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Floods leave 1,800 homeless in Mtwara



**National Pg 4**  
Women benefit from beekeeping training



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Govt to revive wheat production



**Guardian BUSINESS**  
ICT commission, local company sign MOU to promote cashless economy



Charity group donates Ifitar items to Muslims in Tanga Region

NCBA Group fully acquires Tanzanian unit

Tesla sued for alleged privacy intrusion

# Graft, wealth shortcuts anger clerics

## Z'bar skims 100/- from old petrol cap prices

**By Guardian Reporter, Zanzibar**

INDICATIVE petrol prices in Zanzibar have gone down by 100/- a litre for the month of April, sliding from 2,880/- in March to 2,780/-.

Sahara Shande Omar, acting public relations manager for the Zanzibar Utilities Regulatory Authority (ZURA) announced the new price here at the weekend, noting that diesel price goes down by 80/- and aviation fuel is being cut by 181/- a litre.

The official said that the lowering of fuel prices arises from government subsidy on imports to reduce hardships on the people.

The price for kerosene did not change, at 2,921/- per litre, with diesel price moving from 2,980/- to 2,900/- a litre. Aviation fuel earlier sold at 2,681/- a litre will now fetch 2,500/- a litre, he said.

ZURA sets indicative prices while observing change of oil prices at world markets and delivery prices at the port of Dar es Salaam, with preceding month world prices taken into account to arrive at a starting base for prices this month.

Transport costs via Dar port, the value of Tanzania shilling against the US dollar, insurance, taxes and profit margins for wholesalers and retailers are also included in the price setting framework. These prices are legal and people ought to buy fuel at approved fuel stations and claim receipts for their purchases, the manager added.



Bishop Dr Alex Malasusa (R) of the Eastern and Coastal Diocese of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania wishes worshippers a happy Easter shortly after Easter mass at the Azania Front Cathedral in Dar es Salaam yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Jumanne Juma

**By Guardian Reporters**

RELIGIOUS leaders have expressed anger on the reports of public funds being embezzled along with the misuse of power done by high level civil servants.

In sermons to mark the Christian festival of Easter, leading clerics appealed to President Samia Suluhu Hassan to take strict action on dishonest leaders cited for abuse of office "as they are destroying the nation while citizens continue to suffer."

Rev. Dr Alex Malasusa, bishop of the Eastern and Coastal Diocese of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania (ELCT), urged believers to pray for the leaders entrusted to serve the country and its people to stop exploiting the nation.

Leading prayers at his domicile Azania Front church, he said that "it's not that leaders who are given authority to lead do not know what they are doing is wrong, but they are selfish and impeding the country's progress."

He asked for more effort in prayers in this area, asserting that with prayer their souls will change and realize that their actions are unpleasant for divinity.

What the resurrection represents is that dishonest leaders should be reminded of the duty of pitying their fellow citizens, change their acts and start adhering to their oaths, he declared.

Rev. Dr Mpeli Mwaisumbe, head of Acts Fellowship (T), urged Tanzanians to put their prayers for President Samia for help in efforts

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## China investment team scans for opportunities

**By Guardian Reporter**

OFFICIALS from the China-Africa Development Fund (CAD Fund) led by the fund's vice-president and deputy chief executive officer, Yu Zhuorui, have landed in the country to scan for feasible investment opportunities.

In a meeting with Dr Tausi Kida, the Investment and Trade permanent secretary in the President's Office over the weekend, the fund leader said that CADF is committed to invest more in the country, citing various measures taken by the government to ensure a friendly environment for investors.

The top investments policy official said the fund co-funded projects like the Tanga cement plant at Maweni, Star Time multichannel television service provider and a sisal project in Morogoro.

She urged the CAD Fund executive to increase investments since the country has vast potentials which needs to be utilized, citing cashewnuts value addition, wheat farming, fertiliser manufacturing along with infrastructure development.

She listed the construction of toll roads, ports, renewable energy, the standard gauge railway plus fisheries in the country's exclusive economic zone.

Zhuorui was glad at current reforms, noting that the fund was assessing areas of investment to encourage Chinese investors who are in a position to make use of such openings.


Tanzania Investment Centre (TIC) executive director Gilead Teri underscored the need for Chinese firms to set foot in the country as it offers the best conditions investors can find in the region. TIC is willing and ready to facilitate investors from China, he declared.

CAD Fund is a Chinese private equity fund, agency fund o tied to the China Development Bank whose shares are held by the government. It seeks to stimulate Chinese investments in Africa in areas like manufacturing, mining, agriculture, infrastructure, natural resources and others.

CAD fund has set aside \$10bn to back investment efforts by Chinese companies in Africa, the top executive affirmed.

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The supplement will be published on 26<sup>th</sup> April, 2023.

## 'Ivory room records, upkeep in a shambles'

**By Guardian Reporter, Dodoma**

RECORD keeping snags have been identified in managing the ivory storage room, the 2021/2022 annual report of the Controller and Auditor General (CAG) has declared.

CAG Charles Kichere says in the report presented to the National Assembly last week the fire that was claimed to have destroyed the ivory room in 2013 was not investigated. The fire in 2013 ravaging wide sections of the ivory room destroyed important records on the ivory stored, he stated, noting however that it was surprising that no investigations were conducted to identify the cause of fire and its effects, up to the time of the recent audit. Auditors discovered the lack of correct records of ivory stored for assessment, he stated, referring to efforts to re-weighing the stock, owing to an

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## Graft, wealth shortcuts anger clerics

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to put the nation in a good position, asserting that the president has excelled among women leaders in Africa.

He appealed to the president to skip pity and take strong measures against listed dishonest leaders cited in the report by the CAG.

Apart from the nation being proud of the great achievements brought by President Samia, there are still things that are not right, needing to be condemned by all those who wish the country well, he stated.

Bishop Nelson Kisare of the Mennonite Church of Tanzania urged believers across the country to retain the fear of divinity in exercising their responsibilities, to act honestly and avoid corruption.

"If we want to remain in peace in our nation, everyone should act justly, fight corruption. If we promote human rights and act justly we will be able to live peacefully and maintain it since justice brings peace and all this is based on divinity," he stated.

He praised the president for the creation of a commission to assess the criminal justice system in the country and provide advice on improving its delivery. People need to live cleanly, observing religious admonitions, he

stated.

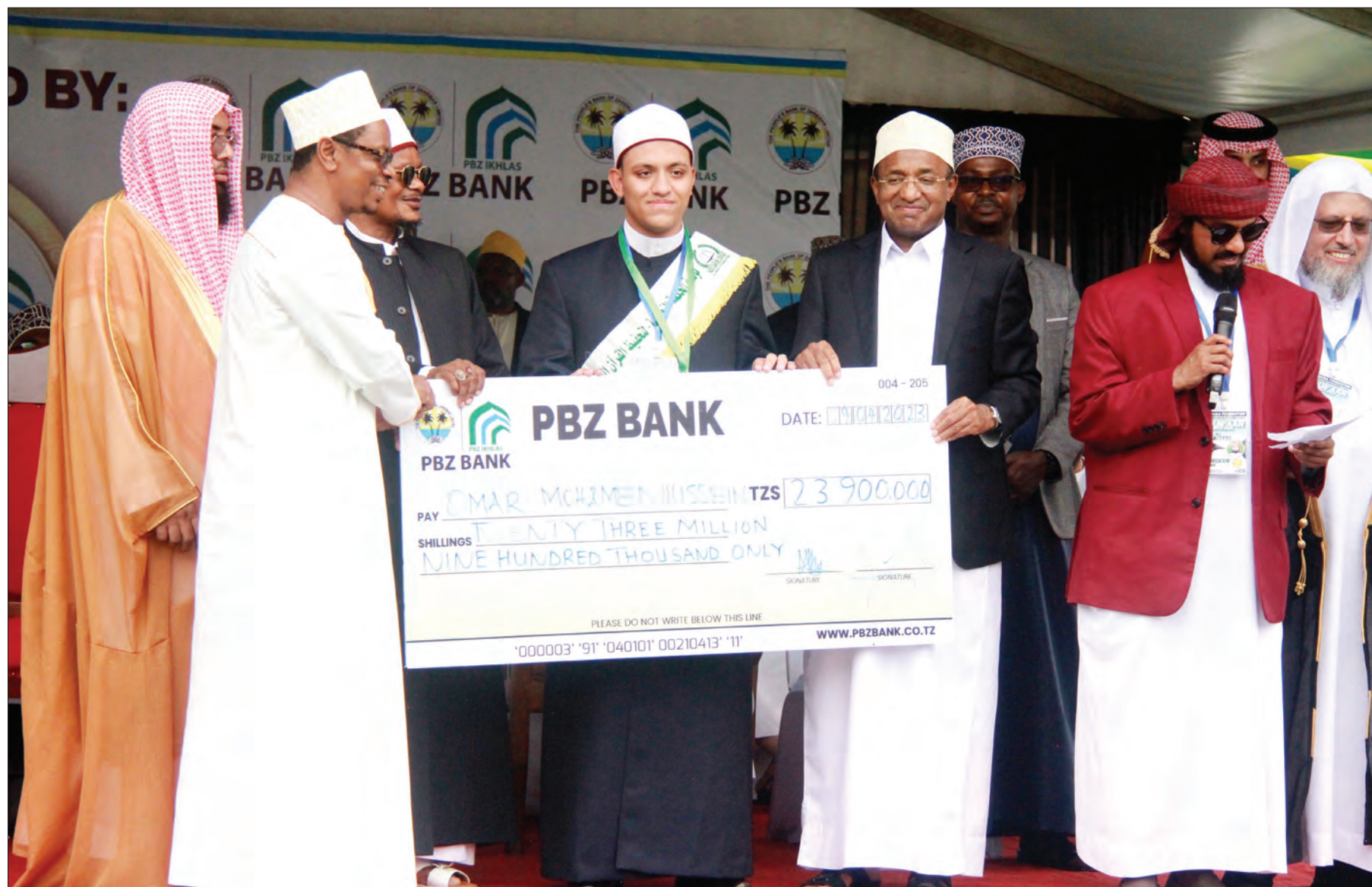
In his Easter mass, Bishop Liberatus Sangu of the Shinyanga Diocese of the Catholic Church warned Tanzanians to seek wealth by hard work and not through embezzlement. People even resort to fortune-telling shortcuts that lead to murder, or throng prayer venues "to be trampled on the head if they believe they will get good houses and cars."

Bishop Ludovick Minde of the Moshi Diocese of the Catholic Church asked families to fight moral erosion, try to persuade young people on the importance of living a married life, to avoid temptations and deviations.

Archbishop Jude Thaddeus Ruwa'ichi of the Catholic archdiocese of Dar es Salaam urged the believers to do what is good and to be righteous so that divinity can fulfill the promise of grace in human life.

Bishop Dr. Dickson Chilongani of the Anglican Diocese of Central Tanganyika urged senior government officials to ensure that they fight against acts of corruption that seem to be on the rise.

He asked religious leaders not to use sermons to misrepresent scriptures to make people in miracles instead of working hard, diligently.



Zanzibar President Dr Hussein Ali Mwinyi pictured at Uhuru Stadium in Dar es Salaam yesterday presenting a dummy cheque for 23.9m/- to Egypt's Omar Mohamed (C) for winning a Quran Africa recitation competition organised by Al-Hikma Foundation and sponsored by PBZ Bank. Third left is Chief Sheikh Abubakar Zuberi bin Ally. Photo: Correspondent Jumanne Juma.

## 'Ivory room records, upkeep in a shambles'

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unsatisfactory situation that saw the ivory destroyed and therefore lose quality.

Ivory room managers similarly failed to integrate the loss of ivory or in its quality with the register on their condition and value, he asserted. The digital programme

used to store and register other quantities of ivory and other trophies was not connected to the main server at the Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism.

The ivory room programme is outdated and hence some of the ivory lacked written information, while others had illegible information

to the poor condition of the roof, leaking during rains.

The CAG cited other shortcomings like equipment to record details on the ivory, using ink that became unreadable. The storage room was in abysmal condition due to its constrained space, leaking roof, unclean air,

inadequate electricity supply, along with the lack of CCTV cameras and firefighting equipment, he stated.

"In my opinion, the lack of right controls on the ivory can contribute to loss of records regarding the trophies," he said, insisting that these records are important in any litigation against poaching or other

efforts targeting poaching activities.

The ministry has confirmed the shortcoming and will be conducting verification each three years depending on availability of resources, he affirmed, recommending having in place a robust system to supervise the ivory stocks.



Vice President Dr Philip Mpango joins other Christian faithful at Easter mass held at the Catholic Church's Saint Maria Theresa Ledochowska Parish in Dodoma city yesterday. Photo: VPO

## US hopes aid will stop violence from spilling into coastal West Africa

WASHINGTON

THE United States is preparing long-term assistance for the Ivory Coast, Benin and Togo as concerns rise that jihad violence in the Sahel could spill into coastal West Africa, officials said.

US officials said on Sunday that Western support was also critical to halting Russia's Wagner mercenary group, which has made major inroads in violence-torn Sahel countries, including by allying with Mali's military junta.

Vice President Kamala Har-

ris, visiting Ghana last month as part of a growing U.S. push in Africa, promised \$100 million over 10 years to reinforce resilience in coastal West Africa. State Department officials are looking at additional funding, including some from the counterterrorism budget.

In a new global strategy to prevent conflict and promote stability, President Joe Biden's administration identified coastal West Africa as a priority for the coming decade.

The report, released in March, said that the Sahel to the immediate north had experienced

more terrorist attacks than any other region and that it was critical to "prevent violent conflicts from emerging or further spreading across the region."

While coastal cities connected to the world through seaports have been unscathed, violence has been rising in areas bordering Mali and Burkina Faso.

"It's a significant and burgeoning threat," said Michael Heath, the deputy assistant secretary of state in charge of West Africa.

"It's something of concern to us because the capabilities of the governments in place –

they've never faced a threat like this before," he told AFP.

"They're trying to cope with this, and we're trying to see what kind of tools they need," said Heath, who recently returned from a trip to the region with other State Department officials to assess needs.

Heath said he has not yet seen a presence in the three countries of the Wagner Group, which has been accused of human rights abuses in several countries including Ukraine, where the unit has played a key role in the invasion.

"They're not yet in the coast-

al West African states, but we know they're looking for opportunities to take advantage of instability wherever they see it," he said.

U.S. officials accuse Russia of stepping up disinformation in French-speaking Africa, seeing a ripe audience due to post-colonial resentments.

Concerns in the Sahel about violence as well as Russia have grown in the months since France ended an eight-year campaign against jihads, which some critics faulted as overly focused on military solutions.

Agencies

## UAE rejects extradition of SA's graft-accused Gupta brothers

JOHANNESBURG

South Africa said lastweek it had learnt with "shock and dismay" that the United Arab Emirates had turned down its request to extradite two brothers accused of orchestrating industrial-scale corruption.

Justice Minister Ronald Lamola said the government was notified on Thursday evening of a Dubai court decision not to allow for the extradition of business tycoons Atul and Rajesh Gupta.

"We learnt with shock and dismay that the extradition hearing had been concluded in the Dubai Court on the 13 February 2023 and our extradition request was unsuccessful," Lamola said in a statement.

The Guptas are alleged to have colluded with former president Jacob Zuma to siphon off state assets from South Africa, the continent's most advanced economy.

South Africa filed the extradition request in July last year after the two were arrested in Dubai a month earlier.

The arrests followed the inking of an extradition treaty between Pretoria and the UAE.

The ultra-wealthy brothers ran a sprawling family business empire in South Africa for more than two decades after migrating from India.

South Africa's case centres on an alleged 25-million-rand (\$1.6-million) fraud linked to an agricultural feasibility study – small fry compared to the scale of other allegations facing the family.

Lamola said the extradition was denied on a technicality.

The Dubai court determined that the UAE had jurisdiction on the charge of money laundering, as the crime in question was alleged to have been committed in the country as well as in South Africa, he said.

On the charge of fraud and corruption, "the court found that the arrest warrant relating to this charge was cancelled," the minister said.

"The reasons provided for denying our request are inexplicable and fly in the face of the assurances given by Emirati authorities that our requests meet their requirements," Lamola said.

The minister accused the UAE of not having properly consulted the South African government before the extradition was turned down, saying such a "level of non-cooperation" was "highly unprecedented."

He said authorities had received only an Arabic summary of the judgment and had had to work overnight to understand and analyse the document.

"That is the life we have been living with the authorities in the UAE," a frustrated Lamola told a press briefing. AGENCIES





Former Prime Minister John Malecela (C) exchanges greetings with a pastor shortly after Easter mass at the Dodoma city parish of the Anglican Church's Central Tanganyika Diocese. Photo: Correspondent Peter Mkwavila

## Cuts of WFP food aid leave Uganda refugees to rely on kitchen gardens

KAMPALA

WATERING the neat lines of green salad leaves outside her thatched home, a South Sudanese Susan Konga living in a refugee camp in Northern Uganda is preparing her kitchen garden for the next harvest.

This year the success of her tireless cultivation will be put to the test - complete self-sufficiency.

Global crises like the war in Ukraine, the earthquake in Turkey and the drought in East Africa mean there's less food aid for people like Konga.

After six years in Uganda, Konga a single mother, must now rely entirely on the maize, cassava and salad leaves grown in her small vegetable patch.

"The change in policy will make it difficult for me to adjust," she said.

Konga worries she will not be able to grow enough surplus produce to sell to pay for her two nieces' school fees and other basic household supplies like soap.

"For me to become sustainable, it will take me more than three years because now I don't have enough land. If I'm not supported, I can't stand on my own," she said.

WFP says vulnerable refugees such as new arrivals including the sick and elderly, will continue to receive emergency food aid but the organisation's \$180 million funding shortfall means others

will have to be weaned off it.

"Donors are having to make very difficult decisions because the needs are enormous globally," WFP Uganda Director Marcus Prior said.

Konga said the rains have been good so far, but she will struggle to survive the periods between harvests.

"We are not yet stable. I plead to them to at least give us food so we can plan for what to do," she added.



**For me to become sustainable, it will take me more than three years because now I don't have enough land. If I'm not supported, I can't stand on my own**

## 1,800 people left homeless by flash floods in Mtwara

By Guardian Reporter

AT least 1,800 people in Mtwara region have been left homeless after their houses were swept by flash floods caused by the ongoing heavy rains, an official has said.

Ahmed Abbas, Mtwara Regional Commissioner, said the flash floods occurred in the past week after the Ruvuma River overflowed following heavy rains upstream.

"The flash floods submerged over 150 houses in Maurunga and Kilambo wards in Mtwara district leaving

528 households with 1,800 people homeless," Abbas said.

The homeless victims have been sheltered in primary schools as the regional authorities were organizing relief supplies, including tents and food, for the victims, he said.

He said the flash floods also destroyed more than 100 hectares of farm crops, including maize and potatoes, in the affected areas.

"We are still assessing to establish the damage done to the farms by the flash floods," said Abbas.

Reports have it that floods caused

by heavy rainfall have severely disrupted operations in Mtwara, prompting authorities to evacuate certain areas.

There is no indication that border crossings with Mozambique have been affected. The flash floods were caused by the overflowing of the nearby Ruvuma River, following heavy rainfall upstream.

Disruptions in flood-affected areas will probably continue for some time as response and recovery operations are ongoing. Transport delays are possible near the border cross-

ings with Mozambique. Further flooding is possible during the remainder of the rainy season through May.

Further sustained heavy rainfall could trigger additional flooding in low-lying communities near rivers, streams, and creeks. Urban flooding is also possible in developed areas with easily overwhelmed storm water drainage systems. Sites located downstream from large reservoirs or rivers may be subject to flash flooding after relatively short periods of intense rainfall. Landslides are possible in hilly or mountainous areas, especially where

heavy rainfall has saturated the soil.

Authorities could issue mandatory evacuation orders for flood-prone communities over the coming days. Disruptions to electricity and telecommunications services are possible where significant flooding or landslides impact utility networks.

Floodwaters and debris flows may render some bridges or roadways impassable, impacting overland travel in and around affected areas. Pounding on road surfaces could cause hazardous driving con-

ditions on regional highways. Authorities could temporarily close some low-lying routes that become inundated by floodwaters. Flooding could block regional rail lines; freight and passenger train delays and cancellations are likely in areas that see heavy rainfall and potential track inundation.

Localized business disruptions may occur in low-lying areas; some businesses might not operate at full capacity because of flood damage to facilities, possible evacuations, and some employees' inability to reach work sites.

## Minister orders rectification of Mpwapwa dam

By Guardian Reporter

DR SELEMAN Jafo, Minister of State in the Vice President's Office (VPO) -Union and Environment - has instructed rectification of the dam at Kazania village in Mpwapwa district, Dodoma region to enable it store huge quantities of water as had been anticipated.

Dr Jafo gave the instructions at the weekend during his impromptu visit at the village to inspect the dam built by Ecosystem-Based Adaptation for Rural Resilience (EBARR) in Tanzania" coordinated by the VPO.

He found the dam not full with water despite raining for several days and the visit followed his December 2022 visit when he expressed his reservations on how the dam was built.

He said he feared the dam will never be full of water, even though he admitted he was not an expert from the National Irrigation Commission.

"VPO has provided funds for this type of environmental projects and the Commission of Irrigation is the one responsible in picking the right areas for digging dams, but here, the Commission has let us down, as I had expected that with all these rains, the dam would have been full, and I can see people drawing muddy water due to its not being fully full," he said.

In the circumstances, he directed the National Irrigation Commission to make

rectifications to the dam including digging trenches by June this year to ensure the water flows well.

He said many areas of Dodoma have been hit by drought due to the effects of climate change, hence the people have no option except continue to plant tree in large numbers against the situation.

Meanwhile, Dr Jafo directed that by May 2023 digging of wells should be done for the people to have safe and clean water, saying the intention of the government is to see the people having little difficulties in accessing to the basic service.

For his part, Mpwapwa District administrative secretary, Sarah Komba thanked the government through the VPO for implementing the dam project in the district, saying it has been well received by the residents.

She said the dam has been dug strategically and that the residents were ready to take care of it for their own benefit.

For his part, Nghambi ward Councillor, Richard Milimo called on experts to adhere to the advice given by minister Jafo, to increase the number of canals leading to the dam for its quick filling up during rains.

Mpwapwa District EBARR project coordinator, Azizi Bilu said shortage of rains has also contributed to the dam's slow filling with water, and pledged to work on the advice given by the Minister.



Asma Mwinyi Foundation board member Abdalla Amour (standing) brandishes a book on Islam to students of Shifaiya Islamiyya Madrasa in North Pemba Region yesterday shortly after handing over 1,104 copies as a gesture of goodwill during the holy month of Ramadhan. Photo: Correspondent Maulid Mmbaga

## CAG's report identifies poor regulation of health system

By Polycarp Machira, Dodoma

SCRUTINY into Tanzania's healthcare system has exposed rot mainly in the private sector as most facilities are not well regulated, it has been revealed.

The Controller and Auditor General (CAG)'s performance audit report for the financial year 2021/2022 shows ineffective registration of private healthcare facilities, inadequate supportive supervision to private and voluntary healthcare facilities and inspection.

The report also shows inadequate regulation of prices of medical services

rendered by private and voluntary healthcare facilities as well as inadequately conducted clinical audits to the facilities.

At least 40 percent of Tanzania's healthcare services are provided by the private sector through more than 2,000 hospitals, health centers, and dispensaries, over 900 pharmacies, and more than 8,000 accredited drug dispensing outlets (ADDOS).

Therefore, regulation of the provision of healthcare services provided by private and voluntary facilities in the country is of paramount importance.

The audit noted that the provision of healthcare services by private and voluntary healthcare facilities did not meet the quality of healthcare services.

Based on the star rating assessment of 514 private healthcare facilities, only 18 percent attained the star rating of three and above. "Additionally, the pharmaceutical and laboratory services provided by the private healthcare facilities were found to be inadequate," reads the report in part.

