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MPs approve bill to amend social security contributions

“The aim of these amendments is to enhance the participation of individuals serving prison sentences in the distribution of their benefits”

By Guardian Reporter, Dodoma

THE National Assembly has passed the Social Security (Amendment) Bill, 2024, which among other things reduces penalties for late contributions and allows employees with different employers to receive contributions from all their employers with consent.

Ridhiwani Kikwete, the Labour, Youth,

Employment and Disabled Persons state minister in the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) presented the bill in the House, saying that amended law permits members who have not yet reached retirement age to use part of their benefits as collateral for a housing loan.

It also allows for contributions made by a member after retirement up to the age of

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Emmanuel Ringo (R), an agriculturalist with local NGO Floresta Tanzania, pictured in Donyomorwa ward in Siha District yesterday taking herders from the Maasai community who have turned to vegetable farming through methods of combating vegetable diseases. The NGO works to reverse poverty and deforestation in Tanzania by transforming the lives of the rural poor. It has offices in Moshi, Siha, Marangu, Same and Mwanja in Kilimanjaro Region Photo: Guardian Correspondent



Govt happy with police handling of 'abductions'

By Guardian Reporter, Dodoma

PRIME Minister Kassim Majaliwa (pictured) has urged the public to collaborate with security agencies to address the rising cases of abductions, murders and disappearances.

He issued this appeal during the direct question-and-answer session to the leader of government business, in response to a query from Anatropia Theonest (Special Seats-Opposition), who sought information on the government's strategy to prevent such acts.

The premier acknowledged the troubling incidents pointing especially at those involving children, an issue which dominated discussions in the National Assembly yesterday.

The MP has asserted that there are incidents threatening the public peace, showing to have various motives, including jealousy in romantic affinities and occult sacrifices. There are also cases involving abductions and killings of people by law enforcement agencies, she told the House.

Before asking the premier to respond, Speaker Dr Tulia Ackson remarked that

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Government reveals nuclear power wish at US-led summit

By Guardian Correspondent, Nairobi

TANZANIA has outlined plans and readiness to develop nuclear energy as an alternative source of electricity for economic growth and social well-being. Deputy Prime Minister and Energy minister Dr Doto Biteko made these plans at the second US-Africa nuclear energy high level conference yesterday in the Kenyan capital of Nairobi.

The conference brings together leaders from the energy sector, policymakers and experts from various African countries, where the deputy premier stated that nuclear energy would help to ensure

“The US authorities are prepared to collaborate with African nations to advance nuclear energy, providing reliable energy supply and drive economic development

reliable and sufficient electricity supply conforming to international environmental standards.

“Tanzania's readiness to develop and utilise nuclear energy is underscored in the 2015 Energy Policy, the 2009 Mining Policy, the Comprehensive Electricity Sector Development Plan and the Renewable Energy Strategy. All these documents recognise the importance of nuclear energy in meeting the country's energy needs,” he stated.

The government is taking steps to reach this goal, seeing nuclear energy as a clean energy source, as Tanzania has considered

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TANAPA consults on easing of congestion at viewing of wildebeest

By Guardian Correspondent, Arusha

TANZANIA National Parks (TANAPA) administrators are taking measures to combat overcrowding at wildebeest migration viewing sites in the Serengeti National Park.

Massana Mwishawa, the deputy conservation commissioner, set out the new initiative here yesterday at a tourism stakeholders meeting, pointing also at reckless speeding by tourist vehicle drivers, arbitrary deviation from recognised viewing routes and frustrating delays at entry points.

Industry watchers say it is a groundbreaking move set to redefine wildlife conservation and tourism traffic management, integrating advanced technologies to address pressing challenges facing the iconic.

There is need for technological interventions due to an overwhelming influx of tourist vehicles and objectionable tourism practices, he stated, identifying crucial wildebeest crossings in the northern Serengeti area as posing the greater difficulty.

It has pushed TANAPA to address these challenges by upgrading essential infrastructure like roads with funds from the central government, he said, noting that five new patrol vehicles for Mara River area will soon be deployed.

This is to enforce strict regulations and alleviate the crippling congestion at the popular Kogatende site, ensuring the protection of this world-renowned wildlife spectacle, he said.

To foster responsible tourism, TANAPA is conducting daily awareness and sensitization sessions for tour guides, in direct response to growing concerns from stakeholders on ecological threats that the viewing stampede can generate.

He expressed fears on the looming threat to the delicate balance of the wildebeest migration, where nearly two million wildebeest cross the Mara River seasonally to the adjacent Maasai Mara Reserve on the other side of the border, when it is greener.

As a marvel of nature, the migration is

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Njombe regional commissioner Anthony Mtaka (R) and Community Police Commissioner Faustine Shilogile (L) grace yesterday's launch in Njombe town of a national campaign under the Police Gender and Children Desk. Witnessing the event are various community and other leaders as well as students from schools in the neighbourhood. Photo courtesy of Tanzania Police



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Govt happy with police handling of 'abductions'

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Aida Khenani (Nkasi North -Chadema), had recently raised the issue, where the answer given by the government was that the matter demands thorough investigations.

"If you use terms like abductions and murders broadly, this morning I read that a witchdoctor has buried more than 10 people. Are these actions attributed to law enforcement agencies?" the top legislator demanded.

"Every human being has the right to live. We must not create an environment that suggests those who go missing, including children or people boarding buses, are taken by law enforcement agencies," she emphasised.

In his response, the premier stated that the responsibility of defending the country lies with all Tanzanians, in collaboration with security forces, detailing that the security agencies have to receive and investigate reports of breaches of peace. "Once they receive such reports, their duty is to conduct thorough

investigations, and if those investigations identify the perpetrators, they will be brought to justice," he said.

The government remains committed to upholding human rights principles and addressing issues that threaten the country's peace, imperil the safety of citizens and their properties, he said.

"The issue of security is a collective responsibility, alongside our security agencies. Our role is to assist by providing any information that poses a threat to peace, so that our agencies can take appropriate measures to address unrest," he further noted, urging the security forces to pursue efforts to ensure that every report is investigated and those responsible are held accountable.

"I appreciate your initial remarks, Madame Speaker, for addressing any misinformation that might hinder our agencies from performing their duties and demoralising those working tirelessly for our safety. Let us strive to remain secure," he added.

MPs approve bill to amend social security contributions

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70, to be taken up in pension calculations.

He told MPs that amendments affect the National Social Security Fund Act, Cap. 50, the Public Service Social Security Fund Act, Cap. 371, and the Workers Compensation Act, Cap. 263.

A new section, 11A, has been introduced to extend social security coverage to self-employed individuals, with provisions allowing employers to make substantial or total contributions for employees.

Section 12(5) is proposed for amendment to clarify the contribution process for self-employed members, while Section 12A has been added to allow employees with multiple employers to receive contributions from all their employers with their consent.

"The aim of these amendments is to provide members with the flexibility to receive contributions from more than one employer," he explained, elaborating that Section 14(3) has been amended to reduce the penalty for late contributions from five percent to 2.5 percent.

"This change aims to establish a fair penalty amount, lower operational costs for employers and provide a more manageable fine," he specified.

The bill also authorises the board to remove excess contributions with the approval of the minister in charge of social security, easing the burden on institutions that struggle to pay fines due to financial constraints, he said.

New offenses have been introduced for employers who refuse to register or obstruct inspectors during their duties, with Section 15 mandating the director general of a fund to ensure that the total amount is placed into the social security fund.

This will be the case even if it was deducted by an employer and not submitted to the fund, to protect the interests of beneficiaries, he said, insisting that the new amendments seek to improve the management of erroneously received contributions.

They also broaden pension benefits availability for members who have reached retirement age but do not meet the criteria for pension eli-

gibility and have been contributing from ages 61 to 70, he stated.

The bill also introduces a mandatory obligation for employees of companies where the government owns at least 30 percent of shares to be registered with the Public Service Social Security Fund (PSSSF), he stated.

It improves requirements related to recording contributions for employees, allowing members to obtain their contribution history from the relevant fund.

"Section 24 has been repealed to remove the provision allowing a member to withdraw their contribution from the Social Security Fund and cease membership, as this conflicted with social security regulations and was more suited to the savings fund," he stated.

New provisions stipulate that beneficiaries serving prison sentences may authorise in writing that their benefits, or any part of them, be paid to a designated beneficiary.

"The aim of these amendments is to enhance the participation of individuals serving prison sentences in the distribution of their benefits," the minister noted.

The bill amends the Workers Compensation Act by empowering the board to amend or remove any conditions related to benefit payments under the Act when valid reasons arise.

"Section 39 is proposed for amendment to allow the application of time limits to be calculated from the date of the relevant illness," he said.

Additionally, it is proposed that incentives be excluded from the salary used in calculating compensation to ensure fairness among beneficiaries.

Requirements for employers to submit annual income reports to the fund by 31 March each year have also been removed, allowing the director general to request these reports at any time, he added.

"Section 39 is proposed for amendment to allow the application of time limits to be calculated from the date of the relevant illness"



Mafia district commissioner Aziza Mangosongo (in hijab) with members of the Mafia District defence and security during an inspection tour of Banja village in Kirongwé ward on Tembonyama islet chiefly to assess the state of security there before endorsing the signing contracts with investors. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

Government reveals nuclear power wish at US-led summit

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able uranium deposits put at a commercially realisable 58,500 tonnes. This could be used for nuclear power generation, he asserted.

Alternative sources of electricity will allow the country to strengthen commercial partnerships within and outside Africa, where ensuring adequate electricity supply will cement regional integration of power grids.

This is being conducted among eastern and southern African countries and eventually across other

parts of the continent, he explained, affirming that Tanzania wishes to collaborate with various stakeholders, including the United States and other African countries, to advance nuclear energy.

This is particularly important as around 600m people in Africa and up to 10m small businesses still face challenges in accessing reliable electricity, he said, citing data that electricity demand in Tanzania is growing by 10per cent to 15pc annually.

To meet sustainable development

goals, Tanzania needs to attain 10,000 megawatts of electricity by 2030, he said, while Nana Ayensu, the United States president assistant for environmental protection, climate finance and technological innovation, appealed for a change of vision.

He underlined the summit's importance in opening doors for the development of nuclear energy as beneficial for human use and environmental protection in contrast to fossil fuels.

It is also capable of enabling

strengthening cooperation among the participating countries, insisting that nuclear energy will support the wide ranging international clean energy agenda.

This includes the globally promoted clean cooking energy, with President Samia Suluhu Hassan leading the initiative, he said in a complementary remark.

The US authorities are prepared to collaborate with African nations to advance nuclear energy, providing reliable energy supply and drive economic development, he added.



Prime Minister Kassim Majaliwa has a word with Ridhiwani Kikwete (L), Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office (Labour, Youth, Employment and Person with Disabilities), in the National Assembly chamber in Dodoma city yesterday. Photo: PMO

TANAPA consults on easing of congestion at viewing of wildebeest

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a pivotal economic engine drawing waves of international tourists and generating substantial revenues, despite that an escalating number of safari vehicles puts viewing points under pressure.

This number adds to high speeds and reckless driving practices, inflicting unprecedented pressure on the conservation area and its rich biodiversity, he said, with analysts saying the forward-thinking plan by TANAPA signals a new era in wildlife conservation and eco-tourism.

By harnessing advanced technology and enhancing infrastructure, TANAPA is not only preserving the integrity of the wildebeest migration but also is set to transform the tourism experience, making it safer, more efficient, and significantly more sustainable.

During the busy peak seasons, the northern Serengeti, which covers 4,000 square kilometres sees up to 600 vehicles daily, with upwards of 4,200 tourists eager to witness the migration.

Wilbard Chambulo, the Tanza-

nia Association of Tour Operators (TATO) chairman and a notable tourism investor, has voiced concerns over reckless driving at the Kogatende viewing area.

In remarks at the stakeholders meeting, he cautioned that uncontrolled speeding and vehicle numbers could turn Kogatende into a dusty and unappealing site.

The high-speed driving, alongside regulation breaches and the clustering of animals disrupts their natural behaviours and creates safety risks, he said.

Dr Emmanuel Massenga of the Tanzania Wildlife Research Institute (TAWIRI) conducted a study showing that vehicle congestion in the northern Serengeti is adversely affecting wildlife and tourist experiences.

The findings suggest that having up to 600 vehicles per day leads to severe congestion at critical migration points like Kogatende, meanwhile as the proliferation of tented camps worsens the situation.

Meeting participants proposed several pivotal recommendations,

such as creating special zones with added fees for prime viewing spots like Kogatende, Ndotu and Moru.

TANAPA can take up a booking system to control tourist numbers at a given moment, or spacing out viewing, while one suggestion was a minimum three-day stay in Kogatende to enhance visitor satisfaction.

Meeting participants stressed the necessity for improved infrastructure, including picnic areas and multiple game-viewing locations, underscoring the need for manag-

ing invasive species and habitat restoration by planting trees.

The Serengeti, celebrated for its extraordinary migration, is one among the world's premier wildlife reserves, hosting over 1.5m wildebeest along with thousands of zebras and gazelles each year, with famed predators moving alongside the massive herds.

The dramatic Mara River crossing remains a key highlight of this migration, emphasizing its crucial significance in conservation and tourism, he added.



The Guardian Limited's printing manager, Balasubramaniyan Venkadachalam (2nd-L), briefs East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP) officials who toured IPP media outlets in Dar es Salaam yesterday on operations in the TGL printing unit - where TGL's daily newspapers Nipashe and The Guardian are printed. From-R: TGL advertising executive Eliupendo Lema; TGL deputy general manager Jackson Paulo; EACOP's communications lead in Tanzania, Catherine Mbatia; and EACOP's external communications officer (Tanzania) Abass Abraham. Photo: John Badi

Govt for collective action to curb human trafficking

By Getrude Mbago

THE government has called for collective efforts from stakeholders and development partners to fight human trafficking as the vice continues to push a number of innocent people in inhumane conditions.

Ahmad Mwendadi, head of training, advocacy and international cooperation in the Ministry of Home Affairs, made the call in Dar es Salaam yesterday during the opening of a capacity-building session for leaders of major hotels in the country. The session aimed at enhancing their ability to detect incidents of human trafficking.

Mwendadi, also a member of Anti-Trafficking in Persons Secretariat (ATS), noted that despite governmental efforts to address the issue, many men, women and children still fall prey to traffickers both domestically and abroad. He emphasised the need for collaborative efforts by various stakeholders.

He said the government has implemented several measures, including coordination with different departments and authorities to investigate trafficking cases, convict perpetrators and identify victims.

"We work with stakeholders to educate the public about the impacts of human trafficking and violence. Majority of victims are youth, women and children. Today's training is crucial as it provides hotel managers with essential skills to enhance their operations in protecting human rights," he said.

Mwendadi commended Tanzania Relief Initiatives and the US government for their support through various initiatives aimed at advancing human rights protection in the country.

Michael Battle, United States Ambassador to Tanzania, stressed the importance of investing in strategies to strengthen human rights protection by combating trafficking.

