these potential departures strategically. The loss of both Inonga and Malone would necessitate significant defensive reinforcements.

Balancing the financial gains from their transfers with the crucial task of finding capable replacements will be a key test for the club's management.

SPORT

Is Jürgen Klopp entering a bold new age of psychological warfare?

COMPREHENSIVE REPORT, PAGE 19



South Africa's women's national soccer team head coach Desiree Ellis. AGENCIES

Desiree, Jerry vie for COSAFA Women's Coach of the Year award

JOHANNESBURG

The nominees for the category of the Women's Coach of the Year at the inaugural 2023 COSAFA Awards have been unveiled.

The winner will be announced at a gala awards ceremony in Durban on April 19, with a panel of judges from across the region having assessed their achievements for the period of January 1 to December 31, 2023.

The three nominees are South Africa women's national squad coach Desiree Ellis, Mamelodi Sundowns Ladies' head coach Jerry Tshabalala, and Zambia's women's national squad head coach Bruce Mwape.

Desiree Ellis (South Africa)

Desiree led South Africa to a historic round of 16's place at the 2023 Women's World Cup and qualified them for the defense of their Women's Africa Cup of Nations title that they won in 2022. She also advanced the side to the final round of qualifiers for the Olympic Games in Paris later this year.

Bruce Mwape (Zambia)

Mwape guided Zambia at their first ever Women's World Cup and although they lost their first two games 5-0, they bounced back with a historic 3-1 win over Costa Rica in their final match.

He has also led them to qualification for the next Women's Africa Cup of Nations and the final round of qualifiers for the Olympic Games in Paris later this year.

Jerry Tshabalala (Mamelodi Sundowns Ladies)

Tshabalala led Mamelodi Sundowns Ladies to the finals of the CAF Women's Champions League and clinched the showpiece's 2023 title by winning all matches in Ivory Coast without conceding a single goal.

Tshabalala led Mamelodi Sundowns Ladies to the treble with victory in the COSAFA Women's Champions League and their domestic Super League.

The judging panel from across the 14 member nations that make up COSAFA consists of stakeholders who are renowned for their knowledge of Southern African football.

They are Houssamidine Ben Ahmed (Comoros), Ivan Capuepue (Angola), Rob Delport (South Africa), Gerard Govinden (Seychelles), Peter Kanjere (Malawi), Jesse Kauraisa (Namibia), and Kagiso Kgaogano (Botswana).

Sibusiso Masilela (Eswatini), Sandra Mwila (Zambia), Boitelo Radebe (Lesotho), Heriniaina Samson (Madagascar), Benoit Thomas (Mauritius), Steve Vickers (Zimbabwe) and Raimundo Zandamela (Mozambique) wind up the panel.

AGENCIES

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Desiree led South Africa to a historic round of 16's place at the 2023 Women's World Cup and qualified them for the defense of their Women's Africa Cup of Nations title that they won in 2022. She also advanced the side to the final round of qualifiers for the Olympic Games in Paris later this year

Gamondi demands focus as Yanga keen on bouncing back

By Correspondent Seth Mapoli

YANGA's head coach Miguel Gamondi has warned his team against complacency as they prepare to face Dodoma Jiji FC in the round of 16 of the CRBD Federation Cup.

Gamondi (pictured) emphasized the importance of the cup competition and acknowledged the threat posed by Dodoma Jiji FC, a team that troubled Yanga in their last NBC Premier League encounter.

The Jangwani Street side arrived in Dodoma on Monday for today's crucial match, which is slated to be played at the Jamhuri Stadium.

Recognizing the single-elimination nature of the cup competition, Gamondi highlighted the need for a focused approach.

"It's a knockout competition, so the loser goes home. We have to be well-prepared because every match is difficult," he explained.

The tight schedule due to their participation in the CAF Champions League has limited Yanga's training time.

Gamondi acknowledged the challenge, particularly considering Dodoma Jiji FC's previous success against his team. "We know it won't be easy," he admitted.

"Dodoma Jiji FC is a good side. When they played us at home, they displayed a challenging game. We need to be very cautious and play with great discipline to secure a place in the quarterfinals."

Gamondi emphasized the team's ambition to retain all their titles this season, stating: "Our goal is to win the CRBD Federation Cup".

"To achieve that, we need a victory against Dodoma Jiji FC. This will pave the way for the quarterfinals, then the semi-finals, and ultimately, the final."

Despite facing player absences due to various reasons, Gamondi expressed his confidence in the available squad.