Insufficient pharmaceutical and laboratory services were indicated by the presence of unregistered

pharmacies, inadequate qualified personnel, lack of dedicated area for dispensing drugs, unsatisfactory handling of unexpired and expired medicine and lack of refrigerators/cold rooms for storage of medications.

On weaknesses on the Registration and Inspection of private and voluntary healthcare facilities, the CAG noted that, the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) managed to register private healthcare facilities by 87 percent of the private healthcare facilities that applied for the registration.

The timeliness for registration of

Healthcare Facilities varied. It took an average of 28 to 269 days. The main reasons for such variations in the registration timeliness were lack of binding set timeliness, lack of client service charter and ineffectiveness of the online registration system.

Low Coverage of Inspection to Private and Voluntary Healthcare facilities: The audit revealed that there was low coverage of inspection provided to private and voluntary healthcare facilities by the Ministry of Health through the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) and

Private Health Laboratories Board (PHLB). PHAB did not manage to inspect 70 percent of the planned private healthcare facilities from 2016/17 to 2021/22. The audit further revealed that PHAB managed to conduct 108 to 460 of the planned inspections from 2016/17 to 2021/22.

On the other hand, PHLB only managed to inspect 4 to 13 percent of the registered private healthcare laboratories. Moreover, the Pharmacy council did not inspect the attached pharmacies in the Private and Voluntary Healthcare facilities.





John Mchomba (L), a priest with Zanzibar's Catholic Church St Joseph's Cathedral, lights an Easter vigil candle during a service on Saturday night. Photo: Correspondent Martin Kabemba

## 200 women in Simanjiro District benefit from special training on better beekeeping

By Guardian Correspondent, Babati

A TOTAL of 200 women in Simanjiro district, Manyara region have benefited from special training on modern beekeeping to help them improve incomes and fight poverty.

The women groups have also been given 120 bee hives to support their activities.

Issued by the Tanzania People Wildlife (TPW), the training and the bee hives will help the communities engage in honey production and increase individual and family incomes while also preserving the environment to reduce the effects of climate change.

TPW director, Neovitus Sianga unveiled this when speaking to conservation stakeholders, pastoralists and village leaders.

Sianga said the organization has done a great job in raising the economy of women from 100 groups in the area, along with providing them with 120 beekeeping hives to promote modern beekeeping.

The conservation expert further said the beekeeping done by the women has greatly also been helping conserve the environ-

ment within their villages especially this time when many parts of the country have been hit by drought and other impacts of climate change.

"The activities also help reduce conflicts between farmers and pastoralists, bee keeping is also part of protecting the wildlife," he said.

Manyara regional chief, Alais Koina urged residents to focus on protecting the environment by ensuring that their daily activities prioritizes protection of nature for sustainable development.

He also urged the organization to continue investing in programmes to educate the public on the importance of protecting the environment and engaging in income generating activities that promote protection of biodiversity.

Alfred Mushy, Pasture Management Officer from the Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries, admitted that climate change has largely destroyed pastures and that coordinated efforts are needed to protect nature.

However, Mushy said the ministry had started to take precautionary measures due to livestock deaths caused by drought.

## Serious challenges in Tanzania's transportation sector - TAMSTOA

By Correspondent Maulid Mmbaga

TANZANIA Medium and Small Truck Owners Association (TAMSTOA) says it is experiencing difficulties in the transport business due to the increase of income tax to its members.

Briefing reporters in Dar es Salaam at the weekend, the association's chairperson, Chuki Shabani said the situation has also contributed to many big transporters shift

their businesses to other countries, the issue that is affecting the national economy.

Shabani said they are required to pay 2.7m/- for each vehicle, saying the rate was undermining their businesses and advised for it to be lowered at least 1m/-, and recommended some alternative ways of revenue collection that will enhance tax collection level without affecting transporters, but so far nothing has not been any feedback.

"We appeal to the Minister for Finance, Dr Mwigulu Nchemba that if he had received our letter, we would like to receive his response so that we convey the same to transporters so that they know what was going on.

"Big traders have shifted their businesses, the move that does not augur well in regard to the national economy, hence before more transporters do the same, it would be better to sit together to arrive at some

accord on the way forward in regard to the burning issue," he said. He said the government wants to collect 141bn/- per year from the transport sector, saying in their recommendations submitted to the ministry, it collects over 280bn/- per year, twice the amount set without bothering businessmen.

He also appealed to President Samia Suluhu Hassan to listen to their plight, saying that their aim is to contribute to the government own

target or more, but without undermining anyone.

He said if the government had set 1m/- income tax per vehicle, many transporters would not have shifted their businesses to foreign countries, they should have registered their vehicles in Tanzania which would have compelled them to buy tyres, and other spare parts for the trucks within the country that would have also contributed tax to the government.

Meanwhile, Shabani said they

support Land Transport Regulatory authority (LATRA) for registering lorry drivers even though, he said the procedure and criteria for the registration was not friendly to those concerned as many drivers fail to register themselves.

However, he advised that LATRA should use the numbers of drivers licences for registering them instead of requiring driving certificates as the environment shows not all drivers possess them.

## DR Congo jails six for life for Italian envoy's murder

KINSHASA

A MILITARY tribunal in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)'s capital Kinshasa has sentenced six men to life in prison for murdering Italy's ambassador in 2021.

Public prosecutors had originally sought the death penalty for the six accused calling them members of a "criminal gang".

Luca Attanasio was among three people shot dead on February 22, 2021, when a United Nations convoy was ambushed in the DRC's troubled east.

The other fatalities were driver Mustapha Milambo and Italian police officer Vittorio Iacovacci.

On Friday, lawyers for the six Congolese men said they would appeal the life terms.

Five of the men are being held in prison in Kinshasa, while the other is on the run.

During previous hearings, the prosecution cast the defendants as criminals who had initially intended to kid-

nap the ambassador and demand a \$1 million ransom.

The defendants, who were arrested in January 2022, denied any wrongdoing and said their initial confessions were extracted through torture.

Their lawyers also argued that the prosecution had failed to offer evidence in support of the murder charges, and pushed for acquittal.

On Friday, the military tribunal also awarded damages to Italy to the Congolese franc equivalent of \$2 million dollars.

Much of eastern DRC is prey to armed groups, many of which are a legacy of regional wars that flared during the late 1990s and early 2000s.

Militia attacks against civilians in the volatile region are common.

The DRC has observed a de-facto moratorium on capital punishment since 2003, according to the UN, but courts continue to hand down death sentences.



A small trader seated dangerously with her two young children near a high-voltage transformer at Songe market in Kilindi District, Tanga Region, at the weekend while waiting for customers for her cassava. Photo: Correspondent Dege Masoli

## Visa Foundation commits \$5m to support African women entrepreneurs

By Josephine Okojie

VISA Foundation has committed to contribute \$5 million in grants and impact investments in Africa that will support women's participation in the digital economy.

The foundation investments were made in connection with United States Vice President Kamala Harris's trip to Africa and the creation of new women in the

Digital Economy Fund and follow Visa's recent pledge to invest \$1 billion in Africa to advance resilient, innovative, and inclusive economies.

The foundation's support would focus on increasing access to financial solutions and other services for women entrepreneurs in Sub-Saharan Africa, to drive equitable digital financial access as countries continue to digitize.

The contributions will be allocated to programs that address the digital gender divide, and support women's full participation in the 21st-century economy.

"Expanding access to digital financial services lies at the core of Visa's purpose, and our company and Visa Foundation are committed to helping address gender disparity and connecting more people to the global

economy," said Aida Diarra, senior vice president and head of Sub-Saharan Africa at Visa in a statement.

"We welcome and are pleased to support important global initiatives, such as the Women in Digital Economy Fund, and we look forward to working with government, NGO and private sector partners to create equitable access for all."

Today, an estimated 500

million people in Africa are without access to formal financial services, less than 50percent of the adult population made or received digital payments in Africa, and more than 40 million merchants do not accept digital payments.

Visa and Visa Foundation are dedicated to expanding financial inclusion by empowering small-business and women-led entrepreneurship in Africa through various pro-

grammes.

Since its inception, Visa Foundation has committed over \$200 million to 50+ countries across various initiatives. The foundation's support has also helped partner organizations reach over 2 million SMBs, globally.

Visa has also introduced a series of initiatives to support women's empowerment together with financial partners. These include a partnership

with Vodacom in the DRC to empower women with disabilities, a collaboration with the Hand in Hand Kenya Micro-Enterprise Success Program, which supported 8,200 women entrepreneurs over three years, and She's Next, which brings funding, mentoring and networking opportunities to female entrepreneurs leading growing SMBs in Egypt, Kenya, Morocco, and South Africa.



## CDC Group allocates \$10m to boost solar power in South Africa, Namibia

By Nithin Prasad

CDC Group of UK government-owned financial development institution, has announced that it plans to invest £2 billion in African businesses over the next two years to double the size of its operations in the continent.

The company announced a line of new partnership agreements amounting to about \$400 million at the U.K.-Africa investment summit (AIS) in London on January 20, 2020.

It said that the bulk of these funds were aimed at helping African banks' ability to better support small and medium enterprises (SMEs), entrepreneurs, and microbusinesses across the continent.

Of this, \$10 million would be in the form of a debt agreement with Mettle Solar Africa to boost the solar energy sector in South Africa and Namibia, CDC Group noted.

"The commitments we have announced will accelerate the roll-out of solar power and other renewable technologies and sup-

port the growth of countless SMEs - the bedrock of any healthy economy - across the continent," said Nick O'Donoghue, chief executive of CDC.

In its statement, CDC said it has already invested in over 700 African companies, which have resulted in the employment of over 370,000 people as of 2018.

Previously, Mercom reported that the African Development Bank (AfDB) approved a \$21.78 million grant to the government of Sudan to promote the adoption of solar-powered irrigation pumps in the country.

The bank said that the grant would help install 1,170 solar pumps in the country's West Kordofan and North Kordofan states.

Earlier, CDC said it partnered with Globeleq, an independent power producer and developer in Africa, to provide \$66 million debt financing to Malindi Solar Group.

The financing was to be utilised to develop a 52 MW solar photovoltaic power project in South-East Kenya. The long-term financing was made available for 16 years.



Khalid Juma (R), a facilitator with a centre for the treatment and rehabilitation of drug addicts, briefs students of Nzonda Haki Secondary School in Mbeya municipality at the weekend on operations at the facility. The students are members of Fema Club and were attending a talk on reproductive health education. Photo: Correspondent Grace Mwakalinga

By Guardian Reporter and Agencies

## Report: China fine on Africa debt relief

A NEW report by researchers from Johns Hopkins University is giving China better than expected marks for its performance in helping to restructure the crippling debt loads carried by some African countries.

The report is based on a detailed evaluation of Beijing's participation in the Debt Service Suspension Initiative (DSSI), an international vehicle for developed nations to support struggling countries like Angola and Zambia.

The DSSI was introduced in 2020 at the start of the global pandemic by the International Monetary Fund and World Bank, which suggested the world's 20 largest economies, known as the G-20, temporarily halt the collection of loans from the world's poorest nations.

US Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen and World Bank Chief David Malpass have recently accused China of being a barrier to debt relief, and US Vice President Kamala Harris was in default-stricken Zambia last week urging the country's bilateral creditors - of which China is the biggest - to do more on restructuring Zambia's debt.

But, despite some caveats, the report released this week by Deborah Brautigam and Yufan Huang from the China Africa Research Initiative found that overall, China "fulfilled its role fairly well as a responsible G-20 stakeholder."

The analysts added that China "did implement the minimum steps of the DSSI fairly well, communicating with other players, and following through on pledges."

According to the available data, Chi-

nese creditors accounted for 30 percent of all claims and contributed 63 percent of debt service suspensions in the countries that participated in the DSSI.

"The metric by which you evaluate [China's] performance depends on what your expectations were for the initiative," Brautigam said, noting that this was the first time the world's second-largest economy had joined a multilateral initiative - a move one G-20 source called "miraculous."

Brautigam said it was obvious that a new architecture is needed to deal with debt relief because the current system is dominated by the Paris Club, a group of wealthy Western nations that started lending to developing countries in 1956. In recent years, there have been more major new creditors,

like China and bondholders.

"So what evolves out of this is really up in the air," she said, adding that all lenders "need to be in together because otherwise you get all these suspicions, you know, worries about free riding."

The study concluded that China might have achieved more during the DSSI if not for fears that countries would simply take advantage of any debt relief to repay other creditors.

In Zambia, for example, Chinese creditors wanted assurances their relief wouldn't be used to pay off the bondholders, while the bondholders were concerned that any relief from their side might go toward paying off China.

China was "totally justified" in its suspicions on this front, Brautigam

said, because "in most countries, all of those creditors continued to be paid."

"We need something that is simultaneous - you know, they all need to be in the room together ... so that we don't have this first-mover problem," she added.

In Zambia, the Chinese decided against suspending their debt payments while the country was still paying bondholders, but this didn't happen in Angola, China's largest African borrower with around \$20 billion in debt to Chinese entities. In that case, Chinese creditors provided 97% of the debt relief over the two-year period without asking for assurances that Angola wouldn't continue making other repayments.

The researcher's third African case

study, Kenya, showed how China's DSSI treatment was different from the other two. Chinese banks agreed to provide relief at first but later stopped loan disbursements and suspended only some 40 percent of the expected amount in 2021.

The study also showed how China's banks and central government, despite the country's top-down political structure, do not always act in unison. The fragmented nature of the Chinese system and bureaucratic hurdles often remain a barrier to debt relief.

Being part of the DSSI helped address that because it "pushed the Chinese government to align interests among fragmented banks and bureaucracies with conflicting goals. This process, still under way, is a necessary step toward full acceptance of the necessity for debt restructuring in the post-pandemic era," the researchers found.



Bishop Anthony Lagwen (L) of the Catholic Church's Mbulu Diocese blesses Special Seats legislator Asia Halamga shortly after Easter mass at Katesh's Saint Augustine Parish in Hanang' District yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Gift Thadey

## Kyerwa district plans to combat coffee smuggling

By Correspondent Titus Mwombeki, Kyerwa

KYERWA district authorities in Kagera region has strategic plans to curb coffee smuggling to neighbouring countries through unauthorised routes.

Zaituni Msote, Kyerwa District Commissioner made the remarks as the 36th Karagwe-Kyerwa Districts Cooperative Union (KDCU) meeting, saying already they have established temporary camps in border areas that will enforce coffee smuggling.

Msote said in the past, the issue had rampant causing loss of revenue to the government hence they decided to take steps to curb coffee smuggling at in border areas.

"The temporary have been placed in all areas in Mulongo, Bugomola, Kibale and Businde wards," she said.

She also appealed KDCU to assist AMCOS at border areas by financing them to withstand coffee markets to hinder people to engage in coffee smuggling.

For his part, Karagwe Member of Parliament, Innocent Bashingwa, who is also the Minister for defence and National Service said since he was tasked to oversee KDCU activities, challenges that contributed to coffee smuggling have been reduced as compared in the past.

"We decided to put farmers' interests foremost and that is why you now witness the fruits thereof; we have to address all challenges facing farmers and traders in regard with the coffee crop," said Bashingwa.

By Muiywa Lucas

## 'Africa's energy transition would require \$100 billion'

AFRICAN leaders and investors have been called to shift focus towards harnessing the continent's renewable energy sources.

Although the continent's potential remain high, Africa's energy transition would require an estimated \$100 billion yearly between 2020 and 2040.

This was the thrust of the African Development Bank (AfDB) Group President, Dr Akinwumi Adesina, while addressing participants at the recently concluded Ninth Berlin Energy Transition Dialogue, hosted by the German government.

According to the AfDB helmsman, there was an urgent need to reduce the world's dependence on fossil fuels and harness Af-

rica's renewable energy sources. While underscoring Africa's success and enormous potential to become a global leader in sustainable development, Adesina did not fail to note the significant energy challenges confronting the African continent.

Sighting a reviewed 2022 report, he said at least 600 million people did not have access to electricity, while 970 million people lacked access to clean energy for cooking.

He warned that for Africa to achieve the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal (SDG), seven of affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all, Africa must connect 90 million people yearly to electricity by 2030. Besides, the continent must also remove 130 million people

from dirty cooking fuels yearly.

According to him, Africa's significant cobalt, manganese and platinum reserves could be utilised to build a robust manufacturing sector rather than being merely exported as raw materials. Alluding to Europe's push for emissions-free vehicles, he said: "Africa is a crucial source for minerals and metals for clean energy value chains, including electric vehicles and utility-scale battery storage. Africa is the perfect place to build lithium-ion batteries to power German cars," he said.

Adesina reiterated that AfDB was spearheading efforts to unlock Africa's vast renewable energy potential, with 86 per cent of its power generation investments in

renewables and a ban on coal energy projects. He insisted that natural gas should be crucial to Africa's diversified energy mix to guarantee a secure energy supply for industries and residences.

"Africa, just like Germany and Europe, must be given time to transition and be allowed to use its natural gas resources as a transition fuel. While Africa will do everything possible to expand the use of renewable energy, the intermittency sources, such as wind and solar, made it impossible to guarantee the security of supply. Natural gas is, therefore, a key part of the energy mix for assuring the security of supply and critical for Africa," he said.

In similar vein, the Kenyan President,

William Ruto, while speaking urged the audience to rise to the challenge of genuine partnership to address the climate crisis and break the cycle of dependence that had plagued Africa for decades.

Also, the German Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs, Annalena Baerbock, said the energy transition was primarily about the security and global security depended on getting away from fossil fuels.

The annual Berlin Energy Transition Dialogue is a joint initiative of the German Renewable Energy Federation, the German Solar Association, the German Energy Agency, and consulting firm eclareon. The forum draws a wide range of prominent participants from the energy sector, including policymakers and representatives from industry, science and civil society.



## Government embarks on special strategy to revive and improve production of wheat in the country

By Correspondent Valentine Oforo, Dodoma

THE government has embarked on a special strategy aimed at reviving and improve production of wheat in the country.

Being among the potential economic cash crops within the country, wheat has been mostly grown by the smallholder farmers in the North regions, specifically in Kilimanjaro, Arusha and Manyara.

Speaking with this paper, Agriculture Minister Hussein Bashe said that the ministry was working to implement a robust strategy for the sustainable production of the crop.

Being its pilot project, Minister Bashe unveiled that agricultural experts from Sokoine University of Agriculture (SUA) who are teaming up with their counterparts from the Tanzania Agricultural Research Institute (TARI) in conducting professional soil testing at Makete District in Njombe Region.

The ongoing process focuses on determining areas within the district where wheat can

thrive," he informed.

He moreover said the exercise will see a huge number of farmers within the district imparted with best agronomic principles for the professional cultivation of the crop.

"The major focus of the strategy is to ensure we make effective use of all areas within the country where wheat can flourish. After Makete, we are focusing on ending the intervention into further areas," he stated.

He detailed that Tanzania has been endowed with numerous areas where wheat can flourish in abundance, but the economic cash crop has been produced poorly in some few regions. "The government is currently working to revamp production and productivity of all key cash crops that grow across the country," he insisted.

High post-harvest loss, below-average rainfall and desert locust invasions in Northern Tanzania has been cited among chief factors that has continued to upset production of wheat in Tanzania.



Nachingwea district commissioner Mohamed Hassan Moyo (in glasses) pictured at Mnero Ngongo village at the weekend unveiling a plaque to lay the foundation stone for a mother and child clinic health building at the Catholic Church Mnero Diocese hospital. The construction is funded by the people of The Netherlands. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

## Less than 7pct of African SMEs adopting technology, says report

By Guardian Reporter

DESPITE the vast opportunities for success that access to the internet and technology provides for small businesses in Africa, less than seven per cent of microenterprises use technology for business, a new International Finance Corporation-World Bank research has shown.

The report, which was released yesterday indicated that economists at the World Bank and IFC analysed data from a survey of 3,325 microenterprises in seven countries – Ghana, Kenya, Mozam-

bique, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, and Tanzania.

According to the survey, microenterprises that used smartphones and computers "reported 2.8 times higher rates of productivity, six times higher sales levels, and 1.9 times the number of employees than non-users".

The survey also showed that less than seven per cent of microenterprises said they used digital technologies for business.

"71 per cent of respondents reported 'no need' for digital technologies. For instance, 35 per cent said these technologies were too

expensive for them, especially after factoring in the cost of purchasing the products with monthly usage fees and related electricity costs. About the same share, 34 per cent, said that they did not know how to use the technologies, pointing to a digital skills gap to be bridged," it stated.

Elaborating on the factors responsible for the small share of businesses utilising smartphones and digital technology, the IFC noted that 20 per cent of respondents cited lack of access to high-speed internet as a reason for not using digital technologies.

"This suggests that while access remains a problem, it may not be the overriding cause of the low use rates. For instance, the mobile and high-speed internet use rate among the general population, at 22 per cent of country populations averaged across Sub-Saharan Africa, is more than three times that of microenterprise," it further stated.

According to the report, the availability of high-speed internet has steadily risen in Sub-Saharan Africa, from an average of 25 per cent in 2010 to 84 per cent by 2021.

It added that the increase in coverage had not yet resulted in a

comparable uptick in connectivity.

"As of 2021, 74 per cent of Africans living in areas where high-speed mobile internet was available were still not connected.

It noted poor access to microfinancing was another hindrance to the small share of users leveraging technology for business success.

"Just three per cent of firms surveyed had previously received a loan. Tellingly, those firms who had received a loan were 18 percentage more likely to use a smartphone."

The report also stated that the lack of proper infrastructure was another area where improvement

was needed.

"44 per cent of the firms surveyed—and 69 per cent of agribusinesses—had no access to electricity. Microenterprises were, for the most part, disconnected from international supply chains, with only 16 per cent having a large company as a main supplier and less than two per cent having large, foreign-based suppliers. These links can be beneficial to small enterprises by creating digital learning opportunities and drawing them into large supply chains," the IFC-World Bank report further stated.

## African campaigner decries soaring mental health disorders linked to climate change

By Guardian Reporter

MENTAL health disorders like stress and depression have spiked in the sub-Saharan African region, fueled by devastating impacts of the climate crisis on the environment and livelihoods, a campaigner has said.

Rosalid Nkirote, executive director of the Nairobi-based African Coalition of Communities Responsive to Climate Change (ACCRC) made the remarks when speaking ahead of World Health Day to be marked on Friday.

He said planetary warming was to blame for mental illnesses, which take a heavier toll on vulnerable communities in the continent.

"The impact of climate change on mental health is a growing concern, with studies showing climate change is associated with an increased risk of mental health disorders," Nkirote said in a statement.

Nkirote said the 2023 World Health Day themed "Health for All" should serve as a clarion call for African governments and bilateral partners to revitalize action on the climate crisis and improve mental health outcomes for communities.

The World Health Organization (WHO) contends that mental disorders have become a public health concern in Africa, citing Kenya and Nigeria where one out of four people seeking medical attention in healthcare facilities have a mental illness.

In Tanzania, five out of 100,000 people have committed suicide due to mental health disorders linked to anxiety, depression, anger, and substance abuse, WHO said.

Nkirote observed that deaths, destruction of property, and displacement of civilians triggered by the recent tropical Cyclone Freddy in southern Africa as well as acute drought in the Horn of Africa could escalate post-traumatic

stress disorders among victims.

In addition, Nkirote decried the long-term emotional and psychological trauma that climate disasters were exerting on communities on the frontline of the climate crisis in Africa.

She added that climate-induced hunger, malnutrition, and water stress were also undermining the cognitive abilities of African children, besides lowering productivity among adults.

Nkirote said climate change and other planetary crises, including pollution and biodiversity loss, are escalating poverty, hunger, conflicts, and displacement, leading to mental health disorders among victims.

She urged governments to incorporate mental health promotion in national climate mitigation and adaptation policies besides investing in quality treatment and care for victims of climate disasters suffering from emotional trauma.