He reaffirmed the US government's commitment to advancing peace and security, including fighting against human trafficking which he described as a severe violation of human dignity.

"Human trafficking undermines the foundation of governance and the rule of law. We must be visionary in our efforts to protect the most vulnerable members of society, especially women and children who are disproportionately affected by this issue," he said.

The Ambassador encouraged hotel owners and staff to take an active role in identifying and reporting traffickers, given their unique position to recognise signs of human trafficking.

Edwin Mugambila, chief executive officer of Tanzania Relief Initiatives, underscored the importance of collaboration between the government and hotels in tackling human trafficking.

"Human trafficking is a crime that exploits individuals for various purposes, including forced labour and sexual exploitation. Victims often face severe violence and combating this issue requires firm, coordinated measures," he said.

According to the International Labour Organisation, 40.3 million people are trafficked yearly, with 24.9 million in forced labour. Out of the 24.9 million people, 16 million are exploited in the private sector such as domestic work, construction or agriculture; 4.8 million persons in forced sexual exploitation and 4 million in forced labour imposed by state authorities and 25 percent of all victims of human trafficking are children.



Human trafficking is a crime that exploits individuals for various purposes, including forced labour and sexual exploitation. Victims often face severe violence and combating this issue requires firm, coordinated measures

Samia to host 70 ministers for blue economy meeting in Dar

By Guardian Reporter

PRESIDENT Samia Suluhu Hassan is set to host 70 ministers from the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS) nations next month for a conference on the blue economy.

The discussions will focus on strategies to enhance the fisheries sector and develop a unified approach to the blue economy.

Minister for Livestock and Fisheries Abdallah Ulega announced this in Dar es Salaam yesterday, detailing that the Ministerial Conference on Fisheries, Oceans and Inland Waters for the OACPS member states will be held in Dar es Salaam from September 9

to 13, adding that

President Samia is scheduled to officially open the conference on September 11.

The conference will run concurrently with the International Forum on Strategies for Improving Aquaculture Production Chain.

This forum is organized by the government through the Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries in collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO).

"The integrated conference, the 8th Meeting of Ministers Responsible for Oceans, Inland Waters and Fisheries aims to address various issues within the fisheries sector among member

countries," he said.

"This includes developing a joint strategy related to fisheries and aquaculture policies to strengthen the sector and boost the economies of member states." He further explained that the conference will provide a comprehensive platform for policymakers and experts to discuss opportunities and challenges in the blue economy and develop strategies for overcoming the challenges.

In addition, the conference will feature fisheries experts, government and non-governmental organizations, regional institutions, researchers, universities and small-scale fishers as key stakeholders in the blue economy.

Ulega said that the conference is expected to bring several benefits to Tanzania, including creating investment opportunities in fisheries and aquaculture, improving relations on natural water resources and aquaculture development and expanding market access for fish products.

It will also offer a platform for Tanzanian fishers to learn best practices, build international relationships and attract investment in the deep-sea fishing sector.

The five-day conference will be held at the Mwalimu Nyerere International Convention Centre and will feature remarks from President Samia and Zanzibar president Dr Hussein Mwinyi.



Deputy Prime Minister and Energy minister Dr Doto Biteko pictured in the Kenyan capital, Nairobi, yesterday attending the four-day Second US-Africa Nuclear Energy Summit. Photo: VPMO

UN sounds alarm over deteriorating humanitarian affairs in South Sudan

JUBA

THE humanitarian situation in many states of South Sudan is rapidly deteriorating, with severe disruptions in the delivery of vital aid to vulnerable populations, the United Nations relief agency warned in an update released on Wednesday.

The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) said the safety of humanitarian staff was under severe threat due to escalating abductions and violence.

"While the number of incidents

slightly decreased in July compared to the prior month, this reduction is mainly due to the onset of the rainy season, severely restricting staff and aid movement by road," OCHA said in its latest humanitarian update released in Juba, the capital of South Sudan.

It said humanitarian partners reported 34 incidents in July alone, highlighting an alarming and persistent trend from the previous year.

Last week, OCHA called on all stakeholders to prioritize the safety and security of aid workers in South Sudan as the country remains one

of the most risky environments for humanitarian workers in 2024. It also said some 267 humanitarian access incidents were reported between January and July, with 135 incidents involving direct violence against humanitarian personnel and assets, including 28 incidents of looting and theft.

"The theft and looting of humanitarian supplies, particularly in Western Bahr el Ghazal and Upper Nile states, are significantly undermining the effectiveness of humanitarian operations and eroding community trust," OCHA said in the latest report.

The UN agency also said the sharp devaluation of the local currency further intensifies the crisis, fuelling negative coping mechanisms such as extortion, road banditry, and heightened demands at checkpoints, all of which obstruct aid delivery.

"Authorities are also increasing burdens on humanitarian organizations, including imposing higher taxes, demanding extensive information on staff and assets, interfering in asset management, and involving themselves in recruitment processes," OCHA said.

Minister wants banks to introduce services that uplift blue economy

By Guardian Reporter, Zanzibar

MINISTER for Tourism and Heritage in Zanzibar Mudrik Ramadhan Soraga has called on the banking sector to develop services that robustly support the blue economy agenda for speedier socioeconomic growth.

Soraga made this call on Wednesday during the launch of the International Forum for CEOs in Zanzibar, known as Tanzanite CEO Roundtable Zanzibar Chapter.

The event brought together executives from companies and organizations across Tanzania, Kenya, South Africa and Mauritius to advance the blue economy and empower local businesses.

Under the theme 'Strengthening Domestic Trade and Building a Strong Blue Economy in Zanzibar' the forum also attracted business and economic stakeholders, including investors.

"This event provides a unique opportunity for businesses, institutional leaders and stakeholders to address crucial investment and economic growth issues. As a government, we value this forum as a vital source of advice for sustainable development," he said.

The minister emphasized that the banking sector must create services that advance the blue economy agenda, which is pivotal for economic development and employment.

He urged participants to work collaboratively to enhance the economy of the isles by focusing on tourism, business, fishery and housing sectors.

Ali Sharif, Minister of State for Labour, Economic Affairs and Investment, underscored the importance of regular meetings

among company executives to discuss sector-specific opportunities and challenges.

The discussions, he said, are essential for improving the investment environment and promoting Zanzibar's economy through the blue economy agenda.

Tanzanite CEO Roundtable Zanzibar Chapter is expected to be a catalyst for development, enhancing international collaboration in investment and business and significantly contributing to Zanzibar's economic prosperity.

Abdul Karim Mkila, NBC Bank Branch Manager in Zanzibar, highlighted the importance of collaborating with businesses and stakeholders to promote economic growth. He emphasized banks' role in providing quality services, including loans and insurance to help businesses operate efficiently.

The forum also meant to further enrich discussions and initiatives related to Zanzibar's economic development.



This event provides a unique opportunity for businesses, institutional leaders and stakeholders to address crucial investment and economic growth issues. As a government, we value this forum as a vital source of advice for sustainable development



TANZANIA COFFEE BOARD

VACANCY RE-ANNOUNCEMENT

1.0. OVERVIEW

Tanzania Coffee Board, is a Government body established by the Tanzania Coffee Industry Act. No.23 of 2001 and miscellaneous Amendments Act of 2009, on behalf of **MBOZI COFFEE CURING COMPANY LIMITED** is hereby inviting applications from suitably qualified and experienced, dynamic and motivated Tanzania citizens to immediately fill vacant position of GENERAL MANAGER currently existing in **MBOZI COFFEE CURING COMPANY LIMITED**.

1.1. QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

Holder of a Master degree in processing engineering, Mechanical engineering or Electrical engineering, Master degree in Economics, Master degree in Laws, Master degree in Business Administration or any equivalent qualifications with at least ten (10) years' experience in a senior management position where as four (4) years must be in the coffee management sector.

1.2. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The main responsibility is Managing, planning and co-ordinating the Company's activities with the following specific duties;

- Ensuring effective overall management and supervision of the Company's activities.
- Overseeing the planning and execution of development activities.
- Directing the formulation of policy proposals for consideration by the Board in relation to physical and financial functions of the Company.
- Interpreting policies laid-down by the Board and issuing internal regulations and procedural instructions thereof.
- Preparing annual budgets for the Company and submitting them to the Board for approval.
- Reviewing regularly actual performance against plans, budgets and standards, and submitting reports to the Board detailing performance with recommendations for action necessary to correct adverse variances.
- Establishing the responsibilities of the immediate subordinates and delegating the necessary authority for them to discharge their duties effectively and efficiently.
- Making recommendations to the Board on staffing levels required by the Company and ensuring effective policies and procedures are established for management of human resource at all levels.
- Ensuring that the Company's activities conform to existing laws and regulations in the country.
- Linking the Company with the coffee industry stakeholders
- Acting as the final authority for management decisions within the Company.
- Safeguarding the Company's financial position and ensuring that it discharges its financial obligations.
- Ensuring that all Company's financial transactions are authorized and controlled in accordance with agreed procedures and the proper systems of internal controls are maintained.
- Ensuring that the accounts of the Company are prepared and submitted to the external auditors within four months after the end of the financial year.
- Maintaining harmonious relations between the customers, coffee cooperative unions and other stakeholders.
- Secretary to Board of Directors and will be coordinating all Directors meetings
- Performing any other duties as may be assigned by The Board of Directors

1.3. TERMS OF SERVICE:

The General Manager shall be employed under three (3) year contract terms renewable upon satisfactory performance.

1.4. REMUNERATION:

The post of General Manager at Mbozi Coffee Curing Company Limited has attractive, competitive and negotiable packages for the candidates to work on permanent and pensionable terms.

LOCATION: Mbozi Coffee Curing at Mlowo, Mbozi District, Mbeya Region.

1.5. MODE OF APPLICATION:

Application in own handwriting, enclosing copies of the relevant certificates, printed curriculum vitae with names of three work related referees and their full address to be addressed to:-

Director General
Tanzania Coffee Board
P.O. Box 732
MOSHI
E-mail: applications@coffee.go.tz

1.6. CLOSING DATE:

All applications must be received not later than three (3) weeks from first appearance in this newspaper.

Makala calls on contractor to complete new hospital aptly

By Guardian Reporter

CCM Secretary for ideology, publicity and training Amos Makala has asked the contractor building Mbagala Rangitatu Hospital in Dar es Salaam to complete the work on time so that it can start providing services to area residents.

He also asked the contractor to ensure the hospital is equipped with facilities for people with disabilities and elderly patients seeking medical care.

Makala made the appeal yesterday when speaking at the construction site during an inspection of the six-storey facility which costs 10.8bn/.

"I ask Group Six International Ltd to complete the construction by June next year because we have our own events in October next year," he said.

He said that he was personally interested in the progress of the project because while serving as Dar es Salaam Regional Commissioner he was involved from the initial stages to the final selection of the contractor.

"I participated in the entire process. We decided to build it because Mbagala has a large population. Additionally, there was a problem with the distance and time residents spent traveling to receive medical services at the Temeke Regional Referral Hospital," he said.

Temeke Municipal Medical Officer Dr Jonas Lulandala stated that the municipality has 179 health facilities: 30 public, 133 private, 17 faith-based, and two government agencies. He said the new hospital will serve 438,141 residents.

Dr Lulandala added that the hospital will have 235 permanent staff and 55 contractual staff. Once completed, it will have the capacity to admit 165 patients, provide specialized services, including surgeries on seven to 14 patients daily.

The hospital will also have wards for children, men and women as well as maternity services for 30 to 40 women daily.

He mentioned that sources of funding for the hospital's construction include 2.4bn/- from the Temeke District Council and 2bn/- from the national government.

Mbagala MP Abdallah Chaurembo said: "We are very grateful to the government for providing us with 2bn/- to start construction of this hospital."



Zanzibar's Tourism and Heritage minister, Mudrik Ramadhan Soraga (C), and Minister of State in the Zanzibar President's Office (Labour, Economy and Investment), Sharif Ali Sharif (5th-L), in a souvenir photo in Zanzibar on Wednesday with various business stakeholders and NBC Bank officials led by Zanzibar branch manager Abdul Karim Mkila (4th-L). It was at the launch of the Zanzibar Chapter of Tanzanite CEO Roundtable. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

Health workers get staff quarters, pupils get apt means of transport

By Guardian Correspondent, Meatu

HEALTH workers at Mwamhongo Dispensary, Mwamhongo Village in Meatu District, Simiyu Region will no longer have to walk long distances to work after being given a residential house

The staff house which was handed over yesterday will be used by three families of health workers. Donated by well-wishers, the house was handed over alongside bicycles for pupils at Busangwa Secondary School who come from Ming'ongwa, Butuli, Bulyanhulu and Sakasaka villages. Both the house and bicycles cost 187.01m/-.

Meatu District Commissioner Fauzia Ngatumbura expressed her gratitude for the building and the bicycles which she said will scale up service provision in the area.

"This support came at the right time as health workers lived very far from the health facility, posing a challenge for residents who need services at night," she said.

She asked health workers who will occupy the new building to maintain it and provide good service to the community, urging pupils who received the bicycles to take good care of them.

Jeremiah Masunga, a resident of Butuli Village, thanked the conservation and tour firms that made the donation for the support and stated that people of Meatu will continue to support the companies.

Sylvester Bwasama, representative of the firms, stated that the donation aims to support health workers in providing quality services and to ensure that

pupils arrive at school on time, thereby improving their academic performance.

"The donation is part of the community empowerment initiatives being implemented in the district," he said.

Regarding the 194 bicycles, he said: "The idea for this project arose because pupils have been walking from their respective villages to school. We assessed what type of transportation could reach many of them with minimal challenges and bicycles were found to be suitable and easy-to-use options for them."

He mentioned that the project will be sustainable as when a pupil completes school, they are required to return the bicycle to the school management so that another one joining the school can use it.

OSHA for vigorous safeguard of employees' safety, health

By Guardian Correspondent, Arusha

THE Occupational Safety and Health Authority (OSHA) has urged employers in the country to safeguard employees as the government makes substantial investment in developing skills of human resources.

This was emphasised yesterday here by OSHA chief executive Khadija Mwenda during a seminar on workplace safety and health for employers and branch leaders of the Tanzania Union of Government and Health Employees (TUGHE).

Mwenda explained that considerable government investment has been made,

including funding health services from early childhood to adulthood as well as in education to develop skills.

"The government expects to benefit from the investment by having individuals contribute to economic activities over an extended period," she said.

She added that this can only be achieved if workers are protected from health hazards, accidents and potential fatalities in the workplace.

She urged employers to ensure that robust safety and health systems are in place at their workplaces by following all necessary procedures as outlined

by OSHA.

Joel Kaminyoge, TUGHE chairman, highlighted their collaboration with OSHA in delivering safety and health education to employers and employees nationwide, particularly their members.

"OSHA is a key partner that not only supports our activities but also works with us in various activities for a better workplace," he said.