"We have full faith in the fitness of the players who will be on the pitch," he stated. "They are ready to fight and deliver a positive result against our opponents."

The CRBD Federation Cup clash comes on the heels of Yanga's elimination from the CAF Champions League.

The team fell short in a penalty shootout against Mamelodi Sundowns last Friday in South Africa after the aggregate score remained level across both legs.

In the upcoming fixtures, Yanga is poised for an exciting series of matches. Following their CRBD Federation Cup encounter, they are set to face Singida Fountain Gate FC away on April 14.

This clash will serve as a precursor to the highly anticipated Dar es Salaam Derby against Simba SC at the Benjamin Mkapa Stadium on April 20, with kick-off scheduled for 11 pm.

Looking ahead, Yanga will confront Coastal Union and later, Kagera Sugar FC, in what promises to be challenging NBC Premier League encounters.

With their sights set on maintaining their momentum and securing valuable points, they are prepared to face formidable opposition in their quest for continued success on the pitch.

Having dominated the NBC Premier League this season, Yanga currently leads the standings with an impressive tally of 52 points.

After 20 games, they boast an exceptional record of 17 wins, one draw, and two losses. Their consistency and formidable performance have solidified their position at the top of the league table.

As anticipation builds for these upcoming fixtures, fans eagerly await the opportunity to witness Yanga showcase their skill and determination.

With their stellar performance thus far in the season, they remain a force to be reckoned with, poised to deliver captivating displays of football prowess in the matches ahead.

Yanga, Dodoma Jiji FC battle for Federation Cup quarterfinal berth



Yanga's footballers are pictured taking part in drills at Avic Town in Kigamboni, Dar es Salaam recently in preparation for this season's NBC Premier League and other tournaments. PHOTO: COURTESY OF YANGA

By Correspondent Michael Mwebe

THIS Wednesday evening, the spotlight falls on Jamhuri Stadium, where Dodoma Jiji FC faces a formidable challenge against Federation Cup holders Young Africans SC, alias Yanga, with a coveted spot in the quarter-finals at stake.

Dodoma Jiji FC, the plucky underdogs, face the herculean task of stopping Yanga's march towards the quarterfinals - a feat not achieved by any team since 2015 when the Federation Cup was relaunched.

The Dodoma club progressed through the first two rounds by overcoming NBC Championship League's side Biashara United 2-1 and non-league side Magereza Dar 1-0.

Head coach Francis Baraza said he has a full troupe of players available after an extended break al-

lowed the full recovery of his injured soldiers.

For goals, Baraza will look to January Jabir, Hassan Mwaterema, and Christian Zigah to inspire his side to an upset triumph.

Yanga, meanwhile, heads into this clash on the back of a goalless draw with Mamelodi Sundowns though they lost the penalty kick shootout last weekend.

As a result, Miguel Gamondi's men are unbeaten in their previous six matches across all competitions, losing just two of their last 20 encounters.

In the Federation Cup, Yanga thrashed non-league side Hausung 5-1 in the first game before crushing Championship side Polisi Tanzania 5-0 in the round of 32 played last month.

Averaging five goals per game in the Federation Cup this season, Yanga's men will back themselves to outscore their bitter rivals on Sunday.

Speaking ahead of the mid-week encounter, captain Bakari Mwamnyeto, en-

couraged the 12th man, made up of the outfit's fans popularly known as 'Wananchi', to grace the team with their presence at Jamhuri Stadium

"We are asking our fans to come in large numbers to support us because this is their team and we are ready to fight to defend our Federation Cup title," Mwamnyeto said.

The bulk of the Yanga senior stars are in good nick ahead of Wednesday's encounter, whereby Pacome Zouzou could be one of a handful of marquee names to return to the first XI - a list that also ought to include fit-again midfielder Khalid Aucho.

Yanga claimed a league double over the Capital City side last season.

The most recent clash was in early February when a late goal from midfielder Mudathir Yahya handed the Dar es Salaam side a narrow 1-0 home win.

In all, the teams have clashed in seven league matches since 2020/21. Yanga has claimed six wins, while just one match has been drawn.



Masaki-based residents take part in a tug-of-war with their children at a festival for Tanzania's football fanatics that are rooting for England's Arsenal FC, which took place at the Kimweli ground, Masaki in Dar es Salaam recently. PHOTO: CORRESPONDENT MIRAJI MSALA

Flexibles by David Chikoko