**In Tanzania, five out of 100,000 people have committed suicide due to mental health disorders linked to anxiety, depression, anger, and substance abuse**



Local breed chickens are transported for sale to Dar es Salaam's Manzese mixed-goods market late last week. With the Easter holidays then setting in, going retail prices had risen from 18,000/- to 25,000/- on average - largely depending on weight and size. Photo: Correspondent Miraji Msala

## World Bank forecasts sub-Saharan Africa's economy to slow to 3.1 per cent in 2023

By Guardian Reporter

THE World Bank has projected economic growth in sub-Saharan Africa including Tanzania to slow to 3.1 per cent in 2023 from 3.6 per cent in 2022.

According to the World Bank's April 2023 economic update for sub-Saharan Africa, growth across the region remains sluggish, dragged down by uncertainty in the global economy, the underperformance of the continent's largest economies, high inflation, and a sharp deceleration of investment growth.

The report says the African governments must sharpen their focus on macroeconomic stability, domestic revenue mobilisation, debt reduction, and productive

investments to reduce extreme poverty and boost shared prosperity in the medium-to-long term amid dampened growth prospects and rising debt levels.

World Bank Chief Economist for Africa Andrew Dabalen said weak growth combined with debt vulnerabilities and dismal investment growth risks a lost decade in poverty reduction.

"Policymakers need to redouble efforts to curb inflation, boost domestic resource mobilization, and enact pro-growth reforms while continuing to help the poorest households cope with the rising costs of living," Dabalen added.

According to the report, economic activity in South Africa is set to weaken further in 2023 (0.5 per cent annual growth) as the

energy crisis deepens, while the growth recovery in Nigeria for 2023 (2.8 per cent) is still fragile as oil production remains subdued.

The World Bank said the real gross domestic product (GDP) growth of the western and central Africa sub-region is estimated to decline to 3.4 per cent in 2023 from 3.7 per cent in 2022, while that of eastern and southern Africa declines to 3.0 per cent in 2023 from 3.5 per cent in 2022.

The report says debt distress risks remain high, with 22 countries in the region at high risk of external debt distress or in debt distress as of December 2022.

"Unfavorable global financial conditions have increased borrowing costs and debt

service costs in Africa, diverting money from badly needed development investments and threatening macro-fiscal stability," it notes.

According to the report, despite these challenges, many countries in the region are showing resilience amidst multiple crises. These include Kenya, Cote d'Ivoire, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), which grew at 5.2 per cent, 6.7 per cent, and 8.6 per cent, respectively, in 2022.

It notes that in the DRC, the mining sector was the main driver of growth due to an expansion in capacity and recovery in global demand.

The report reveals that harnessing natural resource wealth provides an opportu-

nity to improve the fiscal and debt sustainability of African countries, but cautions that this can only happen if countries get policies right and learn the lessons from the past boom and bust cycles.

The World Bank said high inflation and low investment growth continue to constrain African economies.

"While headline inflation appears to have peaked in the past year, inflation is set to remain high at 7.5 per cent for 2023, and above central bank target bands for most countries," the report says.

It notes that investment growth in sub-Saharan Africa fell from 6.8 per cent in 2010-13 to 1.6 per cent in 2021, with a sharper slowdown in eastern and southern Africa than in western and central Africa.



# Six decades of selfless aid make Chinese doctors 'most welcome guests' in Africa

ALGIERS

ON April 6, 1963, China's first medical team was dispatched from Beijing to Algeria. Since then, batch after batch of Chinese doctors have been working in Africa, offering much-needed medical aid and services to local people.

Despite facing numerous difficulties and challenges, Chinese doctors have persevered in their efforts to save lives, treat illnesses, forge new friendships, and promote goodwill throughout Africa.

Their unwavering commitment, sense of duty, and exemplary expertise have earned them a reputation as the most welcome guests on the African continent, endearing them to countless Africans.

As China and Africa strive to build a community with a shared future in the new era, including building a global community of health for all, the Chinese doctors serving on aid missions in Africa have become shining exemplars with their great contribution to the lofty cause.

Since the first Chinese medical team arrived in Algeria in 1963, China has dispatched around 30,000 medical personnel to 76 countries and regions across five continents, with a primary focus on Africa, providing 290 million diagnoses and treatments for local people, according to the National Health Commission of China.

This significant effort underscores China's unwavering commitment as a major country to deliver public goods to the international community.

Wu Yilun, an ultrasound doctor at Xi'an Honghui Hospital in Shaanxi Province, China, has completed three separate two-year stints in Sudan. Notably, three other members of Wu's family, including his uncle, sister, and brother-in-law, have also provided medical aid in Sudan over the past 21 years.

"For me, joining the medical team to Africa is not only a family legacy but also our mission and obligation as a Chinese doctor," he said.

Shen Ali, an anesthesiologist at Ying Cheng Chinese Medicine Hospital in central China's Hubei Province, followed the footsteps of his grandfather and uncle to join the Chinese medical teams dispatched to Algeria.

Through a relay between father and son, husband and wife, and even sisters working hand in hand, Chinese doctors have never left the African continent in the past 60 years, passing on the baton of the aid mission from one generation to the next.

It is never easy for the Chinese doctors to settle down far away from home, not to mention that the hospitals where they work in Africa are usually in remote areas with harsh conditions.

Chinese doctors have made significant contributions to health care in local communities over the past 60 years, with their efforts spanning not only diagnoses and treatments but also pioneering surgeries to help bridge the medical gaps in the host countries.

In Sudan, the Chinese medical team successfully conducted the first open-heart surgery in 1977 at the China-Sudan Abu Osher Friendship Hospital, said Mohamadain Hussein, former head of the hospital. The Sudanese girl who received the surgery is now a mother of five children.

In Algeria, the first femoral head replacement operation in the Khenchela Province was successfully performed in 2011 by Tu Dachun, an orthopedic physician from central China's Hubei Province. Tu, now on his last mission in Algeria, has worked in the North African country for 12 years.

Du Bingbing, head of the current Chinese medical team to Tanzania, successfully conducted a laparoscopic radical operation of congenital hypertrophic pyloric stenosis for a one-week-old baby. That was the first minimally invasive laparoscopic surgery done in Tanzania.

Chinese doctors have also successfully conducted the first cardiac pacemaker implantation in The Gambia, the first craniectomy in Benin, and the first replantation of a severed right upper arm in Mozambique, to name a few.

Falciparum malaria is a high-incident disease in Africa. Bai Chunmei, a Chinese malariologist, had worked for more than four years in Sudan, Cameroon, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, helping establish malaria control centers and cure those who suffer from the disease.

Chinese doctors have also introduced traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) to Africa,



Liu Wei, an obstetrician and gynecologist of the Chinese medical team to Sudan, examines a newborn at Abu Osher hospital in central Sudan's Gezira state on Feb. 22, 2023.

including acupuncture, which is gaining popularity in many African countries.

Hu Changrong, a member of the Chinese medical team to Tunisia, inspects eyes of an old man during a free clinical activity in Tunisia's northwestern province of El Kef, on Feb. 19, 2023. (Xinhua/Xu Supei)

"The Chinese people love peace and cherish lives, which is vividly illustrated by their efforts in international medical assistance," Chinese President Xi Jinping said in February in a reply letter to the 19th Chinese medical team dispatched to the Central African Republic.

Alongside providing medical assistance to various African countries, Chinese doctors have also established friendships with local people, who often regard them as close friends and even family members.

The Chinese doctors shoulder two missions in Africa, one being the "angles in white" to save lives and another being "messengers" to pass on friendship to local people, said Yang Yong, head of the 27th Chinese medical team dispatched to Algeria.

"China provided medical help timely

when there was a severe lack of medical personnel in African countries after the colonial period more than half a century ago," said Nasser Bouchiba, president of the Africa-China Cooperation Association for Development in Morocco.

Chinese doctors usually work in remote areas with harsh conditions, playing "a significant humanitarian role" in helping improve local health care, Bouchiba said.

China's continued dispatching of medical teams to Africa over the past six decades is "the best illustration of China's internationalism and responsibilities as a major country," he added.

Noureddine Djoudi, 89, a former Algerian diplomat, hailed the 60-year Chinese medical aid mission in Algeria as "a model of South-South cooperation."

The Chinese doctors "are the most welcome guests in the African continent," he said. Chinese doctors cured one of his hands which suddenly lost feeling. He called it the "amazing effect" of TCM.

In Namibia, TCM has been introduced into the health insurance system through unremitting efforts by Wang Peng, a mem-

ber of the Chinese medical team in Namibia during 2014-2016.

"It's a step warmly welcomed by many local patients who benefit from TCM for its curative effects," said Ben Nangombe, executive director of Namibia's Ministry of Health and Social Services.

Pierre Somse, minister of public health and population in the Central African Republic, said the Chinese medical teams not only treat patients and save lives but also have touched the local people with their medical ethics and great love.

"The Chinese medical team has been deeply integrated into the daily life of the people of Zanzibar," said Nassor Ahmed Mazrui, Tanzania's Zanzibari minister for health, praising the Chinese doctors as "true angels in white." (Video reporters: Chen Mengyang, Li Rui, Yang Yiran, Yu Fuqing, Shuai Anning, Sui Xiankai, Wang Bingfei, Wu Tianyu, Huang Ling, Xu Supei, Liu Chang, Xie Hao, Rao Rao, Xu Penghang, Lin Juan, Liang Aiping, Yang Lin, Yang Jinxin, Wang Shuo; video editors: Hong Ling, Cao Ying, Li Qin, Zhou Yang, Wu Yuzhan, Zhang Zhiluan)

# Network helps connect African journalists on climate issues

By Kate Bartlett, Johannesburg

AS more people become concerned about the effects of climate change on their lives, journalists in an otherwise struggling industry are becoming specialized in the environmental beat.

But that wasn't always the case, said Frederick Mugira, founder of Water Journalists Africa, the largest network of journalists on the continent reporting on water.

Mugira said that when he started the organization in 2011, "not so much was being tackled about water." But now, "we have more journalists preferring to specialize in water and climate issues."

Mugira, an award-winning journalist based in Kampala, Uganda, founded the network to share ideas and provide training.

From investigative reporting on the impact of a large agricultural industry in Cameroon to how plastics and water pollution are devastating the fishing trade in the African Great Lakes, the coalition is combining environmental, data and solutions-led journalism.

Made up of about 1,000 journalists across Africa, the network works collaboratively to investigate issues around water, wildlife, biodiversity and climate change.

The nongovernmental organization receives funding from various institutions, including the U.S.-based Pulitzer Center and Internews, an international media support nonprofit organization in California.

The network also has a few specialized offshoots, including InfoNile, which uses graphics to map stories on the Nile Basin, and the Big Gorilla Project, which focuses on the endangered species in the forests of Congo, Rwanda and Uganda.

African nations are among the world's lowest greenhouse gas emitters, but scientists have long warned the region will be one of the worst affected by climate change. Mugira said that more than ever, local people want explanations of phenomena

such as droughts.

"We identify a theme of common and cross-border importance. For example, plastic pollution," he said. "When we identify a theme, we search for credible data across the countries we're working on."

Water Journalists Africa projects include graphs and interactive maps and seek to break down data in a comprehensible and colorful way. Radio, TV and print are some of the mediums used, and the stories are published in English and local languages.

"When we started it, we realized journalists in the region didn't have experience in data journalism," Mugira said. But accessing that data can be a challenge.

One reason, Mugira said, is that scientists don't always trust journalists and don't always want to share their information. Another challenge comes when some government officials might want to release only numbers that show them in a good light.

"When it comes to natural resources, they don't really release data, because they see it as sensitive," he added.

## Reporting with results

For Nairobi journalist Sharon Atieno, 29, being a member of Water Journalists Africa opened her up to a wide range of new skills.

"The network has helped shape my environmental reporting, and I've also learned to use data," said Atieno, who learned of the network when applying for grants.

"You can use maps, visualizations, to make it more captivating. This is a skill I acquired not through university but through being part of the Water Journalists Network. That's how I discovered my beat," she said.

Asked why she thought the beat was important, Atieno said, "Everything around us is the environment – plastics in the oceans, polluted lakes, everything has an impact not only on the environment but also on climate change.



"Environment reporting is important because even tiny things we're doing, if you look at it accumulatively, it's having a very big impact on our lives as human beings."

Atieno said everything is connected. For example, more drought results in increased wildlife poaching as people's crops fail and they go hungry.

Atieno has taken part in collaborations with Water Journalists Africa. One story she was particularly proud of looked at how poaching for bushmeat increased when Kenya was under the pandemic lockdown. The poaching resulted

in a decline in the population of the country's iconic Rothschild's giraffe, she said.

Another story she covered was how waste from sugarcane companies in a part of western Kenya was polluting a nearby river.

"The degradation of the sugarcane waste results in a chemical being produced so when it goes into the water system, it makes the rivers toxic," she said. "When I did that story, I reached out to the county government. They said they didn't know it was happening."

After she covered the story, the county authorities opened a com-

mission to investigate the issue.

## Funding challenges

Cross-border networks of environmental journalists in Africa are growing, according to Anton Harber, adjunct professor of journalism at Witwatersrand University in Johannesburg.

"At our annual gathering of the continent's investigative journalists, the African Investigative Journalism Conference, we have definitely seen environmental coverage take center stage with the emergence of a number of cross-border, collaborative networks doing important

and often excellent work," he said.

However, he said, such work needs funding to be able to survive.

"Few newsrooms are investing in it because it is not seen as a topic that sells newspapers or brings clicks," Harber said. "Africa has the stories and the journalists who can tackle it, but they are not usually in the mainstream conventional newsrooms."

But Mugira said stories from his network were now being picked up and followed by other media as interest in their coverage grows.

"These stories are just a starting point," he said.



## Zanzibar Airport delivery results a model for others

ZANZIBAR is experiencing an upsurge of tourist flows with the number of passengers arriving at the Abeid Amani Karume International Airport reaching 538,828 from January to March this year, shifting from 424,968 passengers during the same period last year. Revenue collections are also on the rise with the upsurge, with third quarter fiscal 2022/23p standing at 8.83bn/-, a sharp rise from

5.54bn/- during 2019, before the pandemic broke out. Much of this change had to do with the service provider, the Dubai National Air Travel Agency (DNATA).

It is described online as an Emirati airport services provider for aircraft ground handling, cargo, travel and flight catering services across five continents. It operates from a subsidiary, the Zanzibar Aviation Services Ltd, improving services at the airport, now been recognized as one of the best airports in transporting goods and entrusting handling services. The reason isn't experience with the company's performance by re-branding, where the facility is now deemed to at par with others the firm handles; it demands effective shift of control, not a warped joint venture.

It is not surprising that Zanzibar has adopted this strategy for a key facility and in pursuing the blue economy strategy, it could be expanded to envelop other rather inefficient public entities. Analysts say the direct link with the Emirates facilitates alteration of operations at the airport and enhancing export goods to Europe, all of which opens up trade. A helpful detail is that last September, German air travel firm Edelweiss started using DNATA services at the airport's Terminal III, to wit.

A top official at the airport said with the Emirati firm in place, the

airport was now receiving flights with 'code E,' contributing to increases in revenue from parking of planes and vehicles. The increase in routes raised the number of international flights, with an Italian air charter firm adding to the number. But it not a lesson that policy advisers in the Union government will easily take up, judging from joint venture experience for the past 30 years, where it is hard to point at a success case.

All what reform minded policy advisers can do is to ask the 50-50 joint venture formula stalwarts to take note that this 'marriage of inconvenience' actually leads nowhere. There has to be a real strategy shift where an entity is directly identifiable with a major global brand which potential clients or customers can instantly trust. This isn't the mood with most parastatal management professionals when sitting at round tables restricted to one viewpoint: of state appointed managers or regulators.

Shift of control that comes with an effective joint venture in the sense of engaging a recognized brand to run a facility cannot be substituted by opening website to tell all and sundry what services are available at this or that airport, game park, port or research facility.

The potential clients need to know of any service provider whose services, standards and code of conduct they are familiar with, to make durable decisions like signing accords to airlift travelers, consign goods or ship tankers whose goods can be stored at a dry port somewhere. When the goods delivery value (and insurance) chain is manned by brands they can recognise, it is easier to talk business, not when they have to rely on the word of our director general, etc.

## Time to stop the endless financial mismanagement

IN the past week big headlines in the country's media and social networks - including this paper's lead stories in the past few days - were about the characteristic grim side in the establishment - how a handful of influential people are stealing citizens' money left, right and centre, depriving them of quality basic social services - education, health and water, and no one seems to care.

The big story was the Controller and Auditor General (CAG) Report for 2021/22 Financial Year that was tabled in Parliament last week.

As is routine - since times immemorial - CAG reports have been displays of what is outrageously amiss in the nation's official accounting system and for the government becoming deaf or unmoved about it.

It would be accurate to say it is the greatest display of the rot that tells much about the country's difficult drive in poverty eradication as well as the rampant corruption in officialdom.

Hence to merely say the report is a grim side in the establishment's over six-decade history is perhaps an understatement - but its playing deaf on the shenanigans going on without relent borders the inconceivable.

The report details many cases of negligence on the part of public officials in financial management and accountability resulting in loss of public funds, pilferage through shoddy contracts, outright embezzlement and thievery by officials and sheer lethargy on the part of management.

For example, the latest 2021/22 CAG Report has disclosed that ATCL's

invoice for the purchase of its freighter was inflated by nearly \$50 million.

The report said the last installment for the plane's manufacture was USD 37 million; however, an USD 86 million invoice was presented to the government.

It also includes the odd - TTCL does not know who are its debtors in regard to the 21bn/- it had extended as goods/services to, or the annual payment of funds by TANESCO for the upkeep of Kihansi frogs sent to the US for safe keeping, the money now reaching over USD 2.86 billion after 22 years.

Many hold the view that in order to tame the rampant wastage of taxpayers' money, the government must shift from depending on "strong personalities" to fight corruption in favour of strengthening institutions of governance.

For many decades repeated calls were being made to have the annual reports used to hold accountable those found to have abused their powers and caused the government losses running into billions of shillings, with some calling for outright court action against the culprits.

The latest CAG Report is the first one that covered the current Phase VI administration, that had vowed zero tolerance to corruption, but Tanzanians are yet to see the results of that pledge, instead we still see business-as-usual, happy-go-lucky style of public resource management.

We are therefore reminding that something has to be done if merely to show that the current administration is in reality different to its predecessors.

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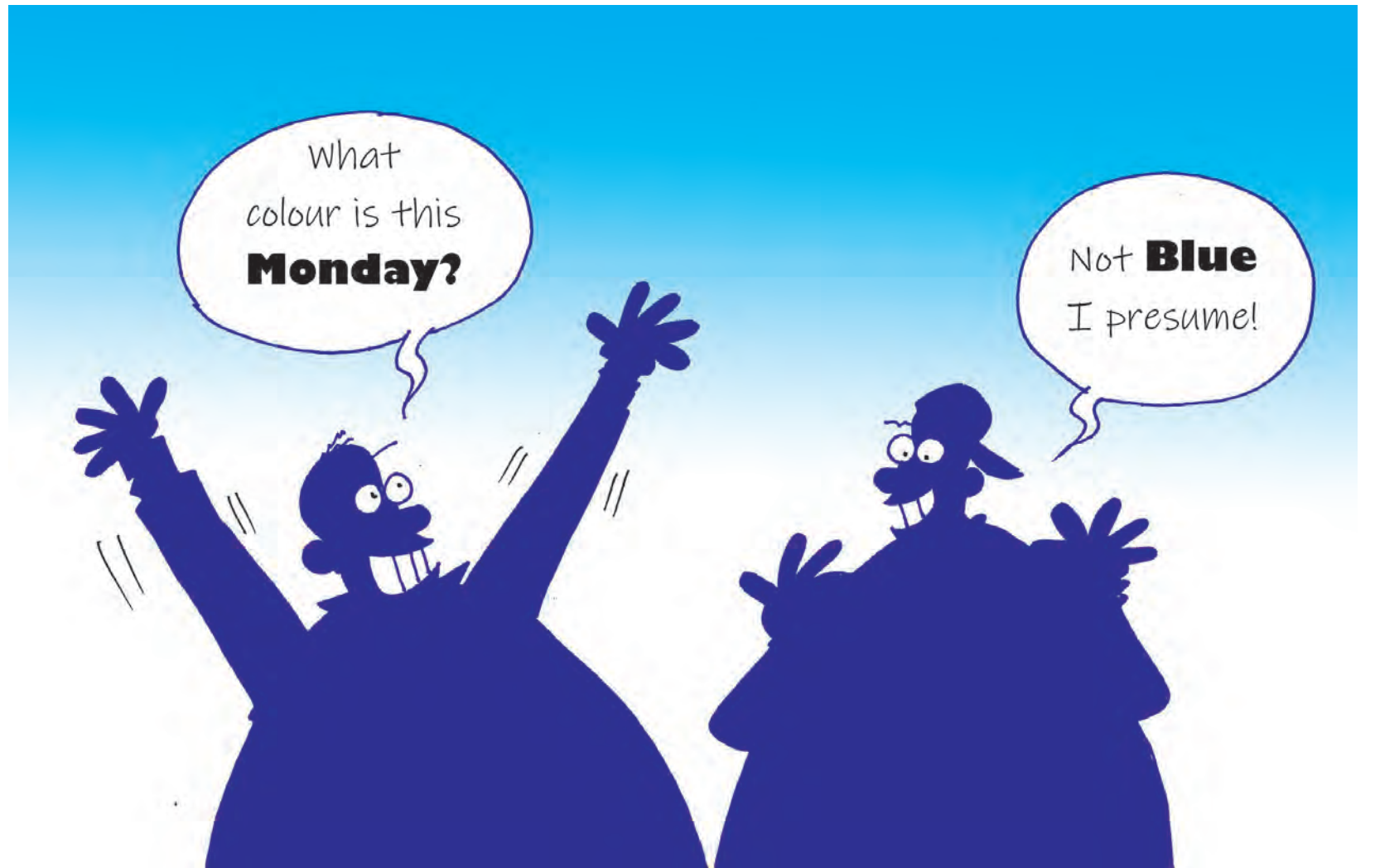
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## Kenya court rules for judicial independence

By Carmel Rickard

KENYA'S highest court has delivered a decision that strongly defends the independence of the judiciary and, by extension, the independence of the mechanism by which judges are chosen, the Judicial Service Commission.

It's a watershed decision in that it will significantly change the way in which members of the JSC are appointed: the court said the President of the country had no role, not even a ceremonial one, in appointing and gazetting JSC members and that the role that the President had assumed in the past was a 'fundamental contravention' of the Constitution.

The litigation in this case was prompted by action of the country's then President, Uhuru Kenyatta. During his terms of office, he developed a track record of conflict - sometimes escalating to seriously intense levels - over the relative powers of the executive and the judiciary.

In 2018, he prompted another such conflict in relation to the appointment of a senior appeal court judge, Mohammed Warsame, as a member of the Judicial Service Commission (JSC). Instead of rubber-stamping the appointment of this judge, as had been done when he was chosen for a previous term on the JSC, the President sent Warsame's name to the national assembly for approval, thus raising two critical questions: what is the role of the President in the appointment of JSC members, and is Parliament supposed to vet a member of the JSC who has been democratically elected by his or her peers?

The Constitution provides that there should be 11 members of the JSC: the Chief Justice, the Attorney-General, one judge from of each level of the higher courts, chosen by their peers, a representative from the magistracy, two from the legal profession, one from the Public Service Commission and two members of the public.

Warsame was chosen by the rest of the appeal court judges to be their representative on the JSC. But when Kenyatta received his name, he had notices published in the media asking the general public for their views on Warsame's 'suitability' for the position.

This led to a spate of correspondence, and then to litigation, on whether Kenyatta's actions were constitutional. Was he supposed to invite comment from Parliament or the public? Did he have any role at all in appointing representatives chosen by the various arms of the judiciary?

The High Court found that the



President Uhuru Kenyatta

President only needed the approval of the national assembly for the two members of the public nominated to serve on the JSC, and that no parliamentary or presidential approval was needed for any of the other commissioners.