Regarding the importance of seminars held for employers and TUGHE branch leaders, Kaminyoge stated that the seminars have significantly improved workers' benefits and reduced workplace conflicts.



Advocate Hekima Mwaipopo (R) exchanges greetings with his clients, former Ubungu mayor Boniface Jacob and human rights activist Godlisten Malisa (L) at the Kisutu Resident Magistrate's Court in Dar es Salaam yesterday shortly before the hearing of the duo's case of publishing false information on social media. Photo: Correspondent Imani Nathaniel

'Bad eating habits to blame for high malnutrition in Morogoro Region'

By Guardian Correspondent, Morogoro

DESPITE being one of the country's key food-producing regions, Morogoro has poor nutritional status largely due to inappropriate food consumption and harmful traditions, it has been said.

Morogoro Regional Nutrition Officer Salome Magembe unveiled this recently at an evaluation meeting on the implementation of Nutrition Pact in the region.

Magembe highlighted that certain traditions, such as prohibiting the consumption of specific foods, particularly animal products, contribute to nutritional deficiencies.

only provide funding in the last quarter, which impedes timely implementation of the Nutrition Pact.

Malima instructed district executives to allocate more than 1,555/- per child under five years to support nutrition interventions.

"I want nutrition to be a regular agenda item in all council meetings and in the district security and safety committee meetings," he said.

Morogoro Municipal Mayor Pascal Kihanga said Morogoro Municipal Council has allocated 76.8m/- for nutrition interventions in the 2023/2024 financial year.

He highlighted this in a performance and accountability report at the annual council meeting.

Kihanga revealed that 66m/- of this amount came from local revenue with 10.8m/- sourced from the Health Basket Fund (HBF), the National Health Insurance Fund (NHIF) and the Improved Community Health Fund (iCHF). A total of 72.1m/- (93.9 percent) of the allocated budget, was already utilized.

The Mayor reported that 532 children identified with malnutrition were referred to health facilities and most were discharged after treatment while 17 required further medical care.

"Even though many residents of the region produce a variety of vegetables and fruits each season, these are often not included in their daily meals"

"Even though many residents of the region produce a variety of vegetables and fruits each season, these are often not included in their daily meals," she said.

She urged residents to abandon outdated practices and focus on adopting a balanced diet.

According to Magembe, the current nutritional data for the region reveals a stunting prevalence of 30.6 percent among children under five years old. The rate of underweight children in the age group stands at 3.9 percent while anaemia prevalence is alarmingly high at 68.1 percent.

During the meeting, Morogoro Regional Commissioner Adam Malima directed district executive directors to allocate funds for nutrition interventions every quarter throughout the fiscal year.

He pointed out that some districts

By Guardian Correspondent, Pemba

Six charged with economic crimes for 'clove smuggling'

ZANZIBAR Anti-Corruption and Economic Crimes Authority (ZAECA) yesterday brought six people before High Court of Zanzibar in Chake Chake, Pemba, charged with clove smuggling offences.

The accused, all residents of Wambaa in Pemba, are Yusuf Mohamed Juma (26), Omar Haji Nassor (32), Kombo Juma Haji (28), Hamad Rajab Juma (30), Haji Issa Haji (48) and Abeid Suleiman Ali (48).

While reading the charges, State Attorney Juma Ali Juma from the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP)'s office told Judge Salum

Hassan Bakar that the accused committed the offense on November 13, 2023, at around 10:00am in the islands of Yambo and Sahare in Tanga Region.

It was alleged that the accused were caught with 1,534.5 kilogrammes of dried cloves worth 20,047,750/-, knowingly committing the illegal act.

As per the charges, on November

13, 2023, the accused, as captains and crew of a boat christened 'Yenye Wapewe Wao,' were engaged in smuggling activities in the Indian Ocean, transporting 1,534.5 kilogrammes of dried cloves from Pemba Island to Tanga.

The action is against Section 58 (1) and (2) of Zanzibar's Anti-Corruption and Economic Crimes Act and Sections 3 and 25 of the Special Anti-

Smuggling Unit Act, the court heard.

The accused denied the charges and the court released them on bail with conditions that each to provide a bond of 4,000,000/- and two guarantors who must also provide a bond of 4,000,000/- along with identity card.

Judge Bakar adjourned the case September 19, this year for another mention.

Initiative out to plant five million coffee seedlings in Kagera Region

By Guardian Reporter

CONSERVATIONISTS are set to plant five million coffee seedlings in Kagera Region to enhance environmental conservation and boost the income of local residents.

Colin Francis, Chief Executive Officer of Brazil-based BR Food, announced this initiative in Dar es Salaam yesterday during the launch of a tree-planting campaign at Kerezange Primary School.

Francis explained that the project supports the government's environment protection efforts, particularly by planting trees that help mitigate greenhouse gases.

"We will plant five million coffee seedlings across 1,000 hectares. This project aims to both preserve

the environment and increase income for local communities through trade of this globally sought-after crop," he said.

He noted that the coffee variety chosen is well-suited to the local climate, with planting starting this year and expected to be completed by 2030.

"Brazil and Tanzania share similar climatic conditions, so this phased planting programme is anticipated to yield positive results for both the environment and the economy through coffee trade and carbon offsets," he added.

Ernest Mziray, Investment Manager at African Carbon Agency, stated that the project aims to implement the 'A to Zero' policy to reduce greenhouse gases.

He highlighted that the newly planted trees will contribute to

reducing air pollution and that the project also promotes youth engagement in football at school.

Job Ndubusa, Head teacher at Kerezange Primary School, thanked the partners, noting that the school was chosen for the campaign due to its commitment to environmental protection and its existing tree cover.

In addition to the tree planting, the school also received sports jerseys and footballs from the sponsors.

Coffee cultivation in Tanzania supports approximately 400,000 people across 52 districts and significantly contributes to the national economy, with annual production fetching \$100 million through exports to countries such as Japan, Italy, Germany, and the United States.



Muheza district commissioner Zainab Abdallah (2nd-L, front row) presents sanitary pads to a Kwemkabara Secondary School student yesterday during the launch of a campaign at Kazita village in Amani ward. Photo: Correspondent Steven William



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China's lending to Africa expands for first time in seven years, study shows

NAIROBI

CHINESE lenders approved loans worth \$4.61 billion to Africa last year, marking the first annual increase since 2016, an independent study released yesterday shows.

Africa secured more than \$10 billion in loans a year from China between 2012-2018, thanks to President Xi Jinping's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), but the lending fell precipitously from the start of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020.

Last year's figure, a more than three-fold increase from 2022, shows China is keen to curb risks associated with highly indebted economies, the study by Boston University's Global Development Policy Centre found.

"Beijing appears to be looking for a more sustainable equilibrium level of lending and experimenting with a (new) strategy," said the university centre, which runs the Chinese Loans to Africa Database project.

The new data comes as Beijing prepares to host African leaders next week for the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation, which takes place every three years.

There were 13 loan deals last year involving eight African countries and two African multilateral lenders, the study found.

Last year's biggest items include a nearly \$1 billion loan from China Development Bank to Nigeria for the Kaduna-to-Kano Railway and similar size liquidity facility by the lender to Egypt's central bank.

China has vaulted to the top bilateral lender for many African nations like Ethiopia in recent years.

It has lent the continent a total of \$182.28 billion between 2000 and 2023, the Boston University study found, with the bulk of the finances going to Africa's energy, transport and ICT sectors.

Africa featured prominently in the initial years of BRI, as China sought to recreate the ancient Silk Road and extend its geopolitical and economic influence through a

global infrastructure development push.

China, however, started to turn off the cash spigot in 2019, a shift that was accelerated by the pandemic, leaving a series of incomplete projects around the region, including a modern railway meant to link Kenya with its neighbours.

The reduction in loans was caused by China's own domestic pressures and growing debt burdens among African economies. Zambia, Ghana and Ethiopia have gone into protracted debt overhauls since 2021.

More than half of the loans committed last year, or \$2.59 billion, were to regional and national lenders, underscoring Beijing's new strategy, the study by Boston University found.

"Chinese lenders' focus on African financial institutions most likely represent a risk mitigation strategy that avoids exposure to African countries' debt challenges," it said.

Nearly a tenth of 2023 loans were for three solar and hydropower energy projects, the study found, illustrating a desire by China to move into funding renewable energy instead of coal-fired power plants.

Still, the discernible trends in last year's figures did not offer a clear direction of China's financial engagement with the continent, the study showed, since Chinese institutions also wrote loans to ailing economies like Nigeria and Angola.

"It remains to be seen whether China's partnerships in Africa will retain their quality," the Global Development Policy Centre said.



It remains to be seen whether China's partnerships in Africa will retain their quality,



Group Six International managing director Yi Xiaobo pictured in Dar es Salaam with officials and students who visited one of the company's workshops yesterday to learn about how to manage large construction projects and major commercial buildings yesterday. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

Renovation of schools in Z'bar to cost 11.7bn/-

By Guardian Reporter, Zanzibar

A TOTAL of 11.7bn/- has been set aside for renovation of 22 primary and secondary schools in Zanzibar, a work which is being carried out by the isle's Maritime Anti-Smuggling Unit (KMKM).

Speaking during an inspection of work at Mwera Regeza Primary School yesterday, Head of KMKM-Commodore Azana Hassan Msingiri said that the decision by the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training to assign KMKM the renovation task was a testament to the unit's effective performance.

Msingiri noted that the funds

will be properly used to ensure the renovations meet high standards as KMKM employs skilled workers for the job.

He emphasised that investing in education is a key government activity and quality education is contingent on well-constructed facilities.

He further mentioned that KMKM was handling various construction projects with professionalism, maintaining the trust of both the government and the public.

"The renovation work at Mwera Regeza Primary School will be conducted around the clock to ensure timely completion to allow

pupils to resume their studies without delay," he said.

The anti-smuggling unit also collaborates with the community on various development efforts, including health and other areas.

Saleh Ali Saleh, building supervisor at Mwera Regeza Primary School, reported that the project was progressing well and was expected to be completed by October this year. The renovation includes 19 classrooms and teachers' offices.

He urged the community to protect the educational infrastructure for the benefit of current and future generations.

Khamis Salum Khamis, Mwera Regeza Primary School Headteacher, emphasised the critical nature of the renovation, as the existing buildings were in poor condition and posed safety risks to pupils and teachers.

He noted that the upgraded facilities will benefit 1,151 secondary pupils and 3,220 primary pupils, providing a safer and more conducive learning environment.

Khamis further said that during the renovation period, it is crucial for parents and teachers to collaborate in supporting pupils in their studies to ensure they perform well in national exams at the end of the year.

Pastoralists embrace organic veggie farming after training

By Guardian Reporter, Hai

PASTORALISTS living at Embukoi area, Donyomorua Ward, Siha District in Kilimanjaro Region have embraced organic vegetable farming as an economic activity.

This came after the training and support they received as part of Accelerated Innovation Delivery Initiative (AID-I) implemented by Floresta Tanzania in partnership with the World Vegetable Centre.

Speaking at Embukoi demonstration farm yesterday, Sinyati Ng'ida, Floresta Tanzania agriculture and livestock programme coordinator, highlighted the project's goals of improving seed access, enhancing nutrition and developing value chain for vegetables and spices.

Funded by the United States Agency for International

Development (USAID), the two-year project aims to reach 5,000 people in Kilimanjaro, with 60 percent being youth aged between 15 and 29 with 40 percent being women.

According to her, several farmers have started to embrace organic farming after recognising its benefits both economically and for family nutrition.

"Farmers should embrace organic agriculture so that they can enjoy bumper harvest, assure good health as well as conserve the environment," she said.

She said the organisation provided training on organic farming to pastoralists, village community banking members, pupils, teachers and various food vendors throughout the region.

"We also aim to supply seeds to enhance nutrition from family level

to schools and support farmers in establishing a robust seed system from production to storage," she said.

Jackson Laizer, chairman of Emusoi credit and savings group, reported positive changes in community nutrition due to awareness and support.

"At Emusoi, we focus on tree planting and vegetable cultivation. Importantly, we have been taught how to incorporate vegetables in our meals to improve nutrition," Laizer said.

Lekishon Mollel, chair of traditional leaders at Embukoi noted that the project was of great benefit to the community. "Previously, we lacked knowledge about environmental conservation but after the training, we have embraced sustainable practices in vegetable farming," he said.

MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT TANZANIA PORTS AUTHORITY (TPA)



PUBLIC NOTICE

CHANGES IN THE COLLECTION OF PORT WHARFAGE CHARGES

Tanzania Ports Authority (TPA) would like to inform its esteemed Customers, Stakeholders, and the Public, in and outside the United Republic of Tanzania that, due to the recent changes in legislation, TPA shall resume collecting Wharfage charges on all cargoes, both imports and exports from 1st July, 2024. These charges until recently were being collected through the Tanzania Revenue Authority (TRA) system (TANCIS) on behalf of TPA.

Due to these changes, TPA would like to guide on how the collection of Wharfage charges will be implemented effectively from 1st September, 2024 as explained hereunder:

I. IMPORT CARGO

For the imported cargo, procedures will remain similar where, after completing the Customs Declaration process, customers will be required to log in to the Tanzania electronic Single Window system (TeSWS) or TPA electronic Payment Portal (TePP) to access their invoices for Wharfage charges. After effecting payment of Wharfage, customers will be able to proceed with other processes to acquire the Release Order from TRA, and clearance of their consignments as normal after payment of the Terminal Handling Charges. It is worth noting that all transit imports' wharfage charges shall be paid in USD.

Please note that, a customer will not be able to receive the Customs Release Order until all wharfage bills have been paid.

II. EXPORT CARGO

For Export Cargo, after having completed Customs Loading Declaration procedures and before cargo reception at the Port, customers/ agents will be required to log in to the Tanzania electronic Single Window system (TeSWS) or TPA Electronic Payment Portal (TePP) for Wharfage invoices and affect payment accordingly. Gate Check-In at the terminals will only be possible after settlement of the Wharfage bills and not otherwise.

Due to these changes, TPA kindly requests the full cooperation of its valued customers and stakeholders involved in cargo clearance at the port. This collaboration is crucial in implementing the changes effectively, improving port management, and delivering quality services that benefit both parties and serve the National interest. Further, the TPA Management wishes to inform the Public of its unwavering commitment in the provision of quality services and engagement with all stakeholders, with the ultimate goal being to see that port services are offered efficiently and effectively.

Either, TPA continues to receive feedback through its official communication channels including the TPA Customer Care Centre located on the 6th Floor of the TPA One Stop Centre building.

Feedback is also received through the toll-free phone number 0800-110032, e-mail address customer-care@ports.go.tz, Website: www.ports.go.tz, and social media platforms in **Instagram**, **X (formerly Twitter)** and **Facebook** with the name **@tpa_tz** available 24/7.

Issued by:
Director General,
Tanzania Ports Authority (TPA)



Simanjiro district commissioner Faki Raphael Lulandala addresses residents of Oljoro ward earlier this week on the long-running shortage of potable water they have been experiencing. He said Water minister Jumaa Aweso has promised that the situation will improve sometime next month and that the Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Agency was busy laying pipes under a project meant to further mitigate the challenge. Photo: Correspondent Gift Thadey

TGNP wants Vision 2050 to underscore ending GBV

By Correspondent Halfani Chusi, Dodoma

TANZANIA Gender Networking Programme (TGNP) has recommended that the forthcoming National Development Vision 2050 considers key issues affecting women, including eradication of Gender-Based Violence (GBV).

The rights body has also recommended that the vision outlines strategies for reducing maternal deaths, maintaining food security, increasing access to clean and safe water, and expanding access to affordable clean energy.

Zainabu Mmari, TGNP's Senior Research and Analysis Officer, made the recommendations yesterday in Kondo District, Dodoma Region, during closure of a three-day gender festival.

Mmari noted that TGNP's analysis revealed that the current National Development Vision 2025, which is being implemented, lacked adequate public involvement during its preparation, leading to a general lack of understanding among citizens.

She pointed out significant gender gaps in the five priority areas of the 2025 vision.

"The challenge we identified is that many people did not understand how the vision was intended to improve their living standards," she said.

Over the three days, TGNP assessed participation levels of various groups in preparing the new vision, with a focus on women and rural communities, acknowledging progress in several areas but highlighted persistent gender disparities in the vision's priorities.

She also mentioned a lack of indicators to measure achievement of the vision, particularly regarding gender issues.

"These challenges have prompted us to continue raising awareness about the importance of contributing to the next vision," she said. "We aim to ensure that citizens understand the current vision and provide input for the next one to help shape Tanzania's future over the next 25 years."

Fredina Saidi, TGNP's Coordinator for Information and Knowledge Centres from Ukenyenge Ward, Kishapu District in Shinyanga Region, praised increased community awareness about the document.

Saidi noted that participation initiatives have helped community members to articulate their views on health, water, education and infrastructure.

"We have a significant responsibility to address our challenges and express our desires for the new vision," she said.

Earlier, Kondo District Commissioner Fatma Nyangasa encouraged residents to make the most of the education gained from the festival.

She described the festival themed 'Integrated Vision for 2050: 30 Years since the Beijing Conference-Let's Plan Together' as an important and productive event.

She promised that all concerns raised would be addressed to ensure progress in the district.

To combat gender-based violence in the district, Nyangasa announced the formation of community committees dedicated to protecting the rights of women and children.

Nigeria becomes first African country to get mpox vaccines

LAGOS

NIGERIA has become the first African country to obtain mpox vaccines after receiving 10,000 doses from the US.

Nigerian authorities have reportedly prioritized five states (Bayelsa, Edo, Cross-River, Lagos and Rivers) with the highest burden of mpox cases.

Mpox cases have been confirmed in more than 10 of Nigeria's 36 states.

The ceremonial signing in Abuja on Tuesday came one week after the World Health Organisation declared mpox a global health emergency.

"Today's handover ceremony symbolizes more than a transfer of vaccines, it exemplifies the power of international cooperation in addressing global health challenges and local health challenges," Dr Muyi Aina, Executive Director and CEO of the National Primary Healthcare Development Agency said.

"We're aware that this vaccine is not exactly in surplus supply. I believe we are getting 10,000 of the about 200,000 doses that are available globally."

The United States government has donated the Jynneos (MVA) vaccine to Nigeria.

Getting an mpox vaccine can help prevent infection. It is recommended for people at high-risk of getting mpox.

The Democratic Republic of Congo is the epicentre of the global outbreak. The US has pledged to donate to the country 50,000 doses.

The US envoy to Nigeria explained why Nigeria received the first delivery.

"Nigeria government has put together a vaccination plan. So, there's a plan on how to use these vaccines effectively, how to make sure we get the most effect out of this 10,000 vaccine donation. So that's very much why Nigeria was chosen to receive this first batch. We will continue to work with Nigeria on efforts to stop the spread of the mpox," Dr Aina said.

According to the WHO, most people with mpox recover within two to four weeks.

The goal of treating mpox is to take care of the rash, manage pain and prevent complications.



Kiteto district commissioner Remidius Mwema lends a hand in the initial stages of the construction of a building at new secondary school in Makame Ward to which the government has allocated 584m/-. Photo: Correspondent Gift Thadey

Experts seek to boost fertiliser use in Africa

By Special Correspondent

FERTILISER experts have met in Nairobi, Kenya, to discuss ways to increase fertiliser use among farmers in Africa.

The three-day African Fertiliser and Soil Health Post-Summit workshop brought together more than 100 delegates from the African Union (AU), regional economic blocs, researchers as well as government officials from across Africa to enhance the use of fertiliser to boost food security in the region.

"Fertiliser consumption among smallholder farmers, who make up most

farmers in the region and farm most of the land, has grown in the past decade, but it is still far below what is needed as farmers face numerous challenges that limit their effective fertiliser demand," said Panduleni Elago, senior adviser at the AU Commission's Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Programme.

Elago noted that the majority of farmers have limited access to finance, which also affects their demand for fertiliser and other inputs.

Jean Baptiste Havugimana, director of productive sectors at the East African Community (EAC) secretariat,

said the continent has initiated many programmes, including the Africa Fertiliser Financing Mechanism, which is a special fund that seeks to improve agricultural productivity by providing the financing required to boost fertiliser use in Africa to achieve the target of 50 kg of nutrients per hectare.

Havugimana said the EAC fertiliser policy provides a roadmap to develop legal instruments, strategies, and projects in the fertiliser industry to achieve food security and rational agricultural production.

Tilahun Amede, head of Resilience, Climate and Soil Fertility at the

Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa, said agro-dealers and other rural entrepreneurs can play a role in triggering farmers' demand for new fertiliser products through innovative measures that blend micro-nutrients to boost soil health.

Wole Fatunbi, acting director of research and innovation at the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa, which is the apex continental body for agricultural research, said that crop yields are low as a result of insufficient use of agricultural inputs such as fertiliser, coupled with a dependency on rain-fed agriculture.



Maryam Ayoub (R), a records officer with the National Records and Archives Authority, briefs Deus Sangu (2nd-L), Deputy Minister of State in the President's Office (Public Service Management and Good Governance), during the latter's working visit to the agency in Dodoma city yesterday. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

WHO concerned about declining condom use among adolescents

GENEVA

THE World Health Organization's office for Europe on Thursday decried a decline in condom use by adolescents in recent years, warning of risks of infections and unplanned pregnancies.

The findings come in the latest report by WHO Europe on health behaviour in school-age children and were drawn from surveys of nearly a quarter-million 15-year-olds across 42 countries between 2014 and 2022.

"While results varied widely across countries and regions, the most important observed trend since the

(health behaviour in school-age children survey) in 2014 is declines in some countries and regions in condom use among sexually active 15-year-olds," said Dr Hans Kluge, WHO Europe regional director, in a preface to the report.

He said the results, which also examined the use of contraceptive pill, were "dismaying" but "not surprising," in light of neglected sexuality education in many countries. WHO and the authors urged decision-makers to do more to improve it.

In the countries where "age-appropriate" sexuality education is available, "it has increasingly come

under attack in recent years on the false premise that it encourages sexual behaviour," Kluge added.

Among the sexually active teens surveyed, the percentage of boys who said they had used a condom in their last sexual intercourse dropped to 61 percent in 2022, from 70 percent in 2014. Among girl respondents, the figure dropped to 57 percent from 63 percent over the same span.

Overall, the proportion of teens who reported having intercourse remained "relatively stable" since 2014 – with one in five 15-year-old boys and 15 percent of girls of the same age reporting having

had sex. The figure for boys was down slightly from 2018 when one in four reported having had intercourse.

Among other findings, teens from poorer, or "low-affluence," families, were more likely to have reported not using a condom – one in three compared to one in four among teens from wealthier backgrounds, Copenhagen, Denmark-based WHO Europe said.

Condom use among girls was lowest in Albania (24 percent) and highest in Serbia (81 percent), the report found. For boys, the lowest rate of use turned up in Sweden (43 percent), while the highest rate was in Switzerland (77 percent).

Food processing just part of service sector jobs 'panacea'

As experts all over Africa, both local and foreign, raise acute questions not just as relates to youth employment issues at the moment but more so in the future, specialised units or institutions are predictably drafting a variety of responses.

One such affirmation is that Africa's population aged between 15 and 35 years is expected to reach one billion by 2063.

This scale of population growth and declining industrial employment due to global trade in automated manufactures leaves narrow openings for vast demand needing much labour, including in food processing.

A recent study by Akademiya 2063 think-tank in Equatorial Guinea and the University of Montpellier in France says that food processing offers a sustainable avenue for youth employment.

The study from the so-called Malabo Montpellier Panel said that food processing would take a sharp turn for the better with a rise in urban population. It refers to a growing class of wealthier, time-constrained, mostly urban populations in Africa looking for shelf-stable, ready-to-eat, ready-to-cook or easy-to-prepare processed foods. Excellent...

While it is true that the demographic pattern is changing the types and amounts of food in demand, the food processing sector definitely will be on the rise more and more.

However, it is also true of knitted fabrics rather than 'specials' and second hand clothing, etc. It is also in part true of mushrooming garages repairing all sorts of motor vehicles with varying spans of longevity as most of them are second-hand. Similarly, it would appear that selling used clothing is likely to remain for many years.

All these are spheres or sub-sectors taking up large numbers of

youths leaving school and locked out from 'office jobs' as the public sector is stationary or hires on a margin periodically, in taking up new graduates or school leavers.

There was a note of alarm in the way in which the think-tank reported ascertained the likelihood of an increase in the urban population from 43 per cent of total population in 2020 to over 60 per cent by 2050.

That said, wealth is also on the horizon as the new middle class projected would then account for 42 per cent of the population - but by 2060. Up to 40 per cent would still be poor but perhaps less penury would then be prevailing.

While these projections leave out the severity of climate change and what it might imply for economic activities, there is a minor chance for the world to come up with solutions that do not rely on suppressing the use of carbon fuels.

Re-greening the deserts is an obvious requirement, success would largely depend on desalination being conducted on sea water and pumped into vast reservoirs made out of dammed enclosures in patches of desert. The salt could thereafter be recycled for use as fertiliser on farmlands.

The report's emphasis on food processing is likely to be exaggerated as there will not be mass food processing industries as food is best cooked than processed and, when processing is needed, large automated firms will dominate the scene.

Yet there is vast scope for value addition on things that are now hugely perishable, but this sphere struggles from periodic overproduction of fruits, green vegetables and even grain, while grain can at least be stored for long.

Thus, novel urban farming, gardening and earning a few coins would likely be more usable than processing as such.

Planting 8m trees annually to save diminishing Kili glacier is salutary

NATURAL resources administrators and private sector interests are seeking to build synergies, with the implementation of one project expected to see eight million trees planted annually on the slopes of Mount Kilimanjaro.

This campaign is intended to prevent the disappearing and iconic glacier at the main peak of the mountain, according to the sector deputy minister. It was in response to a parliamentary question from a legislator asking what the government was doing to protect the fading glacier.

Explaining what is obvious, the deputy minister gave the primary cause of the reduction in ice on the peak as global warming due to climate change.

Still, there are varying aspects to climate change, the global tendency determining how far the ozone layer has been damaged already - and implying a higher impact of ultra-violent sunrays.

The other sphere is local, and here tree planting helps to reduce temperatures and stabilise water supply - as in the case of the recovery of river Themis in Arusha city.

The situation can be said to be somewhat dire on Mount Kilimanjaro's slopes as there are occasional reports of extensive deforestation, fires in the national park areas on its lower slopes, below-normal rains, drought and intensely dry winds.

The latter is a sort of El Niño phenomenon that has been cited as causing vast drought in central regions of southern Africa including Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe. El Niño in other parts of the region was

characterised by excessive rains and frequent floods.

Raising public awareness about tree planting and environmental conservation is perfectly all right but it might prove more helpful to use allocated funds less on radio and television programmes, festivals and expert observances.

The more fruitful activity may be engaging youths waiting to load or unload vehicles in municipal streets or doing occasional farm labour in rural areas to get an opening for regular payment planting trees.

Innovation like obtaining a few drones now being made locally by youths in some technical colleges, using them to throw seeds after rough passage of a power tiller, and then sprinkling some water for weeds or shrubs to grow will likely prove far more helpful.

With that kind of approach, the government in collaboration with stakeholders could reach vast heights especially by paying for drones in sowing seeds or sprinkling water while it allocates funds to pay youth labourers.

The private sector is usually available to assist good causes, but there are far too many clever people wishing for such initiatives to be placed wholly in council hands for their own good.

These may be less than forthcoming when it comes to transparency in purchases or in accounting for expenditure, thus getting far fewer contributors were they to issue yet other calls.

Proper design takes care of those unknowns to convince people that it is trees they want and not another round of coaxing the private sector to assist with allowances.

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By Rahat Kapur

AS Bloomberg Media surpasses 600,000 subscribers worldwide, the news organisation's chief digital officer, Julia Beizer, has spoken on the evolving nature of digital news and how the company is staying ahead of industry shifts.

In the fast-paced world of financial journalism, few names carry the weight and authority of Bloomberg Media. What began as a bold venture by Michael Bloomberg in 1981, offering financial data through Bloomberg Terminal, has since evolved into a global media juggernaut.

Over the decades, the news organisation has grown into a multifaceted empire - spanning television, radio, print, and digital platforms - setting benchmarks for financial news and analysis worldwide.

However, the transition from a single-product company to a multimedia powerhouse has not been without its challenges. As the digital age unfolded and the internet revolutionised the way information was consumed, Bloomberg had to adapt quickly.

Recognising the need to expand beyond the terminals that had anchored its early success, the mid-1990s saw the launch of Bloomberg's website, marking the news firm's entry into the digital realm. Now, as online consumption dominates news, the organisation has been forced to innovate and stay ahead of industry shifts.

At the helm of this digital transformation today is Julia Beizer, Bloomberg Media's chief digital officer. With a career rooted in digital strategy and product development, Beizer is steering Bloomberg Media through its digital evolution.

Before joining the news firm, Beizer held key positions at HuffPost and The Washington Post, where she led HuffPost's first-ever redesign and rebrand, launched innovative projects in virtual reality (VR) storytelling, and explored new digital journalism formats.

At The Washington Post, she managed product roadmaps for web, mobile and connected devices and played a pivotal role in bringing the publication to platforms like Facebook Instant Articles and Apple News, while driving digital subscription growth through strategic partnerships.

Campaign has followed up with Beizer to delve into the firm's approach to navigating the rapidly changing digital landscape. She discussed the company's strategies, touching on everything from AI integration to privacy concerns and the challenges posed by shifting digital consumption trends.

Over the past three years, Bloomberg Media introduced several digital enhancements aimed at meeting the evolving demands of its audience, including the introduction of real-time watchlists, vertical video content, and significant upgrades to its mobile app, all of which prioritise user experience.