At the appeal court, the judges agreed with the outcome at the High Court, in particular that the only people needing parliamentary approval were the two candidates representing the public, and that Warsame, 'having been elected by his peers as a member of the JSC, was not subject to approval by the National Assembly'.

The role of the President, said the appeal court, was 'simply to appoint an elected commissioner within three days of submission of the nominee's name.'

At the Supreme Court, counsel was involved in what seems to have been intense debate with the Bench hearing the matter over the separation of powers and the principle of checks and balances. This included what the court would later call a 'bold submission' by the AG: the names given to the President were 'mere proposals, suggestions or recommendations, but the ultimate decision rests on the formal appointment by the President in his capacity as head of state, and not as head of the executive arm of government'.

Counsel for Warsame pointed out that in 2013, when he was elected by his colleagues on the appeal court to represent them on the JSC, his name was forwarded to the President who 'duly appointed him' without seeking approval from the national assembly. In 2018, however, instead of following the same process, the President 'forwarded his name to the National Assembly for approval.'

In its judgment, the Supreme Court majority held that Kenya's various constitutional commissions differed in the way its members

are officially appointed. There was no requirement that the JSC representative of the appeal court judges should be approved by Parliament, said the Supreme Court judges, and subjecting him, this time round, to parliamentary approval 'was not only in bad faith, but amounted to a breach of his legitimate expectation and a fundamental contravention of the Constitution'.

They added: 'The Constitution does not permit the (national assembly) to vet and approve an elected member of the JSC.'

Kenya's Constitution-making history made it clear that the current Constitution intended for there to be an independent JSC and judiciary.

And, based on that history, said the judges, they came to the 'inevitable conclusion' that the framers of the Constitution had no intention to subject any of the JSC members, chosen by their peers, to an "appointment" by the President.

It is a contradiction in terms and an inherent absurdity to suggest that members elected by their peers or nominated by a state organ can, at the same time, be "appointed" by a different person or authority.'

Then came a further conclusion that might have surprised many: the four-judge Supreme Court majority found that Warsame was wrong to argue that the President's only role in appointing him was 'ceremonial'. No, said the court. The President doesn't even have a ceremonial role in that appointment.

Elections of the appeal court member to represent the rest of that court on the JSC were carried out by the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC) and this was the body to confirm his election via a certificate. It is also the IEBC that publishes a Gazette notice confirming the outcome of these elections. This was to be following by the taking of the oath of office be-

fore the Chief Justice.

'Traditionally, as a practice carried over from the old constitutional order, the President has always issued a Gazette notice to signify the appointment of elected or nominated representatives in the JSC. With the new order, it is our view that this role ought to be played by the IEBC, but certainly not the President.'

'To give the President power to appoint or even to "appoint" by mere gazettement of names is to forget our history...'

The section of the Judicial Service Act that appeared to give the President the power to appoint elected and nominated members of the JSC, was void for being 'inconsistent with ... the Constitution which does not recognise such power,' the majority held.

What of the dissenting single judge, Justice Njoki Ndung'u? She disagreed with just about everything in the majority decision, but it's interesting to note that this was based on her view that there was a 'bigger' issue at stake than the President's appointing power - namely, the requirement that representatives of 'the people' should have a say in such appointments.

Before the present Constitution was finalised, 'the people of Kenya' had told the commission reviewing the final draft that Parliament should take over vetting and approving senior appointments from the President and that one of Parliament's functions should be to 'act as a watchdog over the executive' to check executive excess and approve key presidential appointments.'

'The people' wanted presidential powers to be curtailed. How could Parliament do this, if such appointments weren't referred to the national assembly for vetting, asked Ndung'u.

If the President were to appoint JSC commissioners without the approval of the national assembly, it would deprive Kenyans of the right to participate in the appointment of such commissioners, she said.

The parliamentary approval process was meant to check the President's powers of appointment, ensure that the nominees met the Constitution's 'integrity test' and to ensure such constitutional values as participation of the people, integrity, transparency and accountability', she concluded.

Since that view was taken by just one of the five judges hearing the matter, the majority decision - insulating the JSC appointment process from presidential and parliamentary involvement, other than in relation to the two public representatives on the commission - stands, and will from now on be required practice.



# Pushing African, other societies to embrace homosexuality runs completely against international human rights law (5)

By Obadia Kajungu

**W**IDESPREAD feminism in Europe and North America but which is also gaining ground in the rest of the world, including Africa, has led to a change of males' perception about gender equality from childhood, making them making then grow in fear as they believe that a woman is untouchable when it comes to intimate relationship.

Going by punishment for sexual offences, some boys may be tempted to try sex with me when they become sexually active. Sexual offences attract harsh punishment, up to life custodial imprisonment sentences. This may compel some male children to look for alternatives against nature with the view to satisfying their involuntary sexual desires, including trying to penetrate each other or animals in fear of criminal liabilities imposed by laws in case of carnal knowledge with girls.

On the other side, girls who are too protected by law against relationship with boys are somehow forced into sexual relationships with their fellow girls. The law against sexual intercourse is as a matter of law protecting a girl below 18 not to be penetrated sexually but as a matter of fact, girls are not protected by law against premature sexual penetration.

This is because it reaches a time when even girls become naturally attracted to men while on the other side

boys who would play with them are afraid of coming close to them because of fear of legal consequences.

The effect of this is that girls below 18 have found themselves falling into traps of adult men who date them for money instead of love or true feelings. Or such girls find themselves falling in love with their fellow girls.

If one looks at it logically and practically, boy below 18 cannot convince a girl above 18 to agree to a sexual relationship. Also, a boy who is 18 will find a girl who is 18 and above too demanding financially hence possibility of such a boy falling into a trap of consensual sexual relationship with fellow men. That is where addiction to homosexuality starts.

My point is that until the age of majority, girls do get addicted to money because in their childhood, they were protected by law but those with money abused them sexually thus growing without natural, rue love for men. And boys who have strong sexual desire but no money to entertain girls their age for sexual relationship are forced by circumstances into same sex relationships.

That is why in countries with high level of feminism there are large numbers of same sex love relationships. Sexual intercourse is not a voluntary action and therefore trying to force adolescents to refrain from intermingling or experimenting at that foolish age is trying to hinder nature from taking its course.

The effect of feminism in Tanzania is

that we have started to witness alarming cases of children below 12 (girls and boys) becoming victims of molestation. In today's generation, adult men fail to convince women into sexual relationship because of cost implications. The sad result is they choose to molest children and groom their young victims into homosexuality.

The office of the director of public prosecutions has a record of reported child molestation below 12 years which reached 600 in 2019. The number is conservative considering the fact that many cases of sexual violence go unreported as they are settled at family level because most perpetrators are close family members or friends.

According to Patrick Devlin (1905-1992) in his book entitled 'The Enforcement of Morals' (1959) "the general convictions and judgments of the society about a certain phenomenon is where legal decisions must be rested." That is to say that the laws passed by states and judgments passed by courts in a given society must be poised to reflect or meet the general social convictions and judgments of a certain phenomenon.

In sociology, we have acceptable norms and unacceptable norms. Those acceptable norms are social norms where legal principles must be rested. Social norms are rules of social perceptions and conducts (beliefs, attitudes or behaviours) which are socially acceptable in a particular social or cultural group calculated to engineer the behaviour and relationship of an indi-

vidual in the light of social attitudes.

Now, the judgments and convictions of our African societies are that homosexual behaviour and single sex marriages are disgusting pollution and an assault against African morality and religion on one hand and threats to continued existence of our intangible cultural heritage of humanity which are raison d'être of the United Nations and international human rights law on the other.

African Commission is to blame for keeping inarticulate about this homosexuality promotion by failing to give appropriate directives to African states for protection of African culture in conformity with the African Charter.

The same applies to African Court of Justice because both the Court and the Commission are being operated in the European Union model instead of African Union model.

The next to blame is UNESCO for concentrating its resources to only monuments and stones while forgetting our intangible cultural heritage of humanity. Indeed, UNESCO has totally denied the preservation of traditions, tribal values, religion, vernacular languages which are at risk of extinction.

Irina Bokova, Director-General of UNESCO writes and I quote: "Culture implies more than just monuments and stones—culture defines who we are. It carries universal values and the many faces of our shared humanity. It is the wellspring of collective imagination, memory and belonging. It is a source of resilience, well-being and so-

cial cohesion. It is a force for recovery, creativity and innovation.

"When peoples' cultures are threatened, when their heritage is deliberately attacked, when their cultural rights are violated, we must respond with more culture, more knowledge, and more unity. When culture is at the frontline of crisis, it must also be on the frontline of recovery and peace-building.

"Development cannot be sustainable without culture and there can be no lasting peace without respect for cultural diversity and artistic freedom. Protecting culture and heritage means protecting people. This is what UNESCO stands for."

UNESCO was purposefully founded and established by United Nations in 1945 as a specialized agency aimed at promoting world peace and security through international cooperation, education, sciences and culture.

Before the establishment of UNESCO, the nations and tribes around the world used to enter into armed conflicts due to, among other things, disrespect of other people's culture, religion or traditions by other societies. Through UNESCO, the United Nations recognizes that culture, education and science cooperation will promote world peace and security.

So, by respecting other peoples' culture, religion and traditions, the world became peaceful to the largest extent because the disrespect of others' culture, religion and traditions was among major contributory factors that led to recurring wars of the time.

At the world conference on cultural policies, UNESCO proclaimed a right to cultural identity while today the very same UNESCO is silent on the behaviour that threatens the continued existence of its raison d'être, culture. Currently, UNESCO's functions are no longer practical but have merely remained on papers and lips of its officials.

**The author is an advocate of the High Court (To be continued on Wednesday)**

## S. African fugitive nabbed in Arusha was a very well connected criminal



Thabo Bester and Dr Nandipha Magudumana

By Guardian Reporter

**S**OUTH African fugitive Thabo Bester, who was arrested in Arusha Region on Friday last week, was a well-connected criminal who faked his death then walked out of a maximum security prison, got new identity card under fake name and enjoyed undue freedom by living large in a posh suburb with his medical doctor girlfriend.

It has since emerged that it took collaborative efforts of a private security company, the Interpol, South African police and their Tanzanian counterparts to locate and nab the convicted murdered and rapists who is believed was on his way to Kenya.

It has also been established that Bester may have other yet-to-be-established criminal activities apart from rape and murder. For, in his open hideout in South Africa, he operated shady business ventures that involved other people.

Fidelity Business Intelligence Centre is the private security firm which had been working with South African police in the hunt for the couple. Last week, its CEO Wahl Bartmann put up R100 000 for information

that would lead to the arrest of Bester and his girlfriend Dr Nandipha Magudumana.

Bartmann said the company received many calls, and some callers were not even interested in the reward money. "They just wanted him caught".

He said those tips led to the identification of the vehicle the couple was using, and the Fidelity Business Intelligence Centre was able to trace the car using CCTV cameras.

According to Bartmann, the couple left the country through the Zimbabwean border and fled to Tanzania. In a joint statement on Saturday, the South African police, justice and correctional services ministry said the couple were being processed and that a delegation from South Africa, comprising senior officials, would depart for Tanzania on Sunday.

During the press briefing the country's Police Minister Bheki Cele said Bester and Magudumana were found in possession of multiple passports. None of the passports were stamped, he said.

According to media reports in South Africa, last week, the country's Crime Intelligence officers suspected that Bester was in the country and collaborated with their Tanzanian counterparts and monitored him for a while before pouncing on Friday night.

Reports also indicate that Magudumana's wellness clinic, which was being built next door to the rented Hyde Park mansion the cou-

ple shared, was bankrolled by several investors.

Also, it is reported that authorities in South Africa were working to trace these investors in a quest to find out who was working with Bester in nefarious activities on the other side of the prison.

Bester escaped from the Mangaung Correctional Centre on 3 May 2022 after faking his death in a cell fire. The burnt corpse found in the cell was collected by Magudumana, but it was later confiscated by police.

Magudumana then approached the Pretoria High Court, asking for the corpse to be returned to her and claiming to be Bester's customary law wife. Court papers filed by the South African Police Service revealed that there was no DNA match between the corpse and Bester's biological mother, therefore, the body found in the cell was not Thabo Bester.

After escaping from prison, Bester lived with Magudumana in a rented mansion in Sandton. Bester used an ID document and driver's licence under the name "Katlego Nkwana". The couple operated Arum Properties together, scamming several people into paying millions for construction projects that were never completed.

The property manager of the rented mansion told GroundUp that Magudumana was behind on the rent. Days after GroundUp first reported that Bester had escaped, the mansion was vacated. It was raided by police two weeks later, on 4 April.

A South African media outlet published a video last week of Magudumana being confronted by a private investigator in January this year. The investigator challenges Magudumana about a R1.35-million Mercedes-Benz she allegedly drove across the Zimbabwean border after failing to meet repayment obligations.

South African National Commissioner of Correctional Services Makgothi Thobakgale announced last month that a temporary manager had been appointed to take control of Mangaung Correctional Centre (MCC) from G4S following the escape of rapist and murderer Bester in May 2022.

"This is a necessary remedy following this embarrassing incident which has undermined the authority of the state," Thobakgale said during a press conference at the prison in Mangaung. The temporary manager is Patrick Ali Mashabathakga.

Mangaung Correctional Centre is a maximum security prison and the second-largest private prison in the world, according to G4S. It is operated and partly owned by multinational security company G4S through a South African subsidiary. MCC was opened in 2001 and was awarded a 25-year contract to operate the facility as part of a consortium.

Thobakgale said that a DCS investigation report found that the director of the prison "has lost effective control of the facility". Johan Theron is the managing director and Derrick de Klerk is the acting prison director.

The investigation concluded that Bester's escape was "well-calculated and organised", said Thobakgale.

"Findings of the investigation report clearly reveal that Thabo Bester was assisted to escape from lawful custody on 3 May 2022. Yet the contractor maintains that he



# Journalists in Balochistan have to either keep quiet or die

By Karlos Zurutuza

**G**EOLOGISTS have described the region as the most similar to Mars on Earth. Whether it's violent sandstorms or ice found on its surface, we get more news from the red planet than from Balochistan.

"I still don't understand how a territory divided by the borders of Iran, Pakistan and Afghanistan remains so unknown to the rest of the world. I can't think of a people who receive as little attention as the Baloch," Martin Axmann told IPS.

This doctor in Political Science and author of one of the most referential recent books on the Baloch question - Back to the Future (Oxford, 2008) - points to a strategic territory the size of France which boasts huge reserves of gold, gas and uranium.

Axmann is one of the speakers at a conference organized by the Movement for a Free Balochistan - a political organization with a "secular and democratic" project -, on the 75th anniversary of Balochistan's forced annexation by Pakistan.

Today it is the most depopulated province, the one with the highest rates of illiteracy and infant mortality, and the one most affected by violence. It's also the most hermetic one.

The German expert would not have been able to access the area if he had travelled as a journalist. The few that have tried have been expelled from the country and banned, or even worse.

Carlotta Gal was a correspondent for The New York Times when she was brutally beaten in Quetta - the provincial capital, 900 kilometers southeast of Islamabad - in 2006 by a group of men who identified themselves as "members of a special section of the Pakistani police."

They told her that she lacked permission to be in Quetta.

After nine years as an Islamabad correspondent for The Guardian and The New York Times, Declan Walsh was expelled from the country in 2013 for "undesirable activities". He had written an article about the missing Baloch in Pakistan.

Due to this firewall against the foreign press, the responsibility for reporting falls exclusively on local journalists. Pakistani journalist and best-selling author Ahmed Rashid elaborates on this:

"Reporters on the ground face constant threats from Pakistani secret services, Baloch movements and sectarian groups. We often never get to find out who is behind many of the attacks," Rashid told IPS by phone from his residence in the Pakistani city of Lahore.



A protest in front of the Quetta Press Club against repression by the Pakistani state. Credit: Karlos Zurutuza / IPS

He claims that many of his colleagues resort to "self-censorship": "It's simply not reported. And if Balochistan is not in Pakistan's media eye, it will not reach the outside world either as most of the Western media is fed by press agencies."

In its latest report on press freedom worldwide, Reporters Without Borders ranks Pakistan 157th, describing it as "one of the most dangerous countries in the world for journalists."

The Balochistan Union of Journalists points to more than 40 journalists killed in Balochistan between bomb blasts

and targeted killings, some of them committed outside the country.

Sajid Hussain's body was found in a river on the outskirts of Uppsala (Sweden). RSF then pointed to the possibility that it was the work of Pakistani agencies.

"Eight months later, the body of Karima Baloch, a Baloch activist and human rights defender, was rescued from the waters of Lake Ontario (Canada). The BBC had included her on its list of "the 100 most inspiring and influential women" of 2016.

On "ground zero"

"When you are a journalist in Balochistan, it is the security agencies that contact you directly: they call you by phone, they reach out when you cover a press conference, a protest in the street..."

Thus begins the story of Ahmad, an exiled Baloch journalist who prefers not to disclose his full name or country of residence to IPS to avoid reprisals on his family back home.

"One of the most sensitive stories is that of the enforced disappearances. In the eyes of the agencies, the simple fact of speaking with their relatives means that you are working

against the State," underlines the Baluch man on a videoconference. In 2022 alone, Amnesty International reported more than 2,000 cases in Pakistan, a phenomenon that the NGO describes as "frequent" in the province of Balochistan.

Ahmad recalls how difficult it was to cover the news about Balochistan, and also that phone call while he was covering the story of a murdered colleague:

"We know who you and your brothers are. We also know that you have two children, what school do they go to... Do you want them to stay alive?" he was told over the phone. Ahmad soon realized that he was being followed. A few days later, he was run over while riding his motorcycle to work.

"I was lucky to get out unharmed and that there were a lot of people around. The car turned around and left," recalls this journalist who left the country soon after.

It was the same threats that pushed Kiyra Baloch into exile. He's a seasoned reporter with several publications in The Guardian, The Telegraph or the BBC. "That pressure ended up affecting my family. They couldn't stop thinking that I could be assassinated at any moment," told IPS over the phone this reporter who prefers not to reveal his current coordinates.

"I even receive threats in this country where I am now," he apologizes, before pointing to other coercive measures.

"The Government also puts the pressure on the media so that they do not hire you, or you get fired; they drown you financially in order to cut your wings as a journalist until eventually, you end up leaving the country," adds Baloch.

Listening to the BBC and Voice of America radio broadcast at home from a very young age was what sparked Zeynep's vocation. She chooses a random name in order to protect herself. She speaks from "ground zero" and from a "much more fragile" position than that of her male colleagues.

"We share with them the fear of state surveillance, but then there are those cultural barriers that only us, women, face," the reporter told IPS by phone. An example of that, she explains, is how women are perceived in those "all-men protests."

"You want to do your job but at the same time, want to respect the culture so at the end, you heavily rely on sources. Even if you are not very far from the place you are researching, you make phone calls to ask others instead of going to the spot yourself", she explains.

# Let us put political settlement first, then refugee return second

By Malik al-Abdeh and Lars Hauch

**E**UROPE'S current approach to facilitating refugee returns and containing new arrivals from Syria is based on wishful thinking. Europeans have come to terms with the fact that a political settlement for Syria's 12-year conflict is not on the horizon.

In conversations with diplomats, one hears a reoccurring theme these days: Syria is not a priority anymore. Notoriously hesitant to lead and busy with Russia's invasion of Ukraine, Europeans want to keep things as calm as possible.

But what stands in the way of this old-fashioned wait-and-see approach is the issue of refugees. Not only are significant numbers not returning to Syria, but tens of thousands more continue to set out to the EU each year.

Against this background, Europeans have indicated to president Bashar al-Assad that concessions on the 'refugee issue' could prompt them to re-think their policy of ostracising the Syrian dictator and his regime.

Notably, discussions on refugee return have almost exclusively been about their return to regime-held Syria. Much of the official thinking on the matter, which includes that of the UN envoy, envisages Assad conceding to taking back refugees in return for the normalisation of relations with other Arab countries and Western political and financial inducements.

Putting refugee return on the negotiating table with Assad makes sense from a diplomatic expediency angle. And it is certainly attractive: if voluntary and dignified returns can be realised, this would please the domestic audience in Europe and foreign ministries as well as EU institutions could sell it as an indicator that political progress is being achieved.

However, Europe's current approach to facilitating refugee returns and containing new arrivals is based on wishful thinking.

Assad's 'population warfare' First of all, Europe falsely assumes that As-

sad wants his people back. Apart from the crippling pressures that any sizeable refugee return would place on resources in regime areas - water, electricity, fuel, food, etc. - there is the more important matter of security.

The regime considers all Syrians who have fled to neighbouring countries to be at best cowards and at worst traitors. By placing themselves out of the reach of the regime's military conscriptors, they are seen as having voted with their feet in Syria's civil war.

'We will never forgive or forget' echoes a longstanding view among regime supporters of those perceived to have skipped the war but now want to return once the fighting is over.

The testimonies of those who have returned only to see their loved ones arrested and killed suggest that it is not an empty threat. Those connected to rebels or their families by blood or marriage, or those that have been reported as having anti-Assad views by informants, immediately fail the regime's security check for returning refugees, as will most that hail from former rebel strongholds.

Additionally, living in a neighbouring country for many years and establishing roots there, as most refugees have done, enables the regime to brand them as 'politically suspect'. Syria's Foreign Minister claims that refugees can return 'without any condition', but this magnanimity is only voiced when around Western reporters.

Perhaps the most noteworthy aspect of the Syrian regime's discourse on refugees is that there barely is one, a study on the matter finds. This should not come at all as a surprise.

Syria's mass population displacement has for too long been seen as an unfortunate secondary effect of the war rather than an intended goal. But in civil wars that take on an ethnic or sectarian nature, de-population becomes a strategic goal in itself.

According to one study, 'combatants displace not only to expel undesirable populations but also to identify the undesirables in the first place by forcing people to send signals of loyalty



A nurse walks into a hospital ward in Janakpur in Dhanusha District in southern Nepal. Credit: UNICEF/Rupadhayay

and affiliation based on whether, and to where, they flee.'

In Syria, population displacement was at the heart of Assad's counter-insurgency strategy. Moreover, Assad's use of chemical weapons and his wider war effort are inextricably linked - tactically, operationally and strategically.

Whether it be artillery strikes, barrel bombs, or sarin gas, the overall war strategy was collective punishment of the population in opposition-held areas.

Assad's 'population warfare' doctrine aims to ensure the population balance of pre-war Syria - so nearly fatal to his family and clan - cannot be recreated. "Two-thirds of the population [of Syria] was Sunni and half of it has been scattered to the winds, as refugees or internal exiles", writes one observer - a favourable outcome for the Alawite president.

For Assad, the country has now gained a 'healthier and more homogenous society'. With that in mind, it is understandable that most Syrians reject returning to areas under the control of his regime.

Working with Turkey

Does this mean that Europeans should remove the 'refugee file' from the negotiating ta-

ble? Not quite. But they would be well advised to be sober about their goals. If they try to utilise the refugee file as an entry point for advancing a moribund political process, it would be ethically irresponsible.

In fact, EU diplomats have already signalled that credible steps allowing refugee returns could pave the way for gradual engagement with the Assad regime. This is concerning given that turning refugees into a diplomatic currency to trade concessions with Assad hardly passes the 'do no harm' test.

If the goal is to get results where refugees actually return to Syria in large numbers and fewer people leave the country, Europeans should be talking not with Damascus but with Ankara.

The inconvenient truth about refugee return is that it will only work if enough refugees are willing to return voluntarily, given realistic conditions and a serious partner on the ground with an active interest in seeing returns happen.

Right now, only Turkey and a share of its Syrian refugees can tick both boxes, given the connectivity between populations on both sides of the border and Turkey's ability to assure relative security.

According to UNHCR figures, about 800 Syrian refugees are returning to Syria from Turkey every week despite the UN agency's assessment that conditions are not suitable for a large number of voluntary returns.