Gaining subscribers, navigating algorithm uncertainty and leveraging AI in the news

Under Beizer's leadership, the organisation has also seen a notable increase in its subscriber base, recently surpassing 540,000 subscribers globally (over 600,000 at the time of publishing this piece). This milestone, achieved just after the sixth anniversary of Bloomberg Media's paywall, was reached faster than expected.

Beizer attributes this growth to a focused, consumer-driven content strategy. "We got there by continuing to be laser-focused on our consumer-focused content, and - among other strategies - adding value in our subscription-only newsletter offerings," she said.

She added that subscriptions have been a promising model for APAC (Asia-Pacific region) with 20 per cent of the subscribers living in the region and the remaining proportion from Europe and the US.

Marketing campaigns are also rolled out where the company's digital products are targeted according to consumer needs in APAC.

Meanwhile, media sales and brand partnerships form a key part of Bloomberg's monetisation strategy, with its commercial partnerships "expanding beyond the standard advertising model".

The rise of social media has also significantly altered how the organisation approaches its business. As of February 2024, globally, social media users have surpassed five billion, with Southeast Asia (SEA) emerging as one of the most active regions.

Platforms like Facebook, TikTok and X (previously known as Instagram) dominate the landscape and users in SEA are engaging more frequently and for longer periods than in many other parts of the world.

This shift has fragmented the news ecosystem, making it more fast-paced while also raising significant concerns about privacy and data security.

Social media's role in the dissemination of news has both democratised information and complicated the media landscape.

On one hand, these platforms have made news more accessible, allowing users to consume and share content instantly. On the other hand, the algorithms that dictate what content is seen have raised questions about bias, misinformation and the privacy implications of data-driven advertising.

These concerns are particularly pronounced in regions like SEA, where social media use is high and regulatory frameworks are still catching up with the rapid pace of digital innovation.

Beizer explained Bloomberg Media's approach to this shift: "Research shows that over 80 per cent of consumers are getting their news across a wide variety of places - online, social media, TV, video, podcasts, events, the list goes on.

The sense of information overload is real, which is driving audiences to seek out quality over quantity - quality information and a quality experience.

Consumers want to go to a brand they can trust.

Beizer elaborates: "For years, audiences have nibbled at premium publishers' content - sporadically consuming information from various platforms.

"That relationship worked for users, platforms and publishers for a long time and still allows us to introduce millions of new users every month to Bloomberg journalism. But as news consumers continue this 'flight to quality', our strategy is to continue enhancing our own products and experiences so that users seek us out directly.

"Our recent enhancements to our homepage and mobile app were aimed squarely at improving the experience for our subscribers, who spend most of their time with us on those two products."

While social media platforms will always play a part in Bloomberg's growth strategy, Beizer also emphasized the need to adapt, saying: "Social media platforms will always be part of our growth strategy, but with ongoing uncertainty around algorithm changes to news feeds, we are doubling down on our 'audience-first' approach."

Where there are social media, there's data - and with data comes the opportunity for targeted advertising, but also the challenge of maintaining user privacy. Social media platforms generate vast amounts of data from user interactions, preferences, and behaviours.

These data are incredibly valuable for media organisations like Bloomberg, which use it to better understand their audiences, personalise content and refine advertising strategies.

This is particularly crucial for elements such as programmatic advertising, where advertisements are automatically placed in front of the most relevant audiences.

Beizer explained how Bloomberg Media leverages these data within its programmatic advertising strategy: "We are a data-rich publisher and have a growing first-party data set along with lots of tools and resources. Being a direct business comes with immeasurable benefits.

"Knowing our users helps us better meet their needs. It helps us convert and retain them as subscribers. And it also benefits our advertising clients. When I meet with clients around the world, they are curious about our subscribers and want to know what insights we have about them."

By harnessing the data generated through both direct user interactions on its platforms and from broader social media trends, Bloomberg can offer highly targeted advertising solutions.

However, as privacy concerns grow and regulations tighten, Bloomberg Media has had to navigate these challenges with care.

"We believe that the best strategy for evolving regulation is to put your

customer's privacy first. We treat our consumers' data with the utmost care and give our users control over how their data are used. Keeping those two principles in mind has helped us navigate evolving global regulations - and serve our customers well in the process," Beizer emphasized.

Beizer also noted that having first-party data has been an extraordinary asset in the programmatic space, enabling Bloomberg Media to help clients find their audiences on its platform and across its ecosystem.

She said it was data like these that have enabled Bloomberg Media to pivot to new digital formats, including video content and streaming services, which now present a significant opportunity - particularly in adapting traditional news delivery models to modern consumer behaviours.

In her words: "The shift to streaming presents a tremendous opportunity for companies like ours with a strong broadcast heritage. We have more premium video content than any other financial journalism player, and we see streaming as a way for us to reach new global audiences as consumer behaviours shift.

"We also see an opportunity to innovate. The future of video news doesn't have to look like its broadcast heritage. Through our Bloomberg Originals slate, we have leaned into documentary storytelling to allow our audiences to go deeper on topics that are of interest to them across regions including APAC."

Finally, what about AI (artificial intelligence)? As the media landscape continues to evolve, AI is becoming increasingly central to Bloomberg Media's strategy.

Beizer highlighted the company's stance on AI: "Bloomberg has been an active leader in the space for more than a decade. We have leveraged AI to provide summaries of the top three stories of the moment for consumers in our app in a feature called The Bulletin.

"We also use AI in our first-party data platform, Audience Accelerator, which uses first-party data to inform machine-learning models that predict the population of users on the site that are likely to be in a certain group such as C-suites or tech decision makers."

Beizer also sees generative AI as a potential game-changer for the industry: "Generative AI is of major interest to the industry right now. These tools have the potential to impact Internet search, which will have implications on how news online is going to be discovered."

As Bloomberg Media continues to innovate, AI will undoubtedly play a crucial role in how the organisation adapts to the ever-changing landscape of digital media.

"The future of our industry will be shaped by how well we harness these technologies while maintaining the trust and integrity that our brand has built over decades," Beizer noted.

• **campaign**

By correspondent Emmanuel Onyango

THE term “hero” has its origins in ancient Greek, where it described a mortal man who performed extraordinary feats far beyond the scope of normal human experience, leaving an immortal memory behind him after death.

A hero, or heroine in the case of a woman, is a real person who confronts danger and adversity with ingenuity, passion, courage, or strength to achieve success.

Heroes are often seen as warriors who sacrifice their lives in the pursuit of human rights and dignity, demonstrating their greatness through their brilliance and efficiency on the battlefield, fighting for the interests of their nation and bringing about victory.

Honoring these heroes helps define ideals such as courage, embodying the qualities a community aspires to emulate. In this spirit, the Tanzanian government has established a special day to honor the country's heroes, commemorating its freedom fighters and dedicated soldiers who have participated in various wars since independence.

Historically, in what is now Tanzania, known then as Tanganyika, local traditional rulers were resistant to colonial rule by the Germans and later the British. They waged wars in protest against the administration imposed upon them.

The colonial regime was widely resisted by the African population, as it prioritized the colonial powers' interests over the welfare of the local people. Notable local leaders who resisted colonial rule included Chief Mkwawa of Iringa, Kinjikitile Ng'wale of Lindi, and Songea Mbanu of Ruvuma, among others.

Even after achieving independence in the early 1960s, Tanzanian leaders engaged in the liberation struggles of other African nations still under

Heroes' Day: Celebrating warriors who sacrificed their lives in pursuit of human rights and dignity



President Samia Suluhu Hassan led Tanzanians in marking National Heroes' Day at Mashujaa Grounds in Dodoma this July 25th.

colonial rule. Under the leadership of Mwalimu Julius K. Nyerere, Tanzania supported the liberation of countries such as Mozambique, Angola, and Zimbabwe. Nyerere, who later became the chairman of the Frontline States, played a significant role in these efforts.

In the late 1970s, Tanzania found itself at war with Uganda, led by military ruler Idi Amin, who invaded Tanzania's territorial integrity. This conflict violated the Organization of African Unity (OAU) charter, which required African states to respect each other's colonial-era borders. Amin's forces seized a portion of land in the Kagera region, declaring it part of Uganda. Tanzania had no choice but to launch a military response to pro-

tect its borders, an effort known as the 'Kagera War'.

These historical struggles and sacrifices led the Tanzanian government to make July 25th each year as Heroes' Day, or popularly known as 'Siku ya Mashujaa' in Kiswahili, to honor those who bravely fought and died for the nation's freedom and sovereignty.

The date marks the withdrawal of Tanzanian troops from Uganda, marking the end of the six-month Kagera War, which cost the nation an estimated US\$500 million.

Heroes' Day is observed with various activities, including prayers and special services led by religious leaders from Muslim and Christian communities to

honor the fallen heroes and pray for the nation's peace. Across Tanzania, citizens use this day to pay homage to the brave men and women who sacrificed, often with their lives, to ensure the country's freedom and prosperity.

This year, President Dr. Samia Suluhu Hassan presided over the Heroes' Day commemoration, laying a wreath and a symbolic shield and spear at the newly constructed ceremonial heroes' tower in Dodoma, the government capital.

In her speech, she reaffirmed her administration's commitment to upholding peace, stability, and unity, values instilled by the country's founding fathers and which remain a source of national pride. She urged citizens to remember

and honor the freedom fighters, including the iconic figure Mwalimu Julius Nyerere, whose dedication and patriotism laid the foundation for Tanzania's liberation from colonial rule.

President Hassan also called on Tanzanians to maintain the values of peace, love, tranquility, and solidarity to honor the memory of the fallen heroes. Tanzania takes pride in commemorating its heroes by maintaining memorial sites, such as cemeteries for soldiers who died in liberation struggles, including those who fought in the Kagera War and other regional conflicts. These cemeteries, like the one in Naliende, Mtwara, and another in Kaboya, Bukoba, are a testament to the sacrifices made by these individuals.

Prominent figures in Tanzania's history as freedom fighters include many notable names, such as Bibi Titi Mohammed, the first woman to take an active role in the country's political liberation movement. The country also honors those who participated in the Zanzibar Revolution, led by Sheikh Abeid Amani Karume and figures like Field Marshal John Okello, a Ugandan who played a significant role in the revolution.

During the Kagera War, key military leaders such as General Abdallah Twalipo, David Musuguri, Lieutenant General Silas Mayunga, Major General Mwita Marwa, and Yusuf Himid were instrumental in achieving victory. These individuals and their contributions are celebrated as an integral part of Tanzania's legacy, shaping the nation's identity and values.

By Guardian Correspondent

Right to healthy, clean environment: Need for increased awareness among local communities

ENVIRONMENTAL rights are a cross-cutting issue of which its history evolved significantly over the years. The United Nations (UN) played a pivotal role in its development whereas the idea was initially discussed in the early 1970s, leading to a number of international agreements and declarations.

In 1972, the UN organized the Stockholm conference on human environment which was held in Stockholm, Sweden. The conference marked the first major international gathering focusing on environmental issues following growing global concerns about environmental degradation, pollution, and the impact of human activities on the planet.

The conference was a watershed moment in environmental diplomacy. It marked the beginning of global recognition of the interdependence between human rights and the environment. It set the stage for future international environmental law and policy, underscoring the importance of environmental protection as a fundamental aspect of human rights and well-being.

Tanzania is one of the countries that emphasize on environmental rights as well as people's rights to healthy environment. During the conference in Stockholm, 156 out of 193 countries voted to endorse these rights in human life.

Various countries around the globe have started to adopt these rights into their constitutions and legal frameworks, including policies and strategies.

Tanzania has made progress in implementing these rights as they are recognized in the constitution and various laws as fundamental rights.

Tanzania has various laws that protect land, environmental, wildlife, and forest conservation rights. There are also policies and by-laws that operate at district and regional levels. All these laws and policies are designed to facilitate better access to health and environmental rights.

Recently, WWF Tanzania through the 'Voices for Diversity' programme brought together stakeholders from Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), youth and others to discuss how they can actively participate in advocacy for inclusive conservation and rights to healthy environment in biodiversity conservation.

The intended objective of the session was to raise awareness of the right to a clean, healthy, and sustainable environment among rights bearers, discuss



Participants of the workshop on inclusive conservation and rights to healthy environment in biodiversity conservation that was organised by WWF Tanzania through its Voices for Diversity programme

policies governing this right, and gather their concerns and opinions on its adoption and implementation in Tanzania.

Need for increased awareness

This right needs to be understood by everyone because sometimes people deny themselves these rights unknowingly. Though it has been adopted in Tanzania, there are still many people who are unaware of the rights and how they are supposed to be implemented.

Steven Kapinga, an Environmental Scientist and Activist, said that the environment and human beings are interdependent because the existence of a healthy environment helps humans enjoy their other rights, and at

the same time, human rights help to preserve the environment.

The UN General Assembly adopted the resolution recognizing the right to live in a clean and safe environment in August 2022. Tanzania recognizes and respects this right as a human right, as it is one of the countries that endorsed it.

Kapinga, who was the training facilitator, noted that it is crucial for these rights to be included in the country's constitution since the environment is essential for the nation's workforce.

Although the right to a clean, safe, and healthy environment is stated in Section 4 of The Environmental Management Act, 2004, if it is included in the constitution, there will be no loop-

holes to violate it since the constitution is the supreme law, he added.

Elinuru Isaya, is the student at Sokoine University of Agriculture (SUA) and Project Coordinator at the Tanzania Youth Biodiversity Network (TYBN), he told The Guardian that the knowledge gained will empower him and fellow youth to become good ambassadors advocating for environmental protection and sustainable development within their communities and beyond.

Isaya added that the workshop was a significant step towards promoting environmental awareness and action among local communities countrywide by providing a platform for dialogue and knowledge sharing.

"We have been equipped

with the necessary tools to advocate for a sustainable future. The insights gained from this workshop will help us in advocating for development of effective policies and initiatives to address environmental challenges, thus ensure the well-being of the people," he said.

Threats of the rights to healthy environment

Climate change contributes in putting human safety at risk. Kapinga said that the impact of climate change, the unsustainable management and use of natural resources, the pollution of air, land and water, the unsound management of chemicals and waste, and the resulting loss in biodiversity interfere with the enjoyment of these rights.

He said the number of

people in the world is increasing every day, with the global population currently estimated at 8.2 billion according to Worldometer. This increase is causing the earth to lose its capacity to accommodate all the people, leading to intense competition for resources, especially water, as it cannot be reproduced.

The scarcity of resources especially water is dangerous posing threats to people's safety. Pollution of water sources denies people their fundamental right to access clean water while misuse of land leads to a loss of soil fertility, thus affecting food production and leading to food insecurity.

Environmental pollution also contributes to denying people the right to live in a clean and safe environment, he added.

Saving the environment

There are a number of global and local efforts towards rescuing environmental threats, the presence of international conventions which involves different countries such as The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) are meant to ensure a healthy planet.

CBD is the international legal instrument for 'the conservation of biological diversity, sustainable use of its components and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources' that has been ratified by 196 nations.

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change aims to stabilize greenhouse gas concentrations at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic (human induced) interference with the climate system.

Others are the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) and the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS).

All these conventions were enacted to deal with issues related to environmental conservation. Countries agreed to collaborate in executing these conventions because the environment and biodiversity issues are cross cutting and do not have boundaries.

There are also local laws and policy reforms whereas major strides have been made compared to the past (1970s). Currently, all the policies in Tanzania must state on how the particular sector is going to deal with environmental issues.

Ukraine's long walk to freedom: The 33 years of independence and democracy

By Dzvinka Kachur

ON 24 August 1991, Ukraine declared its independence from the Soviet Union, reclaiming its right to be a sovereign democratic state. In the 20th century, Ukrainians declared the independence of the country multiple times - the independence lasted from three years to a few days in 1918, 1938 and 1941.

In a 1991 referendum, 90.3% of Ukrainians voted for independence. Since then, democracy has become a core value, with more than 80% of the population committed to it by 2023. The Act of Ukrainian Independence, approved by Parliament, was drafted by dissidents like Levko Lukyanenko, who spent 27 years in Soviet prisons for his political views - a struggle that resonates with South Africa's own fight for freedom.

Russian violence on Ukraine

About 900 days after Russia's full-scale invasion, Ukraine's Independence Day serves as a powerful reminder of the generations of Ukrainians who have fought for their freedom. Russia's invasion in 2014 and the subsequent full-scale war in February 2022 echo the numerous military conflicts the Russian Empire has waged to achieve the status of one of the largest countries in the world and to maintain its colonies.

Since February 2024, Russia has launched 9,600 missiles and nearly 14,000 drones, damaging or destroying 6,203 civilian buildings, including more than 2,000 schools, 742 hospitals and 500 churches. Russia has targeted Ukraine's energy system, attempting to force the country into submission. More than 50% of the targets for Russian missiles and drones have been civilian infrastructure.

The humanitarian consequences are severe, with more than 10 million Ukrainians displaced, thousands killed and those in Russian-occupied territories facing daily repression, religious persecution and physical torture. The devastation in cities like Bakhmut and Mariupol, and the stories from Bucha and Irpin, make it hard to comprehend that the Russian army could commit such brutality. However, for those acquainted with Ukrainian history, this is not surprising.

For example, on 2 November 1708 the Ukrainian city of Baturyn was destroyed by Moscow's army - killing 15,000 civilians, including women and children. This was a response to Ukrainian leader Ivan Mazepa's attempt to regain independence from Moscow's Tsar. This leader has never travelled to South Africa, and yet his name did so on a ship. That is how Mazeppa Bay, a place of serene beauty on the Eastern Cape's Wild Coast, earned its name.

The roots of Ukrainian democracy

Ivan Mazepa was one of the leaders of the Ukrainian Cossack Republic, a viable political entity with its own territory, state authority, local administration, military, financial, tax and legal systems that existed from the mid-17th to the late 18th century. The Cossack Republic, a military-political



organisation founded on principles of personal freedom and elected leadership, was established by the Cossacks, drawing on ancient Rus' military and knightly traditions.

The political pinnacle of the Cossack Republic was the 1710 "Treaty and Establishment of the Rights and Freedoms of the Zaporizhian Host and All the Free People of Little Russia", drafted by Pylyp Orlyk. This document, considered one of Europe's earliest constitutions, outlined the principles of elections, separation of powers and the protection of freedoms, including religious freedom. This governance system stood in stark contrast to the Moscow Tsardom, where slavery was abolished only in 1861. Though the Cossack Republic fell to Russian imperial control, the Ukrainian spirit of freedom has been continuously reborn from generation to generation.

Suppression of Ukrainian culture

The military defeat of the Cossack Republic led to the systematic destruction of Ukrainian culture. In 1709, Moscow imposed censorship on Ukrainian printed books, which had been published since the 16th century. By 1720, the printing of new

literature in Ukrainian was banned. In 1729, Peter II ordered all Ukrainian legislation to be translated into Russian. The Ukrainian language was banned at universities in 1784. By 1874, printing Ukrainian books was entirely prohibited and the use of the Ukrainian language was banned in education, theatre and music. These actions were based on the Russian Empire's belief, expressed in the Valuev Decree, that there was no distinct Ukrainian language, dismissing it as a corrupted dialect.

The history of the Russian Empire and its persecution of Ukrainian culture and identity leaves no doubt as to the roots of Putin's modern-day assertion that Ukrainians do not exist.

It also explains why Russia has been abducting Ukrainian children since 2014, aiming to turn them into Russians. Since 2022, Russia has unlawfully and forcibly deported 19,546 Ukrainian children. In May 2022, Russian President Vladimir Putin signed a decree allowing changes to the citizenship, names and birthdates of Ukrainian children without parental consent. Ukrainian children have been sent to 57 regions of Russia, with some already adopted into Russian families.

During the Africa Peace Mission, South African President Cyril Ramaphosa personally asked Putin to return the Ukrainian children, but he dismissed the plea. Despite support from the UN and the International Red Cross, only 388 children have been returned in nearly three years.

At the same time, Ukrainian parents in occupied territories continue to disappear. For example, the mother of 12-year-old Sashko from Mariupol, Snizhana, was separated from her son during the so-called filtration process of Russian military checks on any people in the occupied area showing signs of Ukrainian identity. Sashko was sent for adoption, while his mother was detained. There is no information on her whereabouts or whether she is still alive.

Russia's ideological threat

The military-political leadership of the Russian Federation openly denies Ukraine's right to exist as a sovereign, independent state. The Russian ideology of "Rashism", widely professed by the Russian political class, denies the existence of Ukrainians as a separate nation. The mandatory study of Putin's anti-academic essay "On the Historical

Unity of Russians and Ukrainians" has been introduced in Russian schools and universities to reinforce the propaganda.

Russia's long-term goals are to dismantle the rules-based international order by sowing chaos, undermining democratic unity and reviving imperialism. For Russia, the latter is the only alternative. Aligning with authoritarian states, such as Belarus, Iran and North Korea, which become the leading suppliers of weapons, Russia seeks to erase Ukrainian identity and commit genocide. The South African Constitution, upholding the rules-based order, stands in opposition to such imperial ambitions.

The call to South Africans

In South Africa, apartheid was dismantled through the weakening of the government via international sanctions, much like the pressure needed today to curb Russian aggression.

In 1963, OR Tambo wrote a thank you letter to the Foreign Ministry of the Ukrainian Soviet Republic expressing his gratitude on behalf of millions of South Africans for supporting the resolution that called for sanctions implemented by the UN General Assembly in 1962. Tambo, the deputy head of the ANC, expressed his appreciation for this support of justice and human rights and believed that, if the resolution were implemented, the politics of apartheid would be impossible.

There is no lack of UN resolutions demanding Russia to stop the invasion, return Ukrainian children or to stop the occupation of the sovereign territory, but in most of them South Africa chose to abstain. However, the UN Security Council is blocked by the Russian veto right.

In the 1980s, international sanctions forced the South African government into negotiations. It did not happen overnight, but the pressure was crucial. In the case of violent aggression, peace agreements do not depend on the victim; the aggressor must be weakened. And this is only possible if all countries are working together.

In 2024, it is not enough for the European Union and the US to enforce sanctions on Russia. Chinese and Indian markets have grown strong enough to allow Russia to continue its aggression, and countries that continue collaboration or "neutrality" with the aggressor simply support such aggression. Or, in the words of Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu: "If you are neutral in situations of injustice, you have chosen the side of the oppressor."

A journey of understanding

Just like South Africans, Ukrainians are celebrating and fighting for their democracy.

By removing the barriers that prevent South Africa from standing with Ukraine, South Africans would be supporting the global fight for freedom, democracy and the rule of law.

The washed-out road to Mazeppa Bay today may be rough, but it symbolises the journey that many South African leaders could undertake to truly understand Ukraine's struggle.

DM

CAPITAL RADIO

RATIBA YA VIPINDI JUMATATU - JUMAPILI

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

Tembelea mitandao ya kijamii ya CAPITAL RADIO



CAPITAL RADIO

By Orji Sunday

African farmers use private satellite statistics to bolster their crop yields

WHILE certain spots on his 70-hectare cassava farm in Ibadan, Nigeria, were thriving, a sizable parcel was pale and parched—the result of an early and unexpected halt in the rains. The cassava stems, starved of water, had withered to straw.

"It was a really terrible experience for us," Tope says, estimating the cost of the loss at more than 50 million naira (\$32,000). "We were praying for a miracle to happen. But unfortunately, it was too late."

When the next planting season rolled around, Tope's team weighed different ways to avoid another cycle of heavy losses. They decided to work with EOS Data Analytics, a California-based provider of satellite imagery and data for precision farming. The company uses wavelengths of light including the near-infrared, which penetrates plant canopies and can be used to measure a range of variables, including moisture level and chlorophyll content.

EOS's models and algorithms deliver insights on crops' health weekly through an online platform that farmers can use to make informed decisions about issues such as when to plant, how much herbicide to use, and how to schedule fertilizer use, weeding, or irrigation.

AI is expanding across the continent and new policies are taking shape. But poor digital infrastructure and regulatory bottlenecks could slow adoption.

When EOS first launched in 2015, it relied largely on imagery from a combination of satellites, especially the European Union's Sentinel-2. But Sentinel-2 has a maximum resolution of 10 meters, making it of limited use for spotting issues on smaller farms, says Yevhenii Marchenko, the company's sales team lead.

So last year the company launched EOS SAT-1, a satellite designed and operated solely for agriculture. Fees to use the crop-monitoring platform now start at \$1.90 per hectare per year for small areas and drop as the farm gets larger. (Farmers who can afford to have adopted drones and other related technologies, but drones are significantly more expensive to maintain and scale, says Marchenko.)

In many developing countries, farming is impaired by lack of data. For centuries, farmers relied on native intelligence



rooted in experience and hope, says Daramola John, a professor of agriculture and agricultural technology at Bells University of Technology in southwest Nigeria. "Africa is way behind in the race for modernizing farming," he says.

"And a lot of farmers suffer huge losses because of it."

In the spring of 2023, when the new planting season was to start, Tope's company, Carmi Agro Foods, had used GPS-enabled software to map the boundaries of its

farm. Its setup on the EOS crop monitoring platform was also completed. Tope used the platform to determine the appropriate spacing for the stems and seeds. The rigors and risks of manual monitoring had disappeared. Hisfield-moni-

toring officers needed only to peer at their phones to know where or when specific spots needed attention on various farms. He was able to track weed breakouts quickly and efficiently.

This technology is gaining traction among farmers in other parts of Nigeria and the rest of Africa. More than 242,000 people in Africa, Southeast Asia, Latin America, the United States, and Europe use the EOS crop-monitoring platform. In 2023 alone, 53,000 more farmers subscribed to the service.

One of them is Adewale Adegoke, the CEO of Agro Xchange Technology Services, a company dedicated to boosting crop yields using technology and good agricultural practices. Adegoke used the platform on half a million hectares (around 1.25 million acres) owned by 63,000 farmers. He says the yield of maize farmers using the platform, for instance, grew to two tons per acre, at least twice the national average.

Adegoke adds that local farmers, who have been struggling with fluctuating conditions as a result of climate change, have been especially drawn to the platform's early warning system for weather.

As harvest time draws nearer this year, Tope reports, the prospects of his cassava field, which now spans a thousand hectares, is quite promising. This is thanks in part to his ability to anticipate and counter the sudden dry spells. He spaced the plantings better and then followed advisories on weeding, fertilizer use, and other issues related to the health of the crops.

"So far, the result has been convincing," says Tope. "We are no longer subjecting the performance of our farms to chance. This time, we are in charge."

Digging riverbeds in Zimbabwe in desperate search for water

By Shingai Nyoka, Mudzi

ONE of the worst droughts in living memory is sweeping across southern Africa, leaving close to 70 million people without enough food and water.

In Mudzi district in northern Zimbabwe, a community and their livestock are gathered on a bone-dry riverbed. The Vombozi normally flows throughout the year but right now, it is just beige sand as far as the eye can see.

Armed with shovels and buckets, the men are digging into the river floor, desperately trying to extract the last drops of water from it.

Rivers and dams have dried up in other parts of the district and as a result more and more people are descending on this specific riverbed in Kurima village, putting pressure on the water source.

Along the riverbed are several holes, large enough to fit a single bucket.

Children are bathing, women are doing laundry and giving their bellowing cattle drinks of water.

Gracious Phiri, a mother of five, stands among these women. The 43-year-old tells the BBC she now has to walk further than usual, spending three hours every day travelling to fetch water.

Ms Phiri lowers her bucket into the half-metre (19in) wide hole and draws brown-coloured water. She worries about her family getting sick.

A mother of five, who travels three hours every day to get water from the Vombozi riverbed

"As you can see, the cattle are drinking from the same pit as us. Their urine is right there... it is not very healthy," she says.

"I have never seen anything like this." Food is also in short supply in Zimbabwe where 7.7 million people face hunger. In Mudzi the number of families who have access to a sufficient amount of affordable, nutritious food has dropped by more than half compared to previous years, the local health authority says.

Children have been particularly impacted - since June hospital admissions



A man digs for water in a riverbed in Kurima village, Zimbabwe

for youngsters with moderate to severe malnutrition have doubled.

A village feeding programme is trying to tackle the problem. Once a week women in the community gather, bringing whatever produce they have in order to contribute to a porridge for under fives.

Ground baobab fruit, peanut butter, milk and leafy green vegetables are stirred into the porridge to add extra nutrients.

But the list of ingredients shrinks every week - cow-peas

and beans recently became unavailable because of the poor harvest.

The government, with the support of partners like the UN children's agency, Unicef, devised the village feeding scheme and it used to run at least three times a week.

"But because of the El Niño drought we are now only giving it once a week," explains Kudzai Madamombe, Mudzi district's medical officer.

"Because the rains didn't come, we suffered a 100% loss in terms

of all the crop," he adds, saying the programme might be forced to stop altogether in the next month as food stocks dwindle.

Clinics providing Zimbabweans in Mudzi with vital healthcare have also been affected - boreholes that supply a quarter of clinics in the district with water have run dry, Madamombe says.

And the major dam in the district has only a month's supply of water left.

As a result vegetable irrigation schemes, including one which supported 200 local farmers,

have been suspended.

The misery is everywhere. Tambudzai Mahachi, 36, says she planted acres of maize, cow-peas and peanuts on her plot.

For all her hard work, she got nothing at all, not even a plate of food. Even her hardy baobab tree produced hardly any fruit.

In a good year Mahachi says she would normally supply markets in the capital, Harare, but she is now among the millions of Zimbabweans relying on handouts.

While the village feeding scheme provides food one day of the week, her children need to eat every day.

Seated in a thatched hut, she boils wheat so she can provide her two children with breakfast. The wheat was supplied by a charitable neighbour.

"We have gone from eating what we want and when we want to limiting meals," Ms Mahachi says.

"The older girl understands that we sometimes can only have porridge. But at times I can see that my youngest is hungry."