Moreover, of the nearly 750,000 refugees that have returned to Syria since 2016, most of them (500,000) have returned from Turkey to opposition-controlled areas in the north and northwest of Syria. In contrast, only 10,766 refugees returned to regime-controlled areas between January and October 2022. A greater number have fled Assad's Syria in the same period.

The absence of security hurdles to return and compulsory military conscription (both major push factors in regime areas and those controlled by the US-allied Syrian Democratic Forces) and the fact that Sunni internally displaced people (IDPs) and refugees feel relatively safe under Turkey's protection are solid foundations on which to build a realistic returns policy.

Perhaps most important for European policymakers, Turkey controls the territory in northern Syria through which large numbers from regime and SDF areas are passing through to enter Turkey and continue to Europe, all for vast sums of money.

Dealing with Ankara on a programme for voluntary refugee return would create a firebreak in the logistical chain of the people traffickers that ends in Berlin and Amsterdam but begins at the M4 Highway.

# CAPITAL RADIO

# RATIBA YA VIPINDI JUMATATU - JUMAPILI

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

Tembelea mitandao ya kijamii ya CAPITAL RADIO



CAPITAL RADIO



## Work together to fight against all forms of genocide ideology, DC tells international community

By Guardian Reporter

THE international community and the East African Community (EAC) countries have been challenged to work together at different levels to fight against all forms of genocide ideology or any slightest signal of its kind.

Emmanuella Mtatifikolo, Arumeru district commissioner threw the challenge over the weekend here when speaking at the function to commemorate the 29th Anniversary of the Genocide against the Tutsi. The event was organised by EAC in collaboration with the Arusha and Moshi Rwandan Community and the UN Mechanism for International Criminal Tribunals (UN-MICT).

The event was themed "Remember-Unite-Renew" was preceded by a 'Walk to Remember' and laying of wreaths at the Commemoration Monument at the EAC gardens as a tribute to the more than one million innocent lives lost through the heinous extermination of Tutsis in Rwanda in 1994.

Representing the Tanzanian government, DC Emmanuella said that the genocide perpetrated against the Tutsi in Rwanda was a tragedy not only to Rwanda as a country but to humanity as a whole.

"With the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsis in Rwanda, the entire humanity was put to test and the sanity of human nature was for once put into serious doubts," the DC stated.

She further said that as these barbaric acts were being carried out in Rwanda, the whole world was well aware of such terrible occurrences yet the International Community did nothing to stop those killings in which innocent men, women and children were brutally murdered for no other reason than their ethnic belonging.

She, therefore, called upon all citizens to spare no



Arumeru district commissioner, Emmanuella Mtatifikolo

efforts in fighting against genocide ideology and revisionism in all their manifestations.

EAC secretary general Dr Peter Mathuki reaffirmed the fundamental truth that all humans were created equal, each with certain undeniable rights that include the right to life.

Dr Mathuki said that 29 years later, Rwanda has made tremendous strides that have exceeded expectations and should be rightly commended for doing so.

"In just 29 years, unity and reconciliation is being realized in Rwanda," Mathuki said, adding: "Never Again" should not only be a slogan but should

also be translated into concrete actions as we strive to be one people for one destiny."

Judge President of the East African Court of Justice (EACJ), Justice Nestor Kayobera, said that as the judicial arm of the Community, the EACJ is mindful of the need for the EAC Partner States to draw lessons from the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda in order that these events never happen again.

"As we commemorate, my hope is that we shall all get a better understanding of our shared humanity and renew our collective commitment to protect and uphold fundamental human rights," said Justice Kayobera.

Rwandan High Commissioner to Tanzania, Ambassador Maj Gen Charles Karamba, expressed his appreciation to the EAC, the UN Mechanism for International Criminal Tribunals and all friends of Rwanda for standing in solidarity with the Government and people of Rwanda to remember loved ones who perished in 1994.

Amb. Maj Gen Karamba said that it was during this period that Rwandans take time to reflect on where the country was in 1994, on the aftermath of the 1994 Genocide Against the Tutsi, and where Rwanda is today.

"The country was totally destroyed with no hope of recovery, the post 1994

government of Rwanda was faced with enormous challenges of rebuilding a deeply divided country with a destroyed political, economic, social, and legal infrastructure," he said.

"The stakes were high and tough decisions were needed," added Amb. Gen. Karamba.

The High Commissioner informed the guests that for the last 29 years, Rwandans chose a completely different path of resilience and courage necessary to get solutions for their problems, rejecting the rotten politics of hatred and divisionism, thus, rebuilding Rwanda from the ashes.

Chairman of the Rwandan Diaspora (Arusha and Moshi), Eng Murenzi Daniel, informed the participants that after 1994, the Rwandan community abroad embarked on a journey of national rebuilding and promotion of peace and reconciliation with the support from the government of Rwanda.

"Today, the Rwandan Diaspora plays an integral role in uniting the Rwandans aboard with a focus on building the nation," said Eng Murenzi.

The event brought together a broad spectrum of stakeholders including representatives from various religious groups, Germany Cooperation in Arusha (GIZ), the African Court of Human and Peoples' Rights (AFCHPR), the African Union Advisory Board Against Corruption (AUABC) UN-MICT, and students from various universities and secondary schools in Arusha, and EAC staff.

## Uganda turns to bamboo farming in effort to combat deforestation

KAMPALA

SOME 65 kilometers north of the Ugandan capital Kampala, a lush green bamboo forest, it's the brainchild of former journalist-turned farmer, Andrew Ndawula Kalema.

Kalema switched from journalism to bamboo farming in order to contribute to the reversal of environmental damage being seen in the East African country.

In 2010, Uganda had 6.93 million hectares of tree cover, extending over 29% of its land area.

In 2021, it lost 49,000 hectares of tree cover, equivalent to 23.5 million tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions.

According to the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the East African country has lost over a million hectares of tree cover, nearly a third of the country's total.

With Uganda losing hundreds of hectares of forest cover due to population pressure and illegal logging, both public and individual efforts have become key to restoring degraded land.

Ndawula Kalema says bamboo,

which is fast-growing and can adapt to different weather conditions, is key to mitigating the effects of climate change in Uganda.

"It can do the job of restoring our environment much faster. It can absorb 30% more carbon dioxide and generate 30% more oxygen and it can create the green effect very fast and it will take pressure off our precious trees," he says.

"Bamboo, you cut it down, it takes one season, it is back, it grows back, so it is a magic bullet of sorts that we need to use in our fight to save our environment."

In recent years, Ndawula Kalema has been upgrading his bamboo farm, which he started in 2009 as a hobby.

Growing bamboo on farmers' fields was something unheard of a few years ago, as the plant was mainly seen growing in the wild.

That's no longer the case, as increasing numbers of farmers adopt bamboo planting, due to its income-generating benefits.

But bamboo seedlings are costly, which Ndawula Kalema says can deter farmers.

"The challenge we are seeing the price of a seedling is still very high, one seedling is about 1 dollar. There are others that are even more expensive costing up to 10 dollars one seedling - it is a put off," he says.

"People are now becoming aware of the value bamboo has as in conservation work, in conserving our soils, conserving our environment, and they can't afford the planting material."

To help spread knowledge of bamboo farming around the country, Ndawula Kalema has opened his farm to learners from different institutions. He says students will act as ambassadors for bamboo farming.

Julius Ssebigajju, a student intern at the farm, says his views about bamboo farming have changed since he started working with Ndawula Kalema.

"When bamboo drops these leaves, they leave there down after all they decay and decompose so it adds nutrients in the soil, so it will not need much manure or fertiliz-



Promoting sustainable bamboo harvesting and improving incomes in Uganda.

ers to apply on," says Ssebigajju.

Another intern studying landscaping, Elizabeth Kiwummulu, is impressed by the versatility of bamboo.

"It is good for digestion and you can make herbal soap from it," she

says. Bamboo is best known for its strength and durability. Ndawula Kalema says there's thousands of potential products, even bicycle frames.

"One frame costs 500 dollars and you need about 3 to 4 poles to

make that bicycle frame," he says.

"So, there are many high value products, however the export market comes with standards and volumes, we don't have the volumes yet, we need to encourage more people to grow bamboo."

## 'Small miners contribute to environmental destruction'

By Correspondent Marco Maduhu, Butiama

SMALL miners are claimed to be contributing to environmental destruction by exterminating the natural vegetation due to wanton tree cutting activities for timber used in the mine pits.

Some of the mining areas affected in Butiama district include those at Sirorisimba, Magunga and Nyamikoma which has witnessed the disappearance of their natural vegetation and creeping deserts.

Butiama District sanitary and environmental officer, Karani Ruhumbika said mining activities has virtually obliterated the natural vegetation.

"The District Council, in collaboration with Tanzania Forest Services Agency (TFS) has been education on environmental protection including tree planting to restore the natural vegetation in the mountain manning area but the response has been dismal," he said.

Sirorisimba Village Chairman, Ibrahim Mniko says natural vegetation around Sirorisimba mining areas has been lost and as for now miners buy timber and logs from other areas to prop up their mine pits. Supervisor of Majengo Mine at Nyamikoma village in Butiama District, Lucas Wasinyo, says small miners use traditional means, hence they timber to prop up their pits as they do not have alternative means.

Nyamikoma village executive, Goodluck Makaja says small miners cut trees wantonly, but it has not been easy for them to plant trees as they shift from one place to another in search of minerals.

For his part, the Irasanilo mine manager in Magunga village, Butiama district, Robert Lucas says at the mine, the use of timber has not been big because in some pits in rocky areas, timber is not needed.

Acting Butiama district executive director, Revocatus Rutunda admits that small gold miners in the district have adversely affected the



A gold mine in Butiama District, Mara Region, where trees have been wantonly cut and no more vegetation seen in the area. Photo: Correspondent Marco Maduhu

environment of the area including loss of its natural vegetation.

He says the council is overwhelmed by the number of mines that have been surfacing and the miners lack education on environmental protection, and that, he said,

is the main reason for the destruction of the environment.

He says they have secured sponsors from Global Resource Alliance who will plant trees on two mountain areas - Kigoro and Mwikoro aimed to restore their natural vegetation and the District Council

will mobilise tree planting during the Mara Day event.

He said other government's strategies against environmental destruction is to make by-laws for every village, and noted that already there are two villages - Kamgendi and Lyamisangaa which have

made such laws after seen rampant tree cutting in their areas.

Butiama District TFA manager Hafizi Saidi says in many mining areas in the district natural vegetation has virtually disappeared through tree cutting for mine timber

He says already TFS has initiated a programme, in collaboration with the government to plant trees to restore the natural vegetation and in April this year they will reach all mining areas to educate miners on the importance of tree planting.



# Shipping industry is going hi-tech to outsmart wily drug traffickers

By Caryn Dolley

FROM "smart" containers that detect when a door is opened, to focusing on the identities of drivers who move containers around at harbours, certain sectors of the shipping industry are tightening controls to try to disrupt drug trafficking.

On 16 March, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime released its Global Report on Cocaine 2023 in which South Africa featured prominently.

Among its findings in relation to this country, the report said: "In South Africa, the authorities reported traffickers were increasingly using maritime routes since the pandemic."

### Piggybacking

Traffickers have for long used shipping containers to transport illicit cargo.

"The most popular method in recent years is to 'piggyback' on a legitimate shipment without the shipper's knowledge," the report said.

"Moving large quantities of cocaine in this way requires a network of collaborators - port workers, transport companies, drivers or customs officials."

The report also detailed how traffickers were getting more creative when trying to conceal drugs.

### Cocaine in beeswax and charcoal

"Cocaine has been detected recently in beeswax, plastics, herbs, charcoal and various liquids," it said.

"In Europe in particular, these methods are making the drug hard to detect. However, this method requires a complex process of chemical extraction to separate the cocaine from other substances."

Extraction laboratories involving chemical experts were discovered, suggesting such methods of drug smuggling were becoming more widespread.

In South Africa, global drug cartels use the Port of Durban, where massive consignments of cocaine have previously been intercepted.

Transnet did not respond to Daily Maverick questions sent to it in January about plans to act against drug trafficking.

Daily Maverick previously reported that

a hi-tech fence was being erected at the Port of Durban to try to prevent trespassers from accessing the harbour.

But that security measure does not address what is happening on ships.

Daily Maverick therefore put questions to the Mediterranean Shipping Company (MSC) as well as the company Maersk about measures in place on their sides to try to clamp down on drug smuggling.

Maersk did not respond to two requests for comment.

### 50 detection techniques

MSC explained that it had several plans in place to try to disrupt trafficking.

The company has before been flagged in terms of cocaine smuggling - in one of three busts involving MSC ships in the US in 2019, cocaine worth more than \$1-billion was discovered on the MSC Gayane at the Port of Philadelphia.

In related legal action, several MSC crew members from Montenegro were arrested and jailed.

The Gayane case suggests members of a drug cartel infiltrated the company.

In its response to Daily Maverick questions about what it was to bolster security, MSC said: "[This company] spent \$100m in 2022 alone on cargo security, including measures to help minimise and disrupt drug trafficking."

"Today we have more than 50 ways to detect and disrupt container drug trafficking. We cannot reveal them all as this could compromise our security efforts, as well as those of customs and law enforcement bodies with which we collaborate."

### New technology

MSC was also pioneering new technology involving containers at a terminal in Antwerp in Belgium and this would possibly also be rolled out in Rotterdam in the Netherlands - shipments of cocaine were a problem in Antwerp and Rotterdam - and other ports thereafter.

The technology involved drivers collecting MSC containers at a terminal and instead of a PIN code, details linked to the drivers - including digital identifications, biometric data and a specific code called the Truck Appointment Reference code - were scanned at a gate.



US Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and Homeland Security investigations led a multi-agency inspection of the MSC Gayane that resulted in the seizure of about 35,000 pounds of cocaine discovered in seven shipping containers, 17 June 2019. (Photo: Steve Sapp, CBP Office of Public Affairs)

"This combined approach makes the pick-up process more secure and efficient," MSC's response said. "Mediterranean Shipping Company is the first shipping company in the world to launch ID-based container pick-up."

### 'Smart containers'

In many countries, including South Africa, the rip on/rip off smuggling method was used in terms of shipments of cocaine.

It involved corrupt workers at harbours tampering with cargo seals to secretly load drugs into containers at a departure port and retrieve it at a destination port without the ship authorities, or those involved in importing or exporting the cargo, knowing.

In relation to this, MSC said: "[This company] also addresses seals security and includes smart containers that detect door openings in near real time and other security infringe-

ments among the measures we deploy."

A Maersk document from 2006 said it had a "container seal policy", illustrating how it was trying to deal with the smuggling of illicit goods back then already.

"Maersk Line advocates and requires the use of high-security bolt container seals ... as an integral part of supply chain security," the document said.

"The objective in using this type seal is to minimise the risk of unauthorised access into the container, thereby reducing the risk of cargo pilferage and the introduction of contraband."

### Unpredictable 'human factor'

Meanwhile, the Global Report on Cocaine 2023 said traffickers relied on "service providers and brokers" to move drugs.

"These service providers have become in-

creasingly specialised in areas such as transportation, money laundering, corruption of state agents," it said.

In South Africa, some police officers have been arrested in terms of cocaine interceptions and there are widespread suspicions in cop circles that cartels have forged ties with corrupt workers at harbours and on ships.

MSC said contractors who worked with it went through a vetting process.

"Unfortunately, there will always be individuals who can be corrupted by drug traffickers - or, even more difficult to predict, decent people who will succumb to violent threats by dangerous criminals against them and their families," it said in its response to Daily Maverick.

"This is a human factor which is impossible for individual companies to control entirely."

DM

THE GUARDIAN SIMPLE WORD FIT // THE GUARDIAN CROSSWORD --(00 410 00--

In this puzzle you have no clues, only a list of words that all fit into the grid. The Guardian have given you a head start

**WORD-FIT**

3 letters PAS, DAM, MAN, MOA, AIT, DNA,  
 4 letters ADAH, LIRA, RARE, YAMS, AQUA, SEAR  
 5 letters POSSE, SAHIB, SHARE, UNITA, ENNUI  
 6 letters AARON, SCARE, TIDAL, KILIM  
 7 letters MALAWI, SAHARA, INDIAN  
 8 letters LIBERIA, NOONDAY, UGANDAN  
 9 letters UGARITIC, ODALISQUE

**CROSSWORD**

**CLUES: Across**

1. A penalty  
 5. Capital city of Italy  
 9. Egyptian deity  
 10. A remarkable person  
 11. an associate  
 12. not more than what is specified  
 13. to appear  
 15. the appearance of a dead person  
 17. A rat in Kiswahili  
 19. an atom  
 21. illegal drugs  
 23. people who plays video games  
 24. America  
 26. hot drink for breakfast  
 27. the way in which something is done  
 28. A cover for a pot or pan  
 29. C6H6  
 32. to show someone how to do something  
 33. rest in a chair

**Down:**

1. wide recognition  
 2. leader of prayer in a mosque  
 3. paper money  
 4. the capacity for performing work  
 5. an attractive, passionate male seducer  
 6. number less than two  
 7. excellence  
 8. before in time  
 14. country founded by Kwameh  
 16. exclamation used for emphasis  
 18. occurring once a year  
 20. numbers (Abbreviation)  
 22. an amphibious tracked vehicle used primarily by the military for shore landings  
 23. a rooster  
 25. a fit of temper  
 30. Royal Historical Society  
 31. a large quantity of something

**SOLUTIONS**

WORD-FIT: TYRRENIAN, NEWS PAPERS, AFRICA, OCEAN, MEDITERRANEAN, LIBERIA, NOONDAY, UGANDAN, UGARITIC, ODALISQUE, PAS, DAM, MAN, MOA, AIT, DNA, ADAH, LIRA, RARE, YAMS, AQUA, SEAR, POSSE, SAHIB, SHARE, UNITA, ENNUI, AARON, SCARE, TIDAL, KILIM, MALAWI, SAHARA, INDIAN

CROSSWORD: 1. PENALTY, 2. IMAM, 3. PAPER, 4. CAPACITY, 5. VENICE, 6. ONE, 7. EXCELLENCE, 8. BEFORE, 9. ANKH, 10. NUBI, 11. ASSOCIATE, 12. NO MORE THAN, 13. APPEAR, 14. GHANA, 15. GHOST, 16. EMPHASIS, 17. RAT, 18. YEAR, 19. ATOM, 20. NUMBERS, 21. DRUGS, 22. AMPHIBIOUS TRACKED VEHICLE, 23. ROOSTER, 24. AMERICA, 25. FIT, 26. BREKFAST, 27. MANNER, 28. COVER, 29. BENZENE, 30. SOCIETY, 31. QUANTITY



'Hi-tech' security fencing, which is being installed around Durban's port boundaries, is intended to curb crimes such as theft and vandalism. (Photo: Gallo Images)

**RADIO One** **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   |
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Tembelea mitandao ya kijamii ya Radio One



Radio One



## BUSINESS

## ICT commission, local company sign MoU to promote cashless economy

By Correspondent  
Beatrice Philemon

The Information and Communication Technologies Commission (ICTC) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Aron Group Tanzania to promote cashless economy among small and medium businesses, while helping the government to expand tax base.

According to Dr Nkundwe Mwasaga, ICTC's director general, agreement will involve monitoring Aron Group, which is managing a payment platform that enables SMEs to digitize their businesses by using mobile phones, with all transactions be connected to government systems.

"The use of this digital mobile payment solution will help small and medium enterprises to have a proper record of their businesses transitions," he said during the signing of the MoU took place at ICTC headquarter recently.

He said Aron Group is using "Shake Up" digital payment solution, the South Korean's developed technology.

"We believe if Aron Group will provide the best services within the country, will attract more investors from South Korea to invest in Tanzania in ICT sec-



Shake application is already available for downloading in the Google Appstore and the Apple Playstore

tor and even extend its services in other neighboring countries," he said.

In transforming SMEs into the cashless economy and enhancing the safety of their money, Aron Group Tanzania Limited has introduced 'Shake App' digital mobile payment solution.

"As ICT commission, we are signing this MoU to monitor what they do in order to provide advice and guidance, while promoting and fostering investment and development of ICT industry," he said.

So far, more than 300 startups have been registered by ICT commission.

Also a total of 1600 ICT experts have been

registered by the ICT commission to help the government have a proper data on how many ICT experts are in the country, monitor what they do, check their abilities on services offering.

"We provide short-term courses to ICT experts to improve their skills and link them with other stakeholders to obtain long term courses," he said.

ICT Commission provides foresight on trends and opportunities for ICT uptake for the nation's socio-economic development, build capacity, certify and regulate ICT professionals, promote and foster investment and

development of the ICT industry, advises and collaborates with other industry's stakeholders on research, setting of standards, and foresight.

Leonce Mongi, the company's chief operation officer, said shake application is built as a one stop solution to enable all smart-phone users of Android and Apple devices to make instant payments to all Shake registered merchants from a mobile wallet of their choice and through their visa or MasterCard debt, credit or prepaid cards.

"By using the fun new Shake feature where both the customer and merchant can shake their mobile device to

make and initiate payments, the Shake app provides for a seamless and quick way to pay," he said.

Currently the Shake application is integrated with Vodacom Mpesa, Tigo pesa, Airtel Moneym Halopesa and Z-pesa (Zantel).

So far the company has been also developing payment and management solutions for small businesses and SACCOs as well as e-commerce solutions for both the private and public sectors.

Aron Group Tanzania says has been registered over 300 merchants in Dar es Salaam and will proceed to register an additional 2700 before venturing into other regions in Dodoma, Mwanza, Arusha and Zanzibar.

According to him, the Shake application is already available for download in the Google Appstore and the Apple Playstore.

"Our target is to transform all forms of business payments system in Tanzania into cashless economy, be the most reliable payment services provider in Tanzania and through creativity, good service and consistency, we pride ourselves as one of the leading payment service start-ups in Tanzania," he said.



Tanga city mayor, Abdulrahman Shiloo

## Charity group donates Iftar items to Muslims in Tanga Region

By Correspondent Cheji Bakari,  
Tanga

THE global Islamic charity- Direct Aid Society is expected to distribute 1,000 food items for Iftar, as part of supporting vulnerable families in Tanga region, during ongoing Holy Month of Ramadan.

The Charity group said has already provided such food aid to about 700 families in the region.

This was said by the charity group representative Sheikh Mohamed Abbas over the weekend during donation of Iftar's food items to 225 families held at institution's Tanga region head office located at Pongwe Township, on the outskirts of Tanga city.

Speaking during the items distribution exercise made by Tanga city mayor, Abdulrahman Shiloo on behalf of institution's director for Tanzania Ahmed Farhat, Sheikh Abbas said more families are expected to benefit from the donation.

"Today we're giving Iftar items for at least 205 families and extra of 20 families, last week we distributed such kind of items to 172 families in an event took place here. In Korogwe district, we provided to 250 families and Mtimbwani suburb in Tanga city we provided to 80 families," he said.

"This is not the end, we have extra of food aid that we are expecting to provide to other families and our target is to reach 1,000 families. I therefore call on to other humanity and charity or-

ganizations to join hands of our efforts and initiative to help risky, poor and vulnerable families who are in need because we Direct Aid alone cannot afford to give all communities in need of helps."

Speaking during the event, the Tanga city mayor, Abdulrahman Shiloo commended the institution by saying has done great thing for Muslim societies, as well as other Tanga region communities at large, specifically to the people who are fasting, but they have no assurance of having Iftar meals.

"The Almighty Allah loves and blessing the hand of giving than receiving, you have done good thing particular during this Holy Month of Ramadan which is the time of mercy giving charity to poor people and groups of people who are in need," he said.

Direct Aid Association (formerly African Muslims Agency) started its activities in 1981 as a voluntary non-governmental organization interested in developing the needy people in Africa.

After eighteen years of continuous giving, the name (Direct Aid Association) was adopted instead of (African Muslims Agency) due to the expansion of its work and scope of its charitable projects.

It aims to carry out development work for the disadvantaged communities, targeting the needy social groups, the sick, orphans, victims of disasters and famines, and doing all activities of righteousness and goodness.

## NCBA Group fully acquires Tanzanian unit

NAIROBI

NCBA Group invested an additional Sh3.47 billion in its regional subsidiaries in the year ended December as it sought to increase its share of profits from outside Kenya.

In its latest disclosures, the lender said the value of its subsidiary investments hit Sh74.08 billion from Sh70.61 billion a year earlier, with the Tanzania unit accounting for more than half of the capital injection.

NCBA Group says it invested Sh2 billion in NCBA Bank Tanzania in a transaction that saw it buy out the 6.56 percent stake that was in the hands of minority shareholders.

"The group acquired the minority interest share, increasing group ownership to 100 percent," says NCBA in the annual report.

NCBA has been increasing its stake in the Tanzanian unit from 75.91 percent in 2019 to 93.44 percent in 2021 to current full ownership.

In its Ugandan and Rwandan subsidiaries, the lender pumped in Sh814 million and Sh458 million, respectively, and another Sh200 million investment in Kenyan-based Loop



DFS, formerly Bantech Limited. The latest investments bring to Sh6.98 billion, the amount of money that NCBA Group has invested in the subsidiaries since 2019.

The lender closed the year valuing its investment in Tanzania at Sh7.08 billion and Uganda and Rwanda units at Sh4.94 billion and Sh3.33 billion, respectively.

In 2021, it had invested Sh2.33 billion, up from Sh860.3 million in 2020 and Sh312.97 million a year earlier.

The additional capital injection raised the investment value in the three subsidiaries to Sh12.05 billion, with Tanzania leading with Sh5.08 billion.

During the review period, net losses from subsidiaries reduced from Sh1.56 billion to Sh545 million, with only the Tanzanian unit remaining in the red. The subsidiary widened its net loss from Sh1.16 billion to Sh1.78 billion.

In February this year, NCBA Bank Tanzania announced its plans for expansion into key economic sectors, including FMCG, transportation, energy, and manufacturing.

Speaking at a gala dinner organised for customers over, the Group Managing director John Gachora said they have realized that Tanzania's growth is tied to the growth of these key economic sectors and we want to

be part of that growth.

It was at the same gala that the bank also introduced its new Managing Director and CEO, Claver Serumaga who is tasked with leading the lender into the future.

The Ugandan unit bounced from a Sh483.24 million loss to a net profit of Sh767.6 million, while Rwanda business net profit improved from Sh83.4 million to Sh467.1 million.

The Kenyan unit saw its net profit jump from Sh1.8 billion to Sh14.32 billion.

NCBA Group board increased its dividends payout for the second straight year after net profit grew by 35 percent to Sh13.78 billion.

## Tesla sued for alleged privacy intrusion

SAN FRANCISCO

A California Tesla owner on Friday sued the electric carmaker in a prospective class action lawsuit accusing it of violating the privacy of customers.

The lawsuit in the US District Court for the Northern District of California came after Reuters reported on Thursday that groups of Tesla employees privately shared via an internal messaging system sometimes highly invasive vid-

eos and images recorded by customers' car cameras between 2019 and 2022.

The lawsuit, filed by Henry Yeh, a San Francisco resident who owns Tesla's Model Y, alleges that Tesla employees were able to access the images and videos for their "tasteless and tortious entertainment" and "the humiliation of those surreptitiously recorded."

"Like anyone would be, Mr Yeh was outraged at the idea that Tesla's cameras can be used to violate his family's pri-

vacancy, which the California Constitution scrupulously protects," Jack Fitzgerald, an attorney representing Yeh, said in a statement to Reuters.

"Tesla needs to be held accountable for these invasions and for misrepresenting its lax privacy practices to him and other Tesla owners," Fitzgerald said.

Tesla did not immediately respond to Reuters request for comment.

The lawsuit said Tesla's conduct is

"particularly egregious" and "highly offensive."

It said Yeh was filing the complaint "against Tesla on behalf of himself, similarly-situated class members, and the general public." The complaint said the prospective class would include individuals who owned or leased a Tesla within the past four years.

Reuters reported that some Tesla employees could see customers "doing laundry and really intimate things. We

could see their kids," citing a former employee.

"Indeed, parents' interest in their children's privacy is one of the most fundamental liberty interests society recognizes," the lawsuit said.

The lawsuit asks the court "to enjoin Tesla from engaging in its wrongful behavior, including violating the privacy of customers and others, and to recover actual and punitive damages."



# OPEC+ production cut dust starts to settle

NEW YORK

OPEC's surprise oil production cut sent shock waves through financial markets and pushed crude prices up by the most in a year. Now that the dust has started to settle, one question looms large: Will that price rally stick, or fade away?

Banks from Goldman Sachs Group Inc. to RBC Capital Markets LLC raised their oil-price forecasts immediately after the OPEC+ cut. Yet, many traders still believe a souring economic outlook will block the group's actions from pushing prices higher. Demand indicators are also starting to flash warning signs.

It could end up being the ultimate test of what matters more to the market: tighter supplies, or the lackluster demand picture. That will likely bring more uncertainty over the direction of prices – a complicated development for the Federal Reserve and the world's central bankers in their ongoing battle against inflation.

"It's a very hard market to trade right now," said Livia Gallarati, a senior analyst at Energy Aspects. "If you're a trader, you are pulled between what's happening at a macro-economic level and what's happening fundamentally. It's two different directions."

One thing that is certain: A major shift of market control into the hands of Saudi Arabia and its allies has now been cemented, with huge

implications for geopolitics and the world's economy.

Investors have continued to reward US drillers for production discipline, making it unlikely that shale companies will ever again undertake the kind of disruptive growth that helped to keep energy inflation tame last decade. That leaves the oil market under the purview of OPEC+ at a time when some experts have predicted that demand is heading to a record.

"The surprise OPEC cuts have already triggered fears of a resurgence in inflation," said Ryan Fitzmaurice, a lead index trader at commodities brokerages Marex Group Plc. "These renewed inflation concerns should only increase" in the months ahead, he said. The timing of OPEC's decision has struck an odd chord for many oil experts.

The production cuts don't take effect until May, and much of the repercussions are likely to be felt in the second half of the year. That's a time when oil demand typically reaches its seasonal peak, partly thanks to the busy summer driving season in the US. It's also the point when China's economic reopening is expected to start swinging into full gear, further underpinning demand.

Typically, OPEC would want to take advantage of that consumption burst by selling into the market as much as possible. Instead, the cut means the cartel is holding back. That's sparking debate about whether the move will end up driv-



OPEC+ cuts have already triggered fears of resurgence in inflation

ing oil prices to \$100 a barrel as demand surges, or whether, instead, the cartel and its allies are preparing for a recession-marked summer of tepid consumption.

"While OPEC+ cuts on the surface are generally seen as bullish, it does also raise concerns over the demand outlook," said Warren Patterson, head of commodities strategy at ING. "If OPEC+ were confident in a strong demand outlook this year, would they really feel the need to cut supply?"

Moves in global fuel markets underscore the demand skepticism. While oil prices rallied, moves for refined products were less pronounced, shrinking margins for refiners across Europe and the US. In Asia, prices of diesel, a key refinery product, are signaling heightened

slowdown concerns as timespreads shrink to their lowest since November.

While US inventories have been declining, global inventories are still high.

In the first quarter, commercial oil stockpiles held in OECD countries were sitting about 8% above last year's levels, according to estimates from the US Energy Information Administration. That's a fairly sizeable buffer and a sign of the weakness in consumption that's plagued the market in the past few months.

"You do need to chew through that overhang first before we can see we upside," said Gallarati of Energy Aspects.

Oil bulls have waited in vain for a Russian output cut promised for March to show up. The Kremlin

said it would slash production by 500,000 barrels a day in March in retaliation for import bans and price caps imposed by "unfriendly countries." But there's been no sign of lower Russian output showing up in the one measure that matters to global crude markets – the number of barrels leaving the country.

Crude shipments from Russia's ports hit a new high in the final week of March, topping 4 million barrels a day. That's 45% higher than the average seen in the eight weeks before Moscow's troops invaded Ukraine and has been boosted by the diversion since January of about 500,000 barrels a day delivered by pipeline directly to Poland and Germany.

It wasn't long ago that there were two major players that oil traders turned to for direction over supplies: the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries and the US shale industry.

At the time, OPEC and shale were locked in a battle for market share. It was a feud that helped to keep global oil prices – and energy-driven inflation – at bay for the better part of a decade.

Then the pandemic hit, and with it an oil price rout that suffocated the shale industry. For the last three years, even as the market recovered and cash flow surged, companies have prioritized dividends and share buybacks over new drilling. It's been a winning strategy. Since March 2020, the S&P 500 Energy Sector Index has surged almost 200%, outpacing the S&P 500's

nearly 60% gain.

Now, as calls for peak shale output gather pace, OPEC has one less factor to consider when making supply decisions.

That's a sore spot for President Joe Biden, who was quick to downplay the impact of the decision by the cartel and its allies to cut output by more than 1 million barrels per day. Biden vowed after an initial production cut last year that there would be "consequences" for Saudi Arabia, but the administration has yet to follow through.

Talk of \$100 oil has been buzzing since the end of last year, but it seems like the can keeps getting kicked down the road. First, some analysts had predicted prices would reach that threshold in the second quarter of 2023. The view got pushed into the second half of the year, and now even some of the bigger bulls aren't expecting the magic number to come into play until 2024.

The oil futures curve is reflecting those expectations. Prices for contracts tied to deliveries as far out as December 2024 and 2025 have rallied, even as benchmark front-month futures are starting to ease.

"The OPEC+ output cut certainly raises the possibility of \$100 a barrel this year, although it is by no means a certainty," said Harry Altham, an analyst at brokerage StoneX. "Demand-side weakness stemming from growth considerations is clearly taking a more prominent role."

## UK commercial rent collection dips in Q1

LONDON

Rent collection by UK commercial landlords dipped in the first quarter of the year for the first time in two years in a worrying sign for investors who have looked to solid rents as one of the few bright spots in the outlook for the sector.

Landlords collected 63 per cent of the rent due in March by the end-of-quarter due date, according to data from Remit Consulting. The figure marked the first meaningful drop since the first year of the pandemic, and came after three quarters when collection held relatively steady between 67 and 69 per cent.

The dip at the start of the year threatens a recovery in rent payment from the depths of the Covid-19 pandemic at a time when commercial property is facing falling valuations due to rising interest rates and caution from key lenders following the turmoil at US and European banks.

"I've been in this business 30 years, and up until Covid the working assumption was that 97 per cent of the rent got paid on the quarter [due] date," said Lawrence Hutchings, chief executive of shopping centre landlord Capital & Regional, who added that the rent collection for his company's portfolio was back at pre-Covid levels.

The concern for investors is that the early indication of weakening rent collection



Commercial properties in UK

could be the start of a downward trend, leaving them with less cash to cover rising debt costs and further imperiling property values.

"Payments of rent on the due date have been heading back towards pre-Covid levels until now, and collection levels had been gradually increasing each quarter since December 2020. This reversal in that trend is concerning,"

said Elijah Lewis, research consultant at Remit Consulting.

Rent collection hit a low of 38 per cent in June 2020 when many businesses were shuttered during lockdown, and has never fully recovered. The highest post-Covid collection rate was 69 per cent in June 2022, compared to 75 per cent in March 2019. The trend has been partly driven by tenants taking longer

to pay, and extending beyond the quarterly deadline.

The biggest drop in March payments came from retailers, who have been tightly managing their cash flow as they navigate higher costs for products, transport, energy and staff. Collection at retail properties fell from 71 per cent at the end of December to 62 per cent in March, according to Remit, whose figures are based on 125,000 leases on 31,500 properties around the UK.

"It wouldn't surprise me if there are some companies that are feeling the pinch on their cash flow, and are looking to manage their rent payments a bit more carefully," Hutchings said.

Rent collection was resilient in the industrial sector, which includes manufacturing and logistics warehouses, ticking up slightly in March. Warehouses remain a popular asset for investors betting on the popularity of e-commerce. US private equity group Blackstone earlier this month paid £700mn to buy out a UK-listed logistics landlord.

Richard Hart, head of property management at Workman, said the tick down in rent collection was "an area of concern" particularly when banks are nervous about business and real estate lending. "The spectre of insolvencies, particularly in the retail market, has certainly not disappeared," he said.

## Stanbic reports five months of improved business

KAMPALA

The monthly Purchase Managers' Index measures performance of the economy based on demand and returns from purchasing managers and chief executive officer

A steady growth in demand for goods and services supported an improvement in business activity during the quarter ended March, according to a survey by Stanbic Bank.

The monthly survey measures performance of the economy based on demand and returns from purchasing managers and chief executive officer.

During March, the survey noted, the score for Purchase Managers' Index, which is compiled through conducting interviews with company purchasing managers and chief executive officers, rose to 53.2 from 51.2, which for the first time in more than a year, was above the 52.4 average score.

The score has been improving in the last five months with the February Ministry of Finance Performance of the Economy report, saying the economy had continued to recover due to a reduction in inflationary pressures.

The survey reported improvements in both output and new orders, which increased for the eighth month.

However, the survey indicated that companies had reported a drop in employment, for the second month even as business activity had risen across measured sectors, among which include agriculture, construction, industry, services and wholesale & retail sectors.

Growth in demand was also supported by a reduction in commodity prices for the first time in over a year.

Ms Mulalo Madula, an economist at Standard Bank, said for the eighth month output had grown due to strong domestic demand supported by competitive pricing, which resulted in an increase in purchasing activity. She also said that while increased workloads had encouraged some firms to rise employment, "overall employment declined as workers resigned to seek opportunities elsewhere".

The Purchase Managers Index measures performance of the economy by placing a mid-level score of 50, below which implies a weakening business environment, while a score of above 50 portends business stability or growth.

## Dubai top destination for foreigners, says report

DUBAI

Dubai has become a dream of living, residing and working for many foreigners, especially Arab youths, according to a survey conducted by W Capital, a leading real estate brokerage in the emirate.

The survey asked W Capital clients in the UAE and the Gulf region what makes the charm of Dubai. Participants stated that the infrastructure gave Dubai the lead in the field of real estate at the global level, and strengthened its position at the forefront of global destinations as the best place to live, work and invest, besides the ease of doing business, and providing good job opportunities.

"The poll showed the participants' great desire to live in Dubai, establish their business and plan for future in the emirate of dreams, which is one of the seven safest cities in the world for citizens, residents and visitors," said Walid Al Zarooni, CEO.

He added that Dubai's successes during the past two decades have established its position as a fertile ground for opportunities, where efforts bear fruit and



Walid Al Zarooni

dreams come true. It is now a destination for entertainment, work and living, and it is more than just a civilized space, but rather an experience that cannot be lived anywhere else. Here you can't avoid the temptation of big dreams and achievements, while enjoying the best lifestyle during that experience.

Al Zarooni stated that the emirate has succeeded in being a home for expatriates of more than 200 nationalities, who live and work side by side. Dubai provides a rich lifestyle with many events

and recreational activities for all, in a vibrant urban atmosphere.

The CEO stressed that Dubai provides the most modern roads, ports and airports, which serve as one of the busiest gateways to the world in the region for business, trade and tourism. This makes the city a favourite for many.

Due to its central location between east and west, as it is a few hours away by flight from most of the world's major destinations, Dubai Airport is one of the busiest airports in the world. It serves more than 85 million people annually, connecting more than 240 destinations across six continents, with more than 100 airlines.

Al Zarooni indicated that Dubai has also established its position as one of the happiest cities in the world, and the only city in which happiness is considered an official public mission. The UAE has a Ministry of Happiness, which was established in 2016.

He stressed that the emirate ensures happiness for nationals or residents of other nationalities, by empowering them and providing distinctive infrastructure

and exceptional opportunities, while at the same time preserving their safety and comfort.

Dubai has one of the most developed and effective transport systems: Which makes it ideal for on-the-go thanks to strict traffic laws, and a state-of-the-art road control systems.

He pointed out that Dubai offers the best educational standards. There is a world-class school education, through 16 different curricula, and access to more than 60 prestigious international universities. The health services offered by Dubai are of highest global standards, especially after integrating health and innovation to serve and attract medical tourism. They are keen to become one of the top 20 healthcare markets in the world.

Al Zarooni stressed that the real estate market in Dubai continues to receive great support from the unlimited facilities and qualitative initiatives launched by the emirate's government, represented in the policies to support residents, the new residency laws, and the residency of entrepreneurs and investors.







## WORLD

# Thousands join Israeli judicial protests in shadow of attacks

TELAVIV

TENS of thousands of Israelis joined protests on Saturday against Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's plans to tighten controls on the Supreme Court, despite heightened security worries after two deadly attacks a day earlier.

The latest in a series of protests against the plans, which were paused last month in the face of a wave of strikes and mass demonstrations, come as Israel faces a sharp rise in tensions on several fronts during the Muslim holy month of Ramadan.

Around Al-Aqsa mosque in Jerusalem, tens of thousands of worshippers were expected for evening prayers amid concerns over a possible repeat of nighttime police raids this week that were followed by rock-

et barrages into Israel and Israeli strikes into Gaza and Southern Lebanon.

Israelis were also on edge after a car-ramping in Tel Aviv on Friday that killed an Italian man and wounded five other tourists, hours after a gun attack killed two Israeli sisters and wounded their mother near a settlement in the occupied West Bank.

Netanyahu has mobilised border police reservists and ordered the army to reinforce security positions to head off possible trouble, amid calls for calm from the United Nations, the European Union and the United States.

In central Tel Aviv, crowds waving the blue and white Israeli flags that have become a hallmark of the protests over the past three months gathered in a show of



Protesters take part in ongoing demonstrations against the government's judicial reform bill in Tel Aviv on Saturday. (PHOTO / AFP)

defiance against plans they see as an existential threat to Israeli democracy.

The demonstration began with a prayer for the victims of the attacks a day earlier but protesters said they would not be put off by security worries.

"Security is one thing but reform is another," said 26-year-old student Amity Ginsberg. "We're still going to come here and say loud and clear that we will not let this reform pass."

The proposals, which would give the government effective control over the appointment of Supreme Court judges and allow parliament to overrule many decisions of the court, have caused one of the biggest domestic crises in Israel's recent history.

Hundreds of thousands of demonstrators, including army reservists, busi-

ness leaders, members of Israel's tech industry and leading academics have taken part, facing off against supporters of Netanyahu's religious-nationalist coalition.

The government side, which accuses activist judges of increasingly usurping the role of parliament, says the overhaul is needed to restore a proper balance between the judiciary and elected politicians.

Critics say it will remove some of the vital checks and balances underpinning a democratic state and hand unchecked power to the government.

Before the protests, police had urged people to leave roads clear to allow emergency services to move freely following Friday's car-ramping on a popular shoreline promenade in Tel Aviv.

## Armed gangs kill 74 in Nigeria's Benue state

MAIDUGURI

AT least 74 people were killed in Nigeria's Benue state in two separate attacks by gunmen this week, local officials and police said on Saturday, the latest clashes in an area where violence between pastoralists and farmers is common.

Violence has increased in recent years as population growth leads to an expansion of the area dedicated to farming, leaving less land available for open grazing by nomads' cattle herds.

Benue state police spokesperson Catherine Anene said 28 bodies were recovered at a camp for internally displaced people in Mgban local government area between Friday evening and Saturday morning.

It was not immediately clear what triggered the attack but witnesses said gunmen arrived and started shooting, killing several people.

This followed a separate incident in the same state on Wednesday in the remote Umogidi village of Otukpo local government area, when suspected herdsmen killed villagers at a funeral, Bako Eje, the chairman for Otukpo, told Reuters.

Paul Hembra, a security adviser to the Benue state governor, said 46 bodies were recovered after Wednesday's attack.

President Muhammadu Buhari in a statement on Saturday condemned "the recent bout of killings in Benue State in which tens of people were killed in Umogidi community" and directed security forces to increase surveillance in affected areas.

Many such attacks in remote parts of Nigeria go unreported as thinly stretched security forces often respond late to distress calls by communities.

Benue is one of Nigeria's Middle Belt states, where the majority Muslim North meets the predominantly Christian South.

Competition over land use is particularly intractable in the Middle Belt, where fault lines between farmers and herders often overlap with ethnic and religious divisions.

In further violence, gunmen abducted at least 80 people in Zamfara state, a hot spot for kidnappings for ransom by armed gangs targeting remote villages, residents said on Saturday.

## West unable to condemn terror attack against Russian war blogger – diplomat

MOSCOW

WESTERN countries could not bring themselves to condemn the terror attack on war reporter Vladlen Tatarsky [real name: Maxim Fomin], Russian Foreign Ministry Spokeswoman Maria Zakharova (pictured) wrote on her Telegram channel on Saturday.

"Over six days that elapsed since the moment of the blast in that St. Petersburg cafe, not a single Western 'champion' of freedom of the media and the safety of journalists managed to utter even a word condemning this cruelty, horrendous by any human standards, nor expressed simple compassion for its victims," she noted.

The diplomat pointed out that, on the contrary, statements were made which can be described as the "public justification of terrorism," while Darya Trepova who is accused of the attack is being portrayed as a victim in the West.

"Liberal hypocrisy has turned the West's policy into an assembly line of antihumanism. First, there was deliberate silence over the murders of Vladlen Tatarsky, Darya Dugina, Oleg Klokov and the next step is the justification of violence against 'wrong' journalists. From all appearances, they won't stop there," Zakharova concluded.

Tatarsky was killed in an explosion during an event at a cafe on Universitetskaya Embankment in central St. Petersburg on April 2.

Over 40 people were injured. The National Anti-Terrorism Committee said that the terror attack was plotted by Ukrainian special services. A farewell ceremony for Tatarsky was held at the Troyekurovskoye cemetery in Moscow on Saturday. **Agencies**



## China, Europe closely tied in economy for brighter future

BERLIN

IN its East Asia and the Pacific Economic Update for April 2023, titled "Reviving Growth," the World Bank forecast that the projected slowdown in growth in advanced economies may be largely offset by signs of revival in China's economy.

This was reflected in the fact that heads of state and chief executives of global corporations have been visiting China one after the other, united in the belief that China and its market are not an option, but a need.

### Productive business ties

The essence of China-European Union (EU) economic and trade relations is complementarity and mutual benefit.

In 2022, China-EU trade and economic cooperation remained resilient and dynamic, and the high-level dialogues set the course for China-EU trade and economic cooperation. The total bilateral trade in goods between China and the EU was valued at 5,646.798 billion yuan (about \$821.24 billion), up 5.6 percent year-on-year.

German corporations invested a record 11.5 billion euros (about \$12.5 billion) in China in 2022, according to the German Economic Institute report released on March 29. For German executives, the growth prospects in the Chinese sales market are simply "too attractive."

"For most companies, withdrawing from the Chinese

market is not an issue at the moment," said a recent study by the German Association of Materials Management, Purchasing and Logistics, adding that establishing alternative supplier structures to the existing business in China is complex and resource-intensive.

"We have enjoyed very strong and productive relationships with local partners in China for many years and all the communication channels. We would just like to continue that," said Ola Kaellenius, chairman of the Board of Management of Mercedes-Benz Group AG, in his latest interview with Xinhua.

Looking back into the last 20 to 30 years, Kaellenius said China has been opening up its economy to become an integral part of the global economy. He considered China's opening-up a success story that enabled Chinese start-ups and big companies to grow their businesses and facilitated foreign direct investment, adding that China's further opening-up would likely prompt Mercedes-Benz to increase its investments.

Kaellenius said that what should not happen, however, is protectionism because if economic regions fall into protectionism, it will ultimately slow down growth.

"So we want to make our voice heard and remind everybody that it is opening-up around the world that has led to economic growth," he said.

Fabrice Megarbane, president of L'Oreal North Asia Zone and CEO of L'Oreal China told Xinhua that his group



In this photo taken on June 29, 2015, the Chinese flag (left) is draped beside the EU during a China-EU Summit at the European Union Commission headquarters in Brussels. (PHOTO / AFP)

was overall optimistic and ambitious in the short and long term about China.