The rains failed in most of southern Africa this year, on a continent where most of the agriculture relies on rainfall, rather than irrigation, for water.

The drought has prompted about a third of the countries in southern Africa to declare a state of disaster. A massive 68 million people across the region need food aid.

Zimbabweans dig for water where a river once flowed

For those digging at the Vombozi riverbed, the hunger and water crisis is yet to peak

The Southern African Development Community (Sadc) - a grouping of countries in the region - appealed for \$5.5bn (£4bn) in aid to combat the effects of drought in May. So far, only a tiny fraction has been received.

"If you go anywhere in southern Africa, family granaries are empty, and maize, which is the region's most consumed in terms of carbohydrates, is now priced out of many people's hands," Tomson Phiri, southern African spokesperson for the UN World Food Programme (WFP), tells the BBC.

"The situation is only going to get worse."

The WFP has only received one fifth of the \$400m its needs for emergency assistance, he says, adding that southern Africa is experiencing its largest deficit in maize in 15 years.

And the hunger and water crisis is yet to peak - October, the hottest and driest month of the year, is still a long way off.

If rain falls in November or December, which is when the rainy season typically starts, farmers will have to wait until March to harvest maize.

It is something Ms Mahachi is acutely aware of as she cracks open some wild fruit to stave off her hunger pangs, unsure about what lies ahead in the coming months for her young family.

Economists: Maize prices have soared in Kenya and Malawi, but remaining stable in Tanzania

By Namhla Landani and Khomotso Mahuma

FOR more than a year maize prices in Kenya and Malawi have been much higher compared with other countries in the east and southern Africa (ESA) region.

Several factors explain this. In Malawi, high fertiliser prices which resulted in lower fertiliser usage affected maize supply. This was compounded by adverse weather and trade bans, leading to lower-than-usual production.

In Kenya, high maize prices have been driven up by excessive margins. Sellers are charging prices that are more than the import parity price – the maize price from surplus producing countries, plus transport costs for importing into Kenya.

This is particularly concerning for a country with about 1.2 million of the population facing acute food insecurity.

We are economists at the African Market Observatory, which monitors prices of staple foods and conducts research on market dynamics, including market concentration and barriers to entry, within and across countries in ESA. The analysis is complemented through in-depth field work.

Maize is the leading staple food in the region. It is commonly traded across borders to meet overall regional demand. Tanzania is the leading producer of non-genetically modified maize and exports to other countries in the region. Since 2023, Tanzania has become an important source of maize exports to the region with bumper harvests due to above average rainfall.

Malawi generally produces enough to meet its requirements while Kenya has consistently been a net importer of maize due to the large population.

If maize markets were working well, the prices in both Kenya and Malawi



would consistently reflect the prevailing prices in surplus-producing countries in the region, such as Tanzania, in 2023 and 2024. Competition authorities should take a regional approach to ensure that markets are working well in terms of pricing and trade.

This would entail monitoring markets, assessing barriers to regional trade,

and intervening in cases of anti-competitive conduct.

Malawi's poor harvest Malawi is typically able to exceed its annual maize requirements of around 3.1 million tonnes. But the country had a poor harvest in 2023. This has been linked to low fertiliser supplies and use in 2022.

The use of fertiliser

increases the amount of crop harvested per area of land (crop yield). In May 2022, there was a significant increase in the prices of fertiliser (such as urea) in Malawi due to supply shocks that increased prices across the world. The world prices subsequently declined while fertiliser prices in Malawi remained high, and in general fertiliser prices

in the country have been higher than in its neighbouring countries. When compared with five other countries in the region (including Zambia and Kenya), Malawi had the highest fertiliser prices and mark-ups.

Delays in fertiliser procurement through Malawi's Affordable Input Programme added to the problem. The government programme typically provides 250,000 tonnes of fertiliser on a subsidised basis to 2.5 million households.

Some parts of Malawi were hit by Cyclone Freddy in March 2023. But this only affected 440,000 acres (178,061 hectares) of crops. By our estimates, this accounted for about 10 percent of the overall crop production area.

This means that much of the poor harvest in 2023 was linked to low fertiliser usage.

Tanzania, for its part, has had a good harvest with an estimated 4 million tonnes of excess maize this year. This is seven times the projected import requirements for Malawi in 2024 and is enough to cover the region's overall deficit.

If regional markets were working as they should, the price of maize in Ma-

lawi would be equal to the price (plus associated import costs) at which maize would be bought from Tanzania. We estimate the import parity price was US\$265 per tonne at June 2024 prices. Maize was selling in Malawi for US\$433 per tonne, giving a difference of US\$168, which is an extra charge, or "excess margin", of 63 percent.

The maize price in Malawi is much higher than it would have been had there been normal trading between the two countries.

Kenyan maize dynamics

Kenya's maize production between 2020 and 2022 averaged almost 3.4 million tonnes per year. To meet its 4 million tonne annual consumption, it has been a net importer of maize.

Kenya imports maize from Tanzania and other countries in the region, including Uganda and Zambia. For instance, in 2023, about 43% (219,260 tonnes) (ITC Trademap) of Kenya's total maize imports were from Tanzania.

Considering this, Kenya's maize prices should be similar – that is at import parity levels – to those of its trading partners. But maize prices in

Kenya have been much higher than in the rest of the region.

From January 2023 to April 2024 (Figure 3), Kenya's prices have been marked up substantially above the cost of importing maize from the south-west of Tanzania, which is the maize producing region. In the same period, Kenya's average price was US\$624 per tonne. We calculate the average import parity price as US\$359, resulting in average excess margins of about 82% between January 2023 and April 2024.

Most recently, Kenya's maize price almost halved from over US\$600 per tonne in April 2024 to US\$315 in May 2024, before increasing to US\$374 in June 2024.

This maize price is still above the import parity price from Tanzania at around US\$249, meaning that the maize price in Kenya has a 50% excess margin. Overall, Tanzania's maize prices have been declining since the harvest in April 2023 due to bumper production in 2023 and 2024.

The sharp decline in Kenyan maize prices was likely due to imports from neighbouring countries (such as Tanzania and Uganda) and maize coming on the market that was being hoarded by producers in the hopes of selling maize at higher prices.

This further highlights that maize markets in Kenya are not working well because producers have the ability to distort prices by restricting supply.

The dysfunctional regional markets allow traders and producers to continue to charge higher prices for maize in Kenya. In well-functioning regional markets, cheaper maize from neighbouring countries would drive down maize prices in Kenya.

Maize markets in Malawi and Kenya are dysfunctional

Markets in Kenya and Malawi are characterised by excessive margins and high prices for maize and key inputs used in the production of maize. This is made worse by regional markets not working well in terms of pricing and trade.

This requires competition authorities to take a regional approach to monitoring markets and assessing barriers to regional trade and intervene in cases of anti-competitive conduct.

THE GUARDIAN CROSSWORDS AND WORD FIT - 164 -

By Felix Magezi: 0787 00 97 94 / felixmagezi@gmail.com

14. the beginning of something
17. a place where an animal or insect breeds or shelters
19. University
20. Sunday, abbreviation
21. a fixed luminous point in the night sky which is a large, remote incandescent body like the sun
22. fabric made using an Indonesian decorative technique in which warp or weft threads, or both, are tie-dyed before weaving

DOWN:
1. Pula is her monetary unit
2. a woman on her wedding day
3. merciful
4. formate
5. mentally ill
6. the holding of an office
8. too long, slow, or dull
13. listlessness and dissatisfaction arising from boredom
15. go down below the surface of liquid
16. nipple of the mammary gland of a female
18. a habitual drunkard

ACROSS:
1. The Christian scriptures
7. present again
9. contaminated
10. passed away
11. the star round which the earth orbits
12. strange and frightening

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.

RAGE BOATMAN ASANTE
TEN BRAZE HAFT
MAT OASIS ZIP : ESE
THEME AGAPE SENTENCE
FLOC AREA

Yesterday's solution

POOP DECK P DAMAS CUS
EIDER E E AGO POW A
L A Y E R Y E N A G S C O W L
A L O E S S N M O S C O W L
G R I T A M I N E A C O T E I
O S E E O O G O A D R E V
G Q L K O B E E A T E R A
E E L A R G E R D R O S E R A

RADIO One **RATIBA YA VIPINDI** **JUMATATU - JUMAPILI**

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
TIME PROGRAMME	TIME PROGRAMME	TIME PROGRAMME	TIME PROGRAMME	TIME PROGRAMME	TIME PROGRAMME	TIME PROGRAMME
05:00 AM HALI YA HEWA / KUMEPAMBAZUKA I 06:00 AM AMKA NA BBC 06:30 AM NIPASHE 06:50 AM MATANGAZO 07:00 AM NEWS BULLETIN 07:10 AM MATANGAZO 07:15 AM TAARIFA ZA BARABARANI 07:25 AM UDONDZOZI WA MAGAZETI 07:40 AM KUMEPAMBAZUKA II 08:00 AM HABARI NYEPESI 08:10 AM KUMEPAMBAZUKA III 09:00 AM HABARI ZA BIASHARA 09:20 AM BRAND TALK 09:30 AM KUMEPAMBAZUKA SHERIA 10:00 AM DEATH ANNOUNCEMENTS 10:10 AM YALIVOMO YAMO 13:00 HRS NEWS BULLETIN 13:30 HRS DJ SHOW 16:00 HRS NEWS BULLETIN 16:03 HRS DEATH ANNOUNCEMENTS 16:30 HRS SPOT LEO 18:30 HRS DIRA YA DUNIA BBC 19:30 HRS SPOT LEO 20:00 HRS NEWS BULLETIN 21:00 HRS RADIO ONE DOCTOR 21:05 HRS DAKIKA 45 22:15 HRS AFRO TIZI 23:00 HRS NEWS BULLETIN (24 HRS) 23:03 HRS AFRO TIZI 01:00-05:00HRS MUZIKI MCHANGANYIKO	05:00 AM HALI YA HEWA / KUMEPAMBAZUKA I 06:00 AM AMKA NA BBC 06:30 AM NIPASHE 06:50 AM MATANGAZO 07:00 AM NEWS BULLETIN 07:10 AM MATANGAZO 07:15 AM TAARIFA ZA BARABARANI 07:25 AM UDONDZOZI WA MAGAZETI 07:40 AM KUMEPAMBAZUKA II 08:00 AM HABARI NYEPESI 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CHINA-AFRICA INFRASTRUCTURE PARTNERSHIP OPENS MORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR AFRICA'S DEVELOPMENTS

BEIJING

Infrastructure cooperation between China and Africa is thriving, and the outcome is changing the lives of millions.

Industrial leaders and officials observed that the infrastructure projects undertaken by Chinese companies have yielded tangible benefits for Africans, helping the continent enhance its connectivity; improve conditions for economic and social development; advance its industrialization, modernization and integration; and forge new pathways for future growth.

"To get rich, build roads first." The popular Chinese proverb rings true in Africa. Drawing on its own development experience, China has been dedicated to working with Africa to build transport facilities crucial for economic development.

According to the white paper, "China and Africa in the New Era: A Partnership of Equals," Chinese companies over the last quarter century have helped African countries build or upgrade more than 10,000 km of railways, nearly 100,000 km of highways, roughly 1,000 bridges, almost 100 ports and 66,000 km of power transmission and distribution.

Additionally, Chinese com-

panies have helped build an installed power-generating capacity of 120 million kW, a communications backbone network of 150,000 km and a network service covering nearly 700 million user terminals.

In Kenya, the Chinese-funded Mombasa-Nairobi Standard Gauge Railway has drastically reduced travel time and emerged as the preferred choice for commuters, playing a pivotal role in reducing logistics costs, stimulating commerce and empowering smaller towns along its corridor.

In Nigeria, the Abuja light rail, built by a Chinese company, started operating in May and has considerably eased congestion in the capital.

Nigerian President Bola Tinubu described the light rail's operation as the "fruit of collaboration, dedication, progress, and foresightedness."

China-Africa cooperation has taken infrastructure development to new heights. To bolster Africa's green development, China has assisted countries in constructing several clean energy projects.

The De Aar Wind Farm has changed South Africa's energy landscape. As the first wind power project financed, con-



China-financed solar power plant in Garissa County, Kenya

structed and operated by a Chinese company in Africa, it supplies 760 million kilowatt-hours of clean electricity annually, meeting the electricity needs of 300,000 households. The farm has contributed to closing the gap caused by unstable clean energy and addressing the electricity shortage in South Africa.

In Kenya, the 55 megawatt Garissa Solar Power Plant, financed and constructed by Chinese firms, generates over 76 million kilowatt-hours annually, reducing carbon dioxide emissions by about 64,000 tons annually.

Kenya has moved closer to achieving its clean energy transi-

tion goals with the power plant, said Moses Masika Wetangula, speaker of Kenya's National Assembly.

China has been a dependable partner to Kenya, Wetangula said, noting China's support has been crucial to Africa's development.

Various industrial zones were built and are operated by Chinese enterprises, such as the Sino-Uganda Mbale Industrial Park in Uganda, the Diamniadio International Industrial Platform in Senegal, the Lekki Free Trade Zone in Nigeria, and the China-Egypt TEDA Suez Economic and Trade Cooperation Zone in Egypt.

Through these zones, countries can participate more effectively in the global production chain and promote the internationalization of local brands.

David Bahati, Uganda's minister of state for trade, industry and cooperatives, told Xinhua that China has been providing capital and sharing skills and technology to help drive industrialization in his country.

"The development of the Sino-Uganda Mbale Industrial Park is doing wonders. We have seen the foreign direct investment coming through the industrial park, helping us in terms of import substitution. Most of the things we were importing, such as televisions and clothes, are all being produced at the park," said Bahati.

Modern port cooperation between China and Africa is also developing rapidly.

A good example is the Kribi Deep Sea Port, built by China Harbor Engineering Company Ltd. (CHEC) in Cameroon's southern town of Kribi. The new seaport, strategically positioned in the center of the Gulf of Guinea, has stimulated the country's economy and has become a regional hub for the African Atlantic coast.

"With the coming of the Kribi port, Cameroon has once again placed herself as the port entry

to the sub-region. This (port) has added more value to certain industrial projects in Chad, the Central African Republic and Congo," said Alain Patrick Mpila Ayissi, manager of the Land Development and Environment Department of the Port Authority of Kribi.

In 2023, Tanzania's first modern fishing harbor, Kilwa Harbor, also constructed by CHEC, was launched. As a flagship project under the Tanzanian government's third five-year plan, it is expected to become an engine for economic growth.

The Kribi Deep Sea Port has played a crucial role in bolstering infrastructure development, employment, trade and investment in Cameroon, said Raymond Tavares, a representative in Cameroon and Central Africa of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization.

Infrastructure development is the cornerstone of Africa's development, and improving the state of infrastructure is a common desire of the African people.

Cooperation between China and Africa in the new era provides a path to mutual development, creating a stronger foundation for a closer China-Africa community with a shared future.