Since China optimized its COVID response, "we have already seen potential opportunities in the market which makes us even more bullish about China's economic outlook and prospects," said Megarbane in a recent interview with Xinhua.

The French cosmetics giant was preparing for the beauty market rebound. From the first week of February, consumer traffic and purchases have revealed positive signs and L'Oreal expects a progressive rebound from Q2 and consumer enthusiasm to bounce back in all categories, said Megarbane.

His boss, L'Oreal's chief executive Nicolas Hieronimus, who visited China last month, shared his enthusiasm.

"Activity and consump-

tion are gradually picking up, with good prospects in sight. I came back super energized and very confident for the market," Hieronimus told the French daily Le Figaro. "It's the group's second-largest market and things are changing very fast there."

A good number of French bosses have "jumped on the plane" to resume contact in person with their business partners in China and returned with full confidence in the potential of the Chinese market, according to a front-page article published by Le Figaro Economie on Monday.

Franck Leboucharde, head of the French acoustic engineering company Devialet, was among those who couldn't wait to go to China.

Now back in France after a two-week stay in China where he met with some of the managers of BYD, the lead-

ing Chinese manufacturer of electric vehicles, Leboucharde told the French daily: "We fell into each other's arms, even though we had never seen each other."

All the French bosses came back from China with the certainty that the country still has a lot of potential, Le Figaro wrote, and "all of them intend to continue their investments there."

### More than business

In Greece where the tourism industry accounts for one-fourth of its gross domestic product (GDP), Chinese people hold a special place in the local tourism stakeholders' planning and the hearts of local people.

"We have historical ties with the Chinese people. We are all waiting for them with love from the bottom of our hearts, true love, to host them, and to offer our services. All the restaurants are eager to see the Chinese coming because they are good customers, and we all love them very much," Spiros Bairaktaris, owner of a popular restaurant in the center of Athens founded 144 years ago, told Xinhua.

Greek Tourism Minister Vassilis Kikilias told Xinhua in an earlier interview that the return of Chinese tourists will contribute to the Greek tourism industry's good performance despite the adversities of recent years.

"They're deeply involved in finding out about our culture and our civilization since in both countries culture and civilization go many centuries back. We are getting prepared

IN today's China, new special occupations are developing. People engaged in those jobs trade carbon credits instead of sea products in marine aquaculture bases, or recycle waste materials with only one click.

Focusing on the sustainable development of production, life and the ecological environment, such green professions are injecting ceaseless impetus into China's green efforts.

Green professions were identified in China's occupational classification by the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security in 2015, covering those engaged in environment-friendly, low-carbon and recycling development with high social recognition.

In an updated edition publicized by the ministry last year, the number of green professions reached 134, accounting for around 8 percent of the

## Green professions promote low-carbon development in China

total.

On a production line of an electromechanical equipment company in Fuzhou, southeast China's Fujian province, waste lithium batteries with hazardous substances were properly dismantled in over an hour, and then recycled to assemble electromechanical equipment.

"Compared with five years ago, the company's carbon emission per 10,000 yuan (\$1,448) of output value has dropped 35 percent, and it might keep decreasing," said Tian Yueying, a carbon emission manager who has provided services for the company for six years, expecting more improvement plans.

Carbon emission manager is one of

the professions newly added to the occupational classification in 2022. "To make plans that optimize enterprises' production capacity while complying with local environmental standards is a key task of the profession," Tian said.

The company, established in 2004, was mainly engaged in the manufacturing of metal parts and electroplating, both of which cause high energy consumption and pollution.

Based on the company's technical advantages, Tian and her team proposed the idea of lithium battery recycling and launched echelon utilization of the batteries. The company could offset its carbon emissions during production with the emission reduction generated by recycling waste lithium

batteries.

"This has not only expanded our income, but also gained us higher emission quotas," said Li Junbiao, head of the company.

In a demonstration base of abalone breeding in Lianjiang county, Fujian province, Huang Qiming from the county's trading and service center for public resources was "selling" carbon sink.

According to the man, the sea can absorb 1/3 of the carbon emissions from human activities each year and fix the carbon by aquatic products such as kelp and abalone. Lianjiang county ranks second in China in terms of aquatic product output, thus boasting rich carbon sink reserves, he said.

Huang became a carbon sink trader last September when Lianjiang set up China's first county-level marine carbon sink trading platform. His job is to help match sellers and buyers of carbon sinks, explain to them relevant policies and register trade information.

Qiu Bixiang, general manager of a food company in Fujian province, told People's Daily that under Huang's assistance, the company completed seven deals of carbon sink trade, from which it earned nearly a million yuan.

According to statistics, the annual carbon sink from Lianjiang's mariculture stands at around 400,000 tons, which can generate an economic value of 960 million yuan (\$138 million).

"Carbon sink traders shall bring to

people the dividends of green development," Huang said.

"Residents can find me on the platform by scanning this code," said Zhang Ruiyan, 57, who sorts and recycles resources for a living, pointing to a QR code on a blue box carrying recycled materials in a residential complex in Xiamen, Fujian province.

According to him, selling recycled materials is now as simple as calling an express delivery service. Residents only need to fill in relevant information on a mobile app and place orders.

Zhang has a temporary warehouse as big as a garage, where he stores recycled materials. "This is what I collected yesterday. I can collect about 1,000 kilograms per day. Today, these materials will be shipped to a plant and be made into daily necessities again," he told People's Daily. **People's Daily**

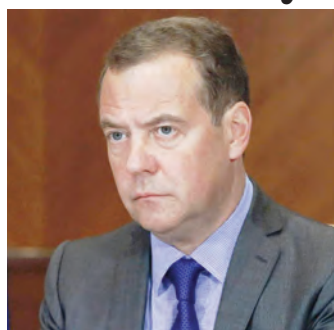


## Ukraine to cease to exist because it is not needed to anyone, Medvedev says

MOSCOW

RUSSIAN Security Council Deputy Chairman Dmitry Medvedev believes that no-one in the world needs Ukraine, therefore it will cease to exist, he said in his post on social media on Saturday.

The post, titled "Why Ukraine will cease to exist? Because nobody needs it," is divided into six parts, in which Medvedev explains why the Ukrainian state is not needed to Europe, the US, Africa, Latin America, Asia, Russia and, finally, Ukrainian people themselves.



### Across the continents

Talking about Europe, Medvedev opined that the attempt to put "young Ukrainian blood-sucking parasites one the arthritic neck of the decrepit EU" will become the final downfall of the "previously royal, but now impoverished, due to degeneration, Europe."

According to the official, the "forced support of the Nazi regime under command of the American mentor has already created true financial and political hell for the Europeans," and its consequences, including "unprofitable Russian sanctions," have already led to outbursts of discontent in both Western and Eastern Europe.

Meanwhile, even the Poles "do not treat Ukraine as a normal country and float the idea of Anschluss of Western regions from time to time," Medvedev underscores.

Meanwhile, American people will sooner or later bring its political establishment to answer, why it is occupied with "a country unknown to them," instead of domestic American issues, Medvedev opined, noting that the "2021 storm of the Capitol will look like boy scout games in comparison."

"Regular Americans have absolutely no idea, what 'Ukraine' is and where 'it' is located. Most of them wouldn't even be able to immediately pinpoint this 'state' on the map," Medvedev noted. As for other parts of the world, Medvedev believes that the "hundreds of billions that the US spends on pointless fighting somewhere in Ukraine, would have been enough to fund many programs, aimed at social development of Latin American and African states."

Ukraine is "also not needed to Asia," since Asian states see it on Russia's example "how color [revolution] technologies are being honed in order to take down the largest competitor states," and "understand what fate has the collective West, led by America, has prepared for them in case of disobedience:" "Help us deal with Russia, and then we will soon come to you."

In addition, Medvedev continue, giant Asian states have enough problems rebuilding the economy after the pandemic, therefore they refuse to blindly support Ukraine and isolate Russia, "a country that is geopolitically much closer to Asian powers and that has historically proven itself as a reliable strategic partner."

### In Russia and Ukraine

Medvedev called the current Ukrainian state a "misconception, created by the dissolution of the Soviet Union." "Millions of our compatriots that have been harassed by the Nazi Kiev regime for years live here. It is them whom we protect with the special military operation, ruthlessly eliminating the enemy," the official noted. "And this is why this sub-Ukraine is not needed for us. We need a Big Great Russia," the political said.

As for the Ukrainians themselves, Medvedev assessed that there are only slightly over 20 million out of 45 million of them still left in the country, and the remaining Ukrainians "Are forced to live in constant anxiety and fear" and "are willing to go anywhere."

"This kind of Ukraine is not needed to anyone on the planet. And this is why it will cease to exist," the author concludes.

## UK PM Sunak to meet US President Biden in N. Ireland

LONDON

BRITISH Prime Minister Rishi Sunak will meet Joe Biden in Northern Ireland next week when the US president flies in to take part in events to mark the 25th anniversary of the Good Friday peace accord.

Having helped broker the 1998 deal, the United States remains an influential voice in Northern Ireland's politics and has sought to protect the peace from the strains caused by Britain's exit from the European Union.

Sunak will greet Biden tomorrow evening when Air Force One lands for what will be a closely watched visit to both sides of the Irish border at a time of heightened political uncertainty in Northern Ireland.

Sunak hosts a gala dinner on Wednesday to commemorate the anniversary, his office said in a statement setting out some details of his itinerary.

Biden, who often speaks proudly of his Irish roots, will also spend time in the Irish Republic, where he will visit Dublin and his two ancestral homes.

The Good Friday Agreement - signed on April 10, 1998 - largely ended three decades of sectarian bloodshed that had convulsed Northern Ireland since the late 1960s.

However the anniversary has been overshadowed by a year-long boycott by Northern Ireland's largest pro-British unionist party of the power-sharing devolved government central to the peace deal. The Democratic Unionist Party is angry about post-Brexit trade rules that treated the province differently to the rest of the UK.

In March, Britain's MI5 intelligence agency increased the threat level in Northern Ireland from domestic terrorism to "severe" - meaning an attack is highly likely - though the move was not thought to be linked to the anniversary.

Biden clashed with the British government at times during Brexit talks, but has spoken in support of a recently agreed UK-EU deal to address some of the tensions caused by the original Brexit agreement.

Although that deal has so far failed to restore the devolved government in Northern Ireland, Sunak will seek to bolster his support for the province by announcing a summit later in the year to stimulate international investment. **Agencies**



US President Joe Biden meets British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak at Naval Base Point Loma, March 13, 2023, in San Diego. (PHOTO / AP)

## Sudan's political uncertainty persists as political agreement delayed again

KHARTOUM

SUDAN'S political landscape remains uncertain as the parties involved in the ongoing political conciliation process have yet to reach a conclusive agreement to resolve the country's protracted crisis.

The signing of the final political agreement between the military and civilian leaders, originally slated for April 1 and postponed to April 6, has been further delayed without a new date set, raising concerns among observers about the potential collapse of the entire political process.

The current political impasse in Sudan dates back to October 25, 2021, when army commander Abdel Fattah Al-Burhan adopted extraordinary measures, dissolving the Sovereign Council and the Council of Ministers, and declaring a state of emergency. This move sparked widespread and persistent protests calling for the restoration of civilian rule.

Following the latest delay, the Forces of Freedom and Change Alliance (FFC), a broad political coalition comprising civilian and rebel groups in Sudan, sought to reassure the public that the postponement does not signify the end of the political process.

"There remains only one outstanding issue in the security and military reform file relating to command and control," FFC Spokesman Yasir Arman said on his Twitter account on Friday.

"The issues of representation at the legislative and sovereign levels in the coming government have been resolved, and only minor issues remain," he said.

However, Sudanese analysts believe that there are underlying differences within both the military-led government and the opposition camp that may further impede the current peace



process.

Abdul-Raziq Ziyada, a Sudanese political analyst, expressed concerns that the parties involved in the political process may be downplaying their differences to provide reassurances to the public. Ziyada noted that the differences between Sudan's two armed forces, namely the Sudanese Army and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), a paramilitary force, are "fundamental and significant," particularly with regard to security and military reform. Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo, the leader of the RSF, had participated in Burhan's move to oust the civilian government, but later distanced himself from it and referred to it as a "mistake" in February 2023, indicating a growing rift between him and Burhan.

Moreover, the divergence in viewpoints is not limited to the military factions alone, as the civilian camp itself has struggled to achieve a comprehensive consensus, with significant segments still unwilling to participate in the political process.

The Sudanese streets remain divided, with some parties refusing to negotiate with the military and insisting on the restoration of civilian rule through persistent demonstrations, while other political factions seek to broaden participation in the political process without excluding any political component.

Abdul-Khaliq Mahjoub, a Sudanese political analyst, believes

that the division among the civilian camp is a crucial factor in the delay of reaching a political solution. "If the civilian factions can unify their position and reach a consensus, it will exert pressure on the military and compel them to sign the agreement," Mahjoub told Xinhua.

"The division among the civil forces undermines the current political process and weakens the viability of any political agreement," he added, emphasizing the need for unity and coherence among the civilian forces for effective progress.

On December 5, 2022, Sudan's military and civilian leaders signed a political framework agreement to resolve the political impasse and establish a two-year transitional civilian authority.

However, the two sides have failed so far to translate the agreement into a final deal, leaving the political situation in Sudan uncertain and unresolved.

Xinhua

## China drives transition of construction industry with technological innovation

ASSISTED by a group of new technologies such as 5G, artificial intelligence (AI), and internet of things (IoT), China's construction industry is becoming more intelligent.

For instance, within 70 seconds, a smart robot can complete binding at nine points on a reinforcement cage of a bay window; prefabrication makes building houses as easy as building toy blocks; and with building automation systems that can sense body movement, indoor temperature and lighting are automatically controlled.

At present, China is working to promote advanced construction equipment and smart construction, so as to improve the quality and safety of buildings.

At a construction site in a middle school in southwest China's Chongqing municipality, some 50-meter-tall tower cranes were busy lifting materials. "Every crane comes with a 'black box' that connects the crane to a smart platform. The device monitors in real time the working conditions of the crane to ensure safety," said Lu Lijun, who's in charge of the construction site.

At the construction site, there were also five data-collecting robots with caterpillars. "They are 'Scan-to-BIM' robots that we independently developed," Lu told People's Daily. These robots can plan their routes and avoid obstacles. They measure buildings within 60 meters at 360,000 points per second to two-millimeter accuracy.

For a long time, the Chinese construction industry has been relying on resource factors and massive investment. It was bothered by extensive production models, low efficiency and high energy and resource consumption.

Smart construction can help promote the high-quality development of the industry.

Developing smart construction is conducive to stabilizing



Photo shows a zero energy and zero emission community service center of a rental housing project for talents in Nanjing, east China's Jiangsu province. The building adopts a wooded structure and comes with a rooftop photovoltaic power generation system. (People's Daily Online/Wu Jun)

growth and expanding domestic growth. In Changsha, central China's Hunan province, the prefabricated building industry has seen its annual output exceed 100 billion yuan (\$14.5 billion), and more than 400 major enterprises are engaged in the sector.

An official with the city's municipal department of housing and urban-rural development said that the technology-driven smart construction industry correlates with many other industries and thus helps promote synergetic development. It not only draws investment, but also creates a consumption market for new-generation information technology, the official added.

Developing smart construction is also an important measure that advances the green and low-carbon transition.

In a smart office building in Chengde, southwest China's Sichuan province, the sky ceiling is automatically controlled in accordance with the weathers. Besides, the building also has rooftop photovoltaic panels and an underground power storage facility that regulates charging and discharging in real-time. These devices save around 1.86 million kWh of power and cut 1,027 tons of carbon emissions from the building each year.

Last year, China's Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development designated 24 cities, including

Beijing, Tianjin, and Chongqing, to carry out a three-year pilot program for smart construction, in the exploration of new paths for the transformation and development of the construction industry.

Focusing on typical application scenarios in digital designing, smart production and smart construction and three other aspects, the pilot project aims to accelerate technological innovation and improve the development quality and benefits of the construction industry. It also strengthens digital management of the quality, safety, schedule, and cost of engineering projects, so as to increase the benefits and quality of construction and reduce the consumption and emissions of it.

On a screen of an exhibition hall in a resettlement program under the phase-III expansion project of Guangzhou Baiyun International Airport in south China's Guangdong province, a BIM (building information model) animation was being played, which showed how prefabricated walls, beams, and columns should be put together.

Full preparations must be made before prefabricated buildings are constructed, said Yi Chao, chief engineer of the resettlement program with China Construction Fourth Engineering Division Corp. Ltd.

He took a nursing home of the program as an example, saying it was

through modeling in BIM software that constructors avoided possible collisions of gigantic prefabricated parts.

In addition, the resettlement program also tailored a city information modeling and smart construction platform that displays the progress, quality, and other information of the program on a mobile app. Thanks to the application of advanced technologies, the construction period for every storey was reduced by six days on average, Yi said.

An official with the Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development told People's Daily that the country would strengthen enterprise-led integration among industries, universities, and research institutions, implement a batch of strategic, comprehensive, and forward-looking projects to tackle major technological challenges, and fasten the cultivation of world-class construction enterprises. **People's Daily**





Kagera Sugar head coach, Mecky Mexime.

## Kagera Sugar aims to spoil Yanga's formidable run

By correspondents Nassir Nchimbi & Ismail Tano

KAGERA Sugar has said it is eager to return to winning ways in the 2022/23 NBC Premier League.

The Kagera-based club has a tricky fixture as it is set to come up against leaders, Yanga, at Azam Complex Stadium in Dar es Salaam on April 11.

With Kagera Sugar now sitting seventh in the top-flight table, the club is out to scale up the league log.

In Kagera Sugar's previous league game against Kinondoni Municipal Council FC held on March 9, the former lost 2-0 to the latter, leaving the club with two wins, two draws, and one loss in its recent five outings.

In their last five games, Kagera Sugar collected eight points from a possible 15 after losing to Kinondoni Municipal Council FC, beating Namungo FC (1-0) and Ruvu Shooting (1-0), settling for 0-0 in two duels against Polisi Tanzania and Coastal Union.

In the first phase clash between Kagera Sugar and Yanga, which took place at CCM Kirumba Stadium in Mwanza, the latter commanded a 1-0 win.

Kagera Sugar head coach Mecky Mexime said that they are upbeat to overcome Yanga no matter how tough the game might be.

Mexime joined Kagera Sugar mid-season as his charges stunned opponents in the second round of the league by making a fast climb from the lower positions to seventh place with 33 points.

"We are determined to win our remaining five games so that we can finish the league in possible fifth place and to achieve that we have to defeat defending champions Yanga, our next opponent," he said.

Mexime said morale among his charges is high as they are well-drilled for the Dar es Salaam mission.

"The league is difficult and very competitive, especially in these last games, every team is fighting to get good results and either win the league, finish top four, clinch relegation playoffs berth, or stay up in the league, Kagera Sugar is planning to get good results," Mexime pointed out.

The coach added: "We have a hungry squad capable of defeating any team at the moment and everyone in our group knows it. We have to bet on ourselves and show what we are made of."

Kagera Sugar's last five games include Yanga (away), Mbeya City FC and Tanzania Prisons (home), Mtibwa Sugar, and the last league match that will see the team come up against Ihefu SC (away).

## After PM hints at a return of Taifa Cup, let's figure out the best format

By Correspondent John Kimbute

ANY present-day soccer fans below the age of perhaps 40 may not quite remember the Taifa Cup soccer tournament and those below the age of 65 would scarcely recall days when the Taifa Cup tourney was as thrilling as the knock-out format club championship.

Efforts have at times been made to bring back Taifa Cup but it appears to be veterans of the failed format trying to revive it by hooks and crooks. The format lacks the sentimental capital to move it to fan appreciation.

The old format of the Taifa Cup is what could make it an instant success and even prompt some advertisers to add colour to the event, as it pitted regional teams against one another.

After it was removed in the mid-1970s, at a time of oil price rises and strained public finances, it was brought back (during the second phase presidency) with what Americans would call a 'politically correct' format.

It was supposedly a club competition, with ad hoc regional outfits dressed as clubs!

Just how naming a team Kilimanjaro XI was bad and shifting the title to an ethnic name like 'Igembensabo' for either Shinyanga or Mwanza, where most fans not knowing the language would scurry around for meaning was better, is unclear.

If the issue is ethnicity, the so-called club format was more ethnic as it had to find something a bit exciting from the local environment to name their ad hoc regional combine. It would be easier for a team to have its straight geographical name for real comfort.

Surprisingly, the make-shift regional combined sides, so long as they had their visible regional identification and took up all good players from the various clubs in the area, was quite exciting as a tourney.

One issue that could come up is whether, for purposes of this tourney, Zanzibar could come in as five or six regions, to bring



Mwanza regional soccer team midfielder, Juma Nade (C), challenges Shinyanga regional squad's Alphonse Donald as they locked horns in a 2010 Kilimanjaro Taifa Cup tournament match at CCM Kirumba Stadium in Mwanza. Mwanza won 2-0.

about at least one instance where a union soccer event is visible.

It cannot be done in the Premier League or federation due to distinct organizational formats. There were instances where the impact of regional sides was more visible than the clubs of a particular zone or region, for instance when Morogoro won the Taifa Cup in 1970 and earned a legendary compliment from Mbaraka Mwinshewe, their homeboy, it was still nearly two decades before Mtibwa Sugar made headlines, and nearly so for Moro United.

Kigoma regional soccer team won Taifa Cup in 1973, and top city side Simba SC moved to enrich its side by taking nearly half of the side.

Their next-door rivals, Young Africans SC (Yanga), had earlier done the same thing with the star-studded Morogoro XI (but some may have gone to the next street big side).

It also implies that those at either the federation head offices or its specialized wings like the coaches' association in particular who like to organize competitions among the youths, ostensibly to recruit possible picks for the national side, Taifa Cup

can be a helping hand.

When regional soccer officials know they have work in their hands within a few months, they will not lose the view of talented players in school contests, especially for secondary schools.

It takes time to notice them for the U-17 national team as it has few scouts, so inclusion in a regional side is an easier task.

The crucial problem, all the same, remains the format which may attract more fans and make the tournament lively on street corners, talk shows, and advertising, and here the politicians should let the fans think.

A familiar name like Tanga playing Iringa is much more of an attraction than Sisal FC (after some sponsorship by 'big agriculture' for that matter), tussling Kamwene FC if Iringa picks up a common greeting in the zone. This sort of pseudo-cultural revival is just fiction.

Still, one must remain skeptical, and finally resigned, as to the format that is likely to be adopted, for there was neither discussion nor criticism of the earlier format, and if one asks veteran officials at the National Sports Council they would give a response that the government

(Culture, Arts, and Sports ministry) had no money so the tournament was discontinued.

It is hopelessly difficult to get senior public officials to get their mental posture to commerce and popularity, instead of 'education' provided by the same officials as to why regional teams ought to be ad hoc 'clubs'.

One can only remain hopeful if that is the right sentiment, that perhaps in sitting down to plan to restore the tourney the ministry and their advisers at the sports council and soccer federation may recall the difference between the tournament in the early 1970s and a couple of decades later.

Changing from the regional format proper was strictly speaking a policy directive, and it is also unclear what the club format was all about when it doesn't remain in place for more than that tourney.

And then there can be hidden reasons, as to who handles the money when it is a so-called club and when it is a regional team proper, they just need to be realistic for the competition to be lively if popular brands contest, not unrecognizable 'clubs'.

## Coach upbeat about national athletics teams' success in CAA Junior Championships

By Correspondent Joseph Mchekadona

TANZANIA's national junior athletics teams' head coach, Alfredo Shahanga, is confident his charges will win medals in the 2023 Confederation of African Athletics (CAA) Junior Championships slated for April 19-23 in Lusaka, Zambia.

The continental championships will take place at National Heroes Stadium in the Zambian capital.

Shahanga said morale in the camp is very high given all athletes are in high spirits.

"I can assure you that we will do well, I have said so as all athletes are in good spirits, and the environment in the camp is superb, in short, I can say my charges are enjoying it," he said.

Fifteen athletes making the national junior teams are camping at Tanzania Episcopal Conference (TEC) in Dar es Salaam.

Shahanga is assisted by Asha Abdallah while Amani Ngoka is the teams' manager.

The 15 athletes in camp are Said Ali who will compete in 100m and 200m in U-18 and U-20, Alex Sezario (100m), and Nicodemus Joseph that will take part in U-18's 1500m and 5000m.

Gasisi Girunda will represent Tanzania in 100m and 200m in U-20 Boys, whilst Elia Clement will take

part in U-20 Boys' 100m showdown.

Benedict Martius will take part in U-20 Boys' 200m while Hafidh Talib will feature in U-20 Boys' discus.

Mpaji Gipson and Samir Sururu will battle it out in U-18 Boys' long jump and shot put events respectively.

In the Girls U-20 javelin, Mwanamini Mkayu will be Tanzania's envoy, while Brethe Everist and Salma Charles will take part in Girls' 200m and 800m showdowns respectively.

Nasra Abdallah will take part in the Girls' 100m and 200m races, whereas Siwema Julius will compete in the Girls' 100m event.

The 15 athletes were selected in the trials organized by Athletics Tanzania (AT) in Dar es Salaam recently. More than 100 junior athletes from across the country battled it out in the trials to seek selection for the teams.

Initially, AT was set to select junior athletes to represent the country in the CAA Junior Championships in this season's East and Central Africa Junior Athletics Championships (EAAR) that took place in Dar es Salaam last month.

However, none of Tanzania's athletes that battled it out in the regional showdown managed to garner the qualifying time for the continental showpiece, which will bring together 50 African nations.

## KMC FC's main sponsor pledges 500,000/- for every goal scored in NBC Premier League

By Guardian Reporter

KINONDONI Municipal Council (KMC) FC's main sponsor, Meridianbet Tanzania, has promised to hand over 500,000/- for every goal the club registers in the remaining 2022/23 NBC Premier League games to motivate the players to work hard.

Meridianbet Tanzania's Head of Marketing and Communications, Matina Nkurlu, unveiled the information in Dar es Salaam over the weekend when speaking to the club's technical bench and players at the team's training grounds at the Baobab in Bagamoyo District, Coast Region.

Nkurlu stated that the purpose of the bonus is to give motivation to the

players, but the money will be used to provide support to the community.

The Meridianbet Tanzania official noted: "Meridianbet Tanzania has decided to buy every goal you score for 500,000/- in your remaining NBC Premier League games."

"But the biggest thing is that the money will be used to give back to the community because KMC FC is a team of Kinondoni Municipal Council and Tanzanians and all of you, especially the one who scores, will decide where the money should be handed to help his surrounding community," he said.

KMC FC's captain, Emmanuel Mvuyekure, praised Meridianbet Tanzania, saying the



Players making Kinondoni Municipal Council FC take part in preparations for the 2022/23 NBC Premier League ties at the Bora ground, Kijitonyama in Dar es Salaam recently. PHOTO: COURTESY OF KINONDONI MUNICIPAL COUNCIL FC

support will motivate players and everyone who supports the club.

The midfielder pointed out: "I thank the Almighty God for being with us at every step and we receive this information with great joy as it will be a great motivation for us."

Mvuyekure added: "I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Meridianbet Tanzania for coming up with this positive idea, as this will increase motivation and commitment in our team."

"The biggest thing is that we have a promise to our sponsor that we will

do well and we'll score a lot of goals and we will never be relegated! And we will continue to help our surrounding community for the next season as well," he said.

Until now, KMC FC is sitting 12th in the NBC Premier League standings after collecting 26 points in 25 outings with five ties left before the conclusion of the tournament.

The Kinondoni-based side's next game will see it lock horns with Geita Gold FC and the former's main sponsor has placed great odds and 1000+ options for the match.



## Lampard confident Chelsea will rise to Madrid challenge

LONDON

NEWLY-INSTALLED Chelsea interim manager Frank Lampard dismissed suggestions he should be fearing a trip to face Real Madrid on Wednesday after seeing his side beaten 1-0 at Wolves in his first game back at the club.

Lampard was put in charge of the Blues until the end of the season on Thursday, just over two years since his first spell as manager at Stamford Bridge ended.

Defeat at Molineux left Chelsea still languishing in 11th in the Premier League table despite spending a world record amount of over £500 million on new players in one season.

But they have progressed to the quarter-finals of the Champions League, where they face holders Real in the first leg in Spain.

Madrid were in sparkling form as they thrashed Barcelona 4-0 in midweek to reach the Copa del Rey final and made light work of Premier League opposition in the last 16 of the Champions League with a 6-2 aggregate win over Liverpool.

"If you are worried, don't come. The players shouldn't be," said Lampard.

"I'm very happy to be back. We have a huge game waiting for us on Wednesday where everything changes."

Despite the appointment of a third manager this season, there was little change on the pitch from Chelsea as they were again lacking in goal threat and undone by one moment of magic in Matheus Nunes' superb winner.

Lampard pointed to a lack of aggression from his players, but believes he does have the talent at his disposal to turn things around.

"It's a big task managing Chelsea. We know we're not in a position we want to be in," he added.

"I didn't expect to solve everything in one day. You have to have more aggression in your game, more speed and more competitive duels which go your way."

"The players need to be aware of that because without that you can't win games. It was interesting to see anyway, I'm here to help with that. It's not stinging criticism, I know there's a lot of talent there."

AFP

## Spurs star Son becomes first Asian to score 100 Premier League goals

LONDON

SON Heung-min dedicated his historic goal in Tottenham's 2-1 win against Brighton to his late grandfather after the South Korea star became the first Asian to score 100 times in the Premier League.

Son reached his century in style with a superb curling finish to put Tottenham ahead in the first half in north London on Saturday.

Afer Lewis Dunk's equaliser, Harry Kane's 79th-minute winner ensured Son's goal wouldn't go to waste as fifth-placed Tottenham stayed in the hunt to qualify for the Champions League via a top-four finish.

It was a welcome boost for the 30-year-old Son, who has endured a difficult season.

As well as an unusually long run of poor personal form, which including several spells on the bench, Son has had to cope with the recent death of his grandfather.

"This was something that I dreamed for. It is an amazing achievement which I wouldn't have had without my team-mates," he told the BBC.

"Scoring 100 goals in the Premier League is a massive thing. I was really emotional because I have had tough moments in the last few weeks. My grandad passed away and it was not easy. I want to send that goal to him."

Son has enjoyed a remarkable career with Tottenham since signing from Bayer Leverkusen for what now looks a bargain £22 million (\$27 million) in 2015.

His dynamic displays have established him as one of the Premier League's most feared, while his humble personality has made him a favourite with Tottenham fans.

Son hopes his latest milestone moment will serve as an inspiration to other Asians dreaming of playing in Europe's top leagues.

"I hope all the Asian players, especially in South Korea, look at this achievement and believe they can do it as well," he said.

"It's a good thing for Asia and I take a big responsibility to be a good example to help the young guys. I want them to believe an Asian player can do amazing things in the Premier League."

Admitting he sometimes found it hard to stay upbeat during his difficult season, Son added: "Sometimes you always expect an amazing season. I am frustrated but I'm not the perfect player so I need to look at my weaknesses."

"The fans are supporting me and I need to take a big responsibility to do well for the rest of the season."

AFP

# Haaland stars in Man City stroll, Chelsea crash on Lampard return

LONDON

ERLING Haaland struck twice as Manchester City crushed Southampton 4-1 to close the gap on Premier League leaders Arsenal, while Frank Lampard's first game back in charge of Chelsea ended in a 1-0 defeat at Wolves on Saturday.

Haaland took his Premier League goal tally to 30 this season, within four of the single-season record, thanks to a clinical header and a breathtaking overhead kick at St Mary's.

The Norway forward's goals, which gave him 44 in all competitions this term, came either side of Jack Grealish's strike against the league's bottom club.

Julian Alvarez netted with a late penalty as second-placed City moved within five points of Arsenal, who travel to Liverpool on Sunday.

Arsenal remain firm favourites to end City's reign as champions but with Haaland in this mood and a home game against the Gunners to come on April 26, there is no chance Pep Guardiola's side will surrender without a fight.

"The second goal was amazing. It is not easy to pick the ball up in the sky and put it on the grass," Guardiola said.

"The first half was not our best level but he changed the game. We lived two incredible de-



Manchester City's Erling Haaland scores his side's third goal during their English Premier League match against Southampton at St. Mary's Stadium in Southampton, on Apr. 8, 2023. (AP)

cadés with Cristiano Ronaldo and Lionel Messi but he is on that level."

Lampard made a surprise return to Stamford Bridge on Thursday when he was appointed until the end of the season following Graham Potter's sacking last Sunday after just seven months in charge.

But the ex-Chelsea midfielder, who was dismissed by the club's former owner Roman Abramovich in January 2021, could not provide an immediate lift for the Blues.

Matheus Nunes won it for Wolves in the 32nd minute with a superb half-volley into the far corner from the edge of the area.

Chelsea remain 11th after a fourth consecutive game without a win.

Sacked by lowly Everton in January after less than a year in charge, Lampard said of his Chelsea return: "There has

been a lot of change and that's not an excuse but things need to improve. That performance summed it up."

At Old Trafford, Manchester United beat Everton 2-0 to stay fourth and leave the fourth-bottom visitors above the relegation zone on goal difference.

Goals from Scott McTominay and Anthony Martial edged United ever closer to a return to the Champions League next season.

Despite the win, United boss Erik ten Hag took aim at his side's congested fixture schedule after Marcus Rashford limped off nine minutes from time.

"We have to wait. He doesn't look well," said Ten Hag. "It's due to the schedule. It can't be that you play three games in six days and we have to protect the players."

Newcastle fight back - Third-placed Newcastle are

above United on goal difference after a 2-1 success at Brentford made it five consecutive wins for the Magpies.

Brentford forward Ivan Toney missed from the spot for the first time since 2018, but made amends when he converted another penalty in the 45th minute.

Newcastle equalised through David Raya's 54th-minute own goal as Joelinton's chip went in off the Brentford goalkeeper.

And Alexander Isak won it after 61 minutes with a blistering finish from the edge of the area.

Tottenham are three points behind Newcastle after beating Brighton 2-1 in north London.

Son Heung-min put Tottenham ahead with a superb long-range curler into the top corner after 10 minutes.

It took the South Korean's Premier League tally to 100 goals, making him the first Asian

player to reach that landmark. Lewis Dunk headed Brighton's equaliser from Solly March's corner in the 34th minute.

Tottenham interim manager Cristian Stellini and Brighton boss Roberto De Zerbi were both sent off after a touchline spat before Harry Kane lashed home the winner in the 79th minute.

Bertrand Traore and Ollie Watkins scored for Aston Villa, who climbed to sixth place after a 2-0 home win against third-bottom Nottingham Forest.

West Ham boosted their survival bid as Harrison Reed's 23rd-minute own goal sealed a 1-0 win at Fulham.

Bournemouth rose out of the relegation zone thanks to a 1-0 victory at second-bottom Leicester, who were booted off after Philip Billing's 40th-minute winner.

AFP

## Guardiola: 'Haaland is on the same level as Messi and Ronaldo'

BY JEREMY WILSON

PEP Guardiola is not exactly prone to hyperbole but, after watching Erling Haaland score his 30th Premier League goal in just 27 games, he delivered the ultimate footballing compliment.

"As a top scorer we lived two incredible decades with Cristiano Ronaldo and Lionel Messi but he is on that level," declared the Manchester City manager.

Guardiola did also repeatedly stress the injury-free longevity of football's two modern-day GOATS, as well as the more all-round nature of Messi's unique qualities, but it was still a timely and hugely significant assessment.

Haaland has missed the past three weeks through injury and, having inspired City here to a 4-1 win against Southampton ahead of the decisive two months of the season, he demonstrated that his abundant quantity of goals can also be backed by rare quality.

Having already scored with a routine but crucial header on the stroke of half-time, Haaland prompted gasps even from Southampton's long-suffering fans with the way that he adjusted his feet to deliver a breathtaking mid-air scissor-kick finish from Jack Grealish's 68th minute cross. "The second was amazing - exceptional - you can't imagine at his height he has this

ability," said Guardiola, before also stressing the importance of Haaland's first - at the end of what had been a tricky first-half - on City's season: "I think our bosses bought him for this type of game. We are uncomfortable and not playing at our best level but he gets the goal."

Guardiola had initially made the Messi-Ronaldo-Haaland comparison during a broadcast interview but, far from playing down the compliment, he was later happy to also expand on it provide a fascinating insight into the similarities with the precocious young Messi he mentored at Barcelona.

"I think Messi is a more complete player - he can play wherever," said Guardiola. "The other two, Cristiano and Haaland, are like a machine. Erling is just 22 and he is doing it in the toughest league in the world. Doing what he is doing is remarkable. But Erling knows the other two guys have dominated for two decades, not just one year."

"They have scored goals, won titles and done absolutely everything. Football is a better place because of Cristiano and Messi."

"To reach their level takes a lot of work. They were never injured. Erling is so tall. He is huge. So he needs a lot of care from the physios. But the numbers he has at his age are unbelievable."

With 92 goals across four seasons in the Bundesliga and now Premier League, Haaland is actually just ahead of Messi at this same point in his career and Guardiola can see clear parallels in their mindset as well as statistics.

"He [Haaland] lives to be professional and compete - I see his reaction when he misses goals, even in training sessions," said Guardiola. "But he is frustrated for five minutes and then he comes back and does the job. Messi, when he scored two goals, was unhappy because he didn't score the third."

"Erling is in an incredible mood all the time. Even in the bad moments, when people said he couldn't adapt, he came into training with the biggest smile. He puts pressure on himself like Messi and Ronaldo. When he doesn't score

two or three goals he says 'what's the problem?'

"It's obvious what he does on the pitch. But what people don't see is the influence he has every day on the locker room. It's been massive."

The impact even on the Manchester City supporters was evident here who were relentlessly reminding Southampton that "he's scored more than you" even before he had proved their point.

While Haaland was becoming the first players to score 30 goals in a Premier League season for five years, Southampton have not yet made it to 25 and their slide back to the Championship feels increasingly inevitable.

Defeats earlier in the day for Everton, Leicester City and Nottingham Forest had again just partially opened the door but they could not take advantage of a

positive first-half performance during which Kamaldeen Sulemana's persistent threat was never matched by his final ball.

Guardiola resisted any temptation to rest and rotate players ahead of the Champions League tie against former club Bayern Munich on Tuesday but there was still a surprising initial lethargy to his team's play.

Jack Grealish was City's most threatening player and, as half-time loomed, he combined with Kevin De Bruyne who was then pinpoint with his delivery to reward Haaland's run in front of Armel Bella-Kotchap.

It settled any slight jangling nerves and City were supreme during the second-half. Ilkay Gundogan almost extended their lead before De Bruyne - delivering a 100th Premier League

assist at record speed - fed Grealish for the goal that his wider attacking play had deserved.

Next came the moment of the match when Haaland's acrobatic finish established clear daylight and prompted Guardiola to immediately bring him off in preparation for Tuesday.

"He never complains about coming off because he respects me a lot," Guardiola said.

Southampton and City traded two further goals - Sejour Mara for the home team and Julian Alvarez converting a penalty for the visitors following Kyle Walker-Peters' trip on De Bruyne - but the match was already long since settled. And it is the return of Haaland that will most fuel City hopes as they go in search of further history, silverware and records over the coming weeks.

THE TELEGRAPH

Gwiji by David Chikoko





# SPORT

Haaland stars in Man City stroll, Chelsea crash on Lampard return

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## Yanga to face Singida Big Stars in Federation Cup semi-finals



Yanga's winger, Bernard Morrison (L), gets the better of Singida Big Stars' fullback, Paul Godfrey, as the outfits locked horns in a 2022/23 NBC Premier League tie which took place in Dar es Salaam last year and ended in a 4-1 victory for Yanga.

By Correspondent Michael

Mwebe

**Y**OUNG Africans (Yanga) has become the last team to book a place in the semi-finals of this season's Azam Sports Federation Cup (ASFC).

A second-half strike from substitute Fiston Mayele spearheaded Yanga to a narrow 1-0 over a determined Geita Gold FC at Azam Complex Stadium in Dar es Salaam on Saturday evening.

Yanga was the better team from start to finish against the gold miners' outfit that was unable to find any real rhythm despite putting up a spirited fight.

The game was locked at 0-0 after 45 minutes of football before Yanga emerged victorious following the introduction of Mayele in place of the frustrated Clement Mzize. Head coach Nasreddine Na-

bi's men will next face Singida Big Stars in the showdown's semi-finals.

Singida Big Stars booked a final-four berth with a comfortable 4-1 home win over Mbeya City FC in Singida on Friday afternoon.

Yanga and Singida Big Stars are set to face each other in the 2022/23 NBC Premier League game at Liti Stadium in Singida before the Federation Cup semi-final duel.

The other ASFC semi-

final will feature an all-Dar es Salaam draw as Simba SC takes on Azam FC at Nangwanda Sijaona Stadium, Mtwara.

Simba SC confirmed their place in the last four of the competition with a convinc-

ing 5-1 win over Ihefu SC in Dar es Salaam on Friday.

Striker Jean Baleke scored a hat trick while Saidi Ntibazonkiza and Pape Sakho also got on the scoresheet.

Simba SC has to negotiate an away trip to Morocco for the second leg of the squad's 2022/23 CAF Champions League quarterfinal tie against defending champions, Wydad Athletic Club, before turning attention to the Federation Cup.

Meanwhile, Azam FC, the winner of the 2019 Federation Cup, edged out Mtibwa Sugar in another last eight's match in Dar es Salaam on Monday last week.

The draw keeps alive a possible showdown between Simba SC and Yanga in the final.

The two rivals faced each other in the 2021/22 ASFC semi-final game played at CCM Kirumba Stadium last year which ended with Yanga commanding a 1-0 victory.

The semi-finals will be played across the weekend of April 29 and May 3 in Singida and Mtwara.

The final will be played at Mkwakwani Stadium in Tanga, with the showpiece taking place on June 3.

In addition to a trophy, medals for players, the technical bench, and 50m/- prize money, the winner of the Federation Cup earns a ticket to represent the country in the CAF Confederation Cup next season.

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12:00 Weekend Movie (r)  
14:00 SKONGA (r)  
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15:30 Akili & Me (r)  
16:30 #HASHTAG  
17:00 S5ELEKT  
17:55 Kurasa  
18:00 eNewz  
18:30 Bongo Hit  
19:00 EATV SAA 1  
20:00 DADAZ (r)  
21:00 5SPORTS LIVE  
22:00 Zote kuntu  
23:00 Kurasa (r)  
23:05 EATV SAA 1 (r)

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## Trio in tight race for SWPL trophy

By Correspondent Michael Mwebe

THE tightest and most hotly-contested Serengeti Lite Women's Premier League title race is approaching the final straight.

The table has been as tight as it was during the start of the season and the status quo is likely to remain unchanged for the rest of the season.

In a topsy-turvy campaign, three clubs- JKT Queens, Simba Queens, and Fountain Gate Princess-still hold a strong chance of lifting the Women's Premier League title, with just two points separating the trio.

JKT Queens turn out to be the first team to win three consecutive league titles and are steadfast in securing a fourth top honour.

With five games to go, however, there is a close race in the goal-difference tallies and every single point, goal, and result is going to count over the next four weeks.

Currently, JKT Queens are at the top of the tree and a soccer enthusiast cannot say they do not deserve it. The army side is the only team yet to taste defeat this season.

They also boast the league's meanest defense, conceding just six goals in 13 games.

The title is in their hands, considering if they win every game, they become champions. However, they have the tougher run-in and are going to be forced to keep on raising their game.

They have four away games including two against the top four sides, Fountain Gate Princess and Yanga Princess.

Simba Queens- the seasoned contenders, having won Women's Premier League titles in 2020, 2021, and 2022 - currently sit second, one point behind JKT Queens.

Charles Lukula-coached Simba Queens are the Women's Premier League side with the biggest number of goals scored.

That means Simba Queens are in the best possible position in terms of goal difference. Title rivals will do well to catch up with Simba Queens' monster total of 40 goals.

Simba Queens have the kinder run-in and, despite having not showcased their prowess, coach Lukula's side knows what it takes when it is squeaky-bum time.

New kids on the block Fountain Gate Princess are currently placed third on the table, one point behind Simba Queens, having only entered the top flight three seasons ago.

Dodoma-based Fountain Gate Princess is the underdog with nothing to lose. They have shown grit and determination in making their way from the Women's First Division League to potential top-flight champions in just three years. They have got enough talent in the squad to do it.

At the other end of the table, Mkwawa Queens are already relegated and are likely to be joined by either Amani Queens or The Tigers Queens.

## Confident Simba SC braced for second meeting with humbled Ihefu Sports Club

By Correspondent Michael Mwebe

SEEKING a second scalp over their Mbeya counterparts in the space of three days, Simba SC confronts Ihefu SC in Monday's only 2022/23 NBC Premier League game at Highland Estate Stadium in Mbeya.

Simba SC, also nicknamed 'Msimbazi Reds', powered past Ihefu SC 5-1 to progress to the semi-finals of this season's Azam Sports Federation Cup (ASFC) at Azam Complex Stadium in Dar es Salaam on Friday evening.

Scoring goals at an incredible rate has been the theme for Simba SC this season, and the side was in a merciless mood during the quarterfinals of the ASFC.

Jean Baleke's hat trick alongside strikes from Saidi Ntibazonkiza and Pape Sakho put Ihefu SC to the sword.

In today's encounter, Simba SC will be aiming to keep the heat on runaway 2022/23 NBC Premier League leaders, Yanga, with a victory over



Simba SC winger Augustine Okrah (L) negotiates his way past Ihefu SC's defensive midfielder, Samwel Onditi, during this season's NBC Premier League tie which took place in Dar es Salaam in November last year. The duel ended with Simba SC cruising to a 1-0 victory. PHOTO: COURTESY OF SIMBA SC

Ihefu SC. Simba SC remains Yanga's only competition for the Premier League crown.

Head coach Robertinho's troops have amassed a 17-game unbeaten run to climb

up to second on the standings, but have seen the gap between themselves and Yanga grow to eight points with six games to go.

Simba SC could reduce the

gap to five once more with a win over Ihefu SC before Yanga entertains Kagera Sugar in Dar es Salaam on Tuesday.

With games coming thick and fast, Robertinho may ponder rotation in a few positions in his first XI today.

First-choice goalkeeper, Aishi Manula, is expected to keep his place between the posts.

While Israel Patrick impressed as a right-back, Shomari Kapombe could be reinstated, and Joash Onyango and Henock Inonga will continue their central defensive partnership.

The workaholic Mzamiru Yassin is set to continue in the middle of the pitch whereas Sadio Kanoute is likely to return to the starting line up, Erasto Nyoni and Jonas Mkude are also options at Robertinho's disposal.

Clatous Chama will be looking to register his 15th assist of the season alongside Ntibazonkiza as the former operates in the midfield.

Baleke has a chance of continuing playing in attack

following an impressive performance he showcased last weekend.

The somehow out-of-favour Moses Phiri could get much-needed game time as Robertinho is likely to manage minutes of his key players with one eye on next week's Premier League clash against age-old rivals, Yanga.

On the flip side, a humbled Ihefu SC will look to bounce back by taking inspiration from the side's performance in league matches against Azam FC and Yanga, as well as the Mbeya club's recent league form.

Now unbeaten in five outings in 2022/23 NBC Premier League matches, Ihefu SC has climbed to an impressive sixth place in the table.

The most recent of those league successes was the 1-0 defeat of Azam FC in Mbeya on March 14.

In head-to-head stats, Simba SC and Ihefu SC have met in three league matches since the 2020/21 season. Simba SC boasts an unbeaten record in this rivalry, with three wins.

## Flexibles by David Chikoko