Containers handled at Dar port go up 3 times in three months

By Guardian Reporter

THE Tanzania Ports Authority (TPA) has reported that a huge investment made by DP World at Dar es Salaam port has started to pay off within three months where the number of containers handled has increased from 7,151 in April 2024 to 20,151 by July 2024.

The increase is a result of investment worth \$250million (675bn/-) injected by DP World into the operation of berths 0-7 at the port since the new investors took over.

Josephat Lukindo, TPA manager of Operations and Coordination informed CCM secretary for Ideology, publicity, and training Amos Makalla who toured the Dar es Salaam Port on Wednesday that the funds were used to improve the port's operations in three key areas after DP World took over from TPA on April 15, 2024.

"With our experience in port operations, we decided to start with improving three crucial areas to enhance efficiency," Lukindo said, noting that DP World, through its subsidiary DP World Dar es Salaam purchased modern equipment worth 215bn/-.

The company has also repaired

defective equipment previously used at the port and purchased new equipment, including 20 trucks, 31 terminal trailers, and 7 generators each with a capacity of 10,000 Kw to operate machinery during power black-out and heavy cargo handling equipment (cranes).

"Additionally, DP World installed modern IT systems for port operations. We initially found outdated systems and decided to install modern systems to drive technological advancements," he said.

He explained that the number of ships waiting after docking has decreased significantly, from 2 container ships to none, from 7 bulk carriers (carrying products such as fertiliser) to 1, and from 17 mixed cargo ships to 8 within a month following massive investments.

"This significant investment will make the Dar es Salaam port competitive with other major ports in Africa including Morocco," he observed.

Makalla said those major achievements were clear testimonials for those who were vehemently rejecting and skeptical of the mega-investment.

"There are people whose main

job is simply to oppose everything. Even when the government was purchasing aircraft, they opposed it and they are now enjoying flying on those planes," Makalla said.

According to Makalla, the same people also tried to oppose the SGR train investment and construction of the Mwalimu Nyerere Hydro-electric power.

He said CCM was rallying behind President Samia Suluhu Hassan's administration in implementing the party's manifesto elections, especially in critical areas of investments like ports.

Juma Kijavara, TPA Deputy Director General said the achievement attained within a short period of DP World's investment has enhanced efficiency and attracted more traders both locally and internationally.

"The Dar es Salaam Port will be capable of competing with other global ports in the provision of reliable, quality, and affordable services as a result of significant investment injected," Kijavara said.

Among the strategies to make the port competitive was the construction of berths and tanks for storing oil and perishable items for instance vegetables to be preserved before export.

He said TPA would continue with feasibility studies for the construction of a tourist berth that will initially have the capacity to accommodate two million tourists.

He said TPA was taking deliberate measures to exploit the existing international market, saying South Sudan has already shown interest in using the port as an outcome of major services improvement at Dar port.

"We are proud of our port to be serving the market of approximately 700 million people in East, Central Africa and South of Sahara Regions. We are optimistic number to grow," he concluded.

By Guardian Correspondent

First Housing Finance Tanzania, a specialized residential mortgage lender established in 2017, is making significant strides in the country's mortgage market.

The lender now holds a 5 percent market share in an industry typically dominated by Tanzania's largest commercial banks.

According to the latest Tanzania Mortgage Market Update report from the Tanzania Mortgage Refinance Company (TMRC), as of June 30, 2024, First Housing has climbed into the top five mortgage lenders among 31 banks offering residential mortgage solutions nationwide.

"We are thrilled with these results as they reflect our dedication to supporting the growth of Tanzanians by helping them achieve their dream of homeownership," said Amulike Kamwela, Acting CEO of First Housing.

"This commitment not only helps individuals realize their dreams but also aligns with Tanzania Development Vision 2025, particularly in promoting high-quality living standards."

Kamwela also urged Tanzanians to explore First Housing's residential mortgage products rather than relying on incremental home construction. He pointed out that juggling rent payments and construction costs on a single income over a long period can be financially overwhelming.

"With a residential mortgage loan from First Housing, you can complete your home construction on time," Kamwela emphasized.

First Housing is focused on becoming the market leader in affordable housing solutions in Tanzania.

The lender plans to leverage cutting-edge technology to enhance customer experience and service delivery while equipping its team with the skills necessary to navigate evolving industry



Amulike Kamwela, Acting CEO of First Housing.

First Housing Finance placed among top five mortgage lenders list

policies and regulations.

As of June 2024, First Housing's unaudited financial statement shows a total gross mortgage loan portfolio of 31.3bn/-, marking a 37 percent increase compared to 22.8bn/- in June 2023.

The mortgage market in Tanzania registered a 1.70 percent growth in the value of residential mortgages from 614.57bn/- recorded on 31 March 2024 to 625.00bn/- as of 30 June 2024.

On a year-to-year comparison, 6.91 percent growth was registered in value of mortgage loans as of 30 June 2024 (584.59bn/- Q2 2023 vs. 625.00bn/- Q2 2024).

Overall average mortgage debt size as of 30 June 2024 was 104.80m/- equivalent to US\$ 39,2862 compared to 102.21m/- equivalent to US\$ 38,315 reported on previous quarter.

The ratio of outstanding mortgage debt to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) stood at 0.38 percent similar to the previous quarter.

Mortgage debt advanced by the top 5 Primary Mortgage Lenders

(PMLs) accounted for 64 percent of the total outstanding mortgage debt.

The Tanzanian housing sector's fast-growing demand is mainly driven by the strong and sustained economic growth with GDP growth averaging 6.2 percent over the past decade, the fast-growing Tanzanian population, which is estimated to more than double by 2050, and efforts by the Government in partnership with global non-profit institutions and foreign Governments to meet the growing demand of affordable housing.

Tanzania's dedicated Housing Finance Company focuses on providing long term housing solutions to the citizens of Tanzania.

Being the pioneer in the housing finance market, the lender operates by offering mortgage products for Purchase, Improvement, Extension, Completion and Refinancing of an existing home loan.

The lender's shareholders include Azania Bank, International Finance Corporation, HDFC Investment Limited of India, Armut Limited of Mauritius and Sunjay Suchak.



By Amalia Lui

THE STABILITY OF AFRICA'S INFRASTRUCTURE GROWTH

Africa's economic growth over the past two decades has been underpinned by significant investments in infrastructure, driven by the belief that robust infrastructure is the cornerstone of sustainable development.

From expansive transportation networks to energy projects, these investments have been positioned as critical levers for enhancing trade, attracting foreign investment, and improving overall economic stability.

However, as the continent faces mounting debt and uneven economic outcomes, questions are emerging about the long-term viability of an infrastructure-led growth model. This article critically evaluates Africa's infrastructure-driven growth's stability, exploring its successes and the underlying challenges that may threaten its sustainability.

Historical Perspective

Over the past two decades, Africa has embarked on an ambitious infrastructure development journey marked by large-scale transportation, energy, and telecommunications investments.

This period saw the launch of several mega-projects, such as the construction of the Mombasa-Nairobi Standard Gauge Railway in Kenya, Ethiopia's Grand Renaissance Dam, and Julius Nyerere Hydropower Station, set to become one of the largest dams in Africa.

These projects were financed through domestic resources and international partnerships, particularly with China, significantly contributing to Africa's infrastructure boom.

However, the alignment between these infrastructure investments and Africa's economic phase reveals a more complex picture. Whilst initially there was an increase in GDP growth across most African countries, recently this rate has not been maintained despite Africa's determination to continue investing heavily in infrastructures.

So far, the anticipated economic benefits from infrastructure-led growth have not fully materialized, raising concerns about the long-term sustainability and strategic alignment of these investments with Africa's broader economic goals.

Key drivers of infrastructure-led growth

The rapid expansion of infrastructure across Africa has been primarily driven by strong political will and strategic governance, with many governments prioritizing infrastructure as the cornerstone of their development agendas.

Countries like Kenya, Nigeria, and Ethiopia have implemented ambitious infrastructure plans aimed at boosting economic growth and enhancing regional connectivity. Economic factors, such as the availability of international financing and favorable growth conditions in the early 2000s, have played a crucial role in Africa's infrastructure investment needs.

Additionally, technological advancements, particularly in the energy and telecommunications sectors, have facilitated the integration of modern infrastructure, helping to lower costs and improve efficiency.

These drivers collectively reflect Africa's commitment to infrastructure as a key lever for long-term economic development despite the mounting challenges related to debt sustainability and the alignment of investments with economic returns.

Challenges

One of the most significant challenges to the stability of infrastructure-led growth in Africa is the growing financing gap and concerns over debt sustainability.

Many African countries have relied heavily on external financing to fund their infrastructure projects, often through loans from international partners. However, this approach has led to a sharp increase in public debt levels.

Based on the information from the media, countries like Kenya and Zambia have faced increasing difficulties in servicing their debt, with Zambia defaulting on its Eurobond payments.

The reliance on debt to finance infrastructure projects raises concerns about the long-term economic stability of these countries, as the burden of debt servicing may outweigh the economic



benefits of the infrastructure investments.

Also, the currency fluctuations and continued weakening of currencies of African countries against the Euro, Dollar, and Pound Sterling significantly affect the ability of African countries to service such debts.

Corruption and mismanagement also pose significant threats to the success and stability of infrastructure-led growth in Africa. Misallocation of funds, inflated project costs, and lack of transparency are common issues that undermine the effectiveness of infrastructure projects.

According to the African Development Bank, corruption costs Africa up to \$148 billion annually, impacting large-scale infrastructure projects. Such inefficiencies waste valuable resources, erode public trust, and deter potential investors, further destabilizing infrastructure-led growth.

The environmental and social challenges associated with large-scale infrastructure projects in Africa cannot be overlooked.

Many projects have led to significant displacement of communities and environmental degradation, which can trigger social unrest and long-term ecological damage. For example, the construction of dams, such

as the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam, has raised concerns over water rights and environmental sustainability in the Nile Basin.

Similarly, the expansion of mining infrastructure in countries like the Democratic Republic of Congo has led to deforestation and loss of biodiversity. These risks not only jeopardize the sustainability of the projects themselves but also threaten the livelihoods of local populations, potentially leading to conflicts and further instability.

Geopolitical risks, including regional conflicts and external political influences, also challenge the stability of infrastructure-led growth in Africa. The continent's infrastructure projects often involve multiple countries and are susceptible to regional tensions and political instability.

For instance, cross-border projects like the LAPSET Corridor, which aims to connect Kenya, Ethiopia, and South Sudan, have been delayed due to security concerns and political disagreements.

Additionally, the growing influence of foreign powers in financing and executing infrastructure projects has led to concerns about neo-colonialism and the strategic motives behind these investments. These geopo-

litical dynamics can lead to project delays, increased costs, and strained international relations, ultimately undermining the stability and effectiveness of infrastructure-led growth in Africa.

Opportunities

Strengthening regional cooperation and integration presents a significant opportunity to enhance the stability of infrastructure-led growth in Africa. Initiatives like the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) and the African Union's Program for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA) aim to foster greater economic integration and coordinated infrastructure development across the continent.

By pooling resources and aligning national infrastructure projects with regional priorities, African countries can reduce costs, mitigate risks, and ensure that infrastructure investments deliver broader economic benefits.

For instance, the AfCFTA is expected to boost intra-African trade by US\$32 billion annually which averages 50 percent African intra-trade between now and 2032, underscoring the potential of regional cooperation to drive sustainable growth.

Innovative financing models

Adopting innovative financing models, such as public-private partnerships (PPPs), impact investing, and blended finance, offers a pathway to improve the sustainability of infrastructure projects in Africa.

PPPs, in particular, allow governments to leverage private sector expertise and capital, reducing the reliance on debt while ensuring more efficient project delivery.

In Nigeria, the Lekki Toll Road project is a successful example of a PPP that has improved transportation infrastructure while minimizing public debt exposure.

Similarly, impact investing and blended finance models can attract investments to generate both financial returns and social or environmental benefits, ensuring that infrastructure development aligns with broader sustainable development goals.

Capacity building and governance reforms

Enhancing capacity building and implementing governance reforms are critical to ensuring the long-term success and stability of infrastructure-led growth in Africa. Strengthening institutions, improving transparency, and fostering a culture of accountability can reduce corruption and improve the management of infrastructure projects.

Training programs for government officials, supported by international partners like the World Bank and African Development Bank, can build the technical and managerial expertise needed to oversee complex infrastructure projects.

Moreover, governance reforms that emphasize public participation and stakeholder engagement can ensure that infrastructure investments are responsive to the needs of local communities, thereby increasing their long-term viability and positive impact.

Conclusion

While Africa's infrastructure-led growth has undoubtedly laid the groundwork for economic development, the sustainability of this model is increasingly under scrutiny due to rising debt levels, corruption, environmental risks, and geopolitical challenges.

African nations must consider a strategic pivot towards agriculture-led development to ensure long-term stability and inclusive growth. Agriculture remains the backbone of many African economies, employing over 60 percent of the continent's workforce and contributing significantly to GDP.

By focusing on enhancing agricultural productivity, particularly among smallholder farmers, Africa can address food security, reduce poverty, and create a more resilient economic base.

Investments in modern farming techniques, irrigation, and rural infrastructure, coupled with supportive policies and governance reforms, could unlock the potential of Africa's vast agricultural resources.

This approach offers a sustainable pathway to growth and aligns with the continent's unique factor endowments, ensuring that economic development is both inclusive and resilient in the face of global challenges.

Amalia Lui (pictured) is a partner at Clyde & Co LLP in Tanzania. She is a practising advocate with twelve years' experience dealing with complex legal matters related to M&A, licensing, compliance, oil & gas, mining and the overall commercial practice.

A LETTER TO NEW MANAGERS:

NAVIGATING OFFICE POLITICS AND OTHER THINGS THEY DIDN'T TEACH YOU IN SCHOOL

By Godwin Jaha Semuny

Climbing the corporate ladder is often seen as a reward for years of dedication. But with that ascent comes a challenge that no textbook or mentor can fully prepare you for—office politics. These unwritten rules, subtle power plays, and quiet alliances can catch even the most seasoned professionals off guard. Organizational politics is easily recognized but hard to define, often representing the darker side of workplace culture. It's that intangible "feel" of the place—the reason you instinctively know which topics to avoid with certain departments or why challenging someone like Trina or Fred could jeopardize your career.

No organization is immune to these politics, but how deeply they permeate and influence the workplace can be managed. These political maneuvers generally fall into five categories: self-promotion, where individuals elevate themselves at others' expense; office politics, which involve influence tactics based on political factors rather than merit; gatekeeping, where those in power control access to opportunities; territorialism, where people aggressively defend their "turf"; and the manipulation of unwritten rules for per-

sonal gain. Each reflects different ways people navigate and exert influence within an organization, often leading to power imbalances and conflicts.

Now, picture yourself stepping into a new role, full of enthusiasm and ready to make a difference, only to realize that your success hinges not just on what you know, but on who you know. Relationships and informal networks often wield more influence than skills or knowledge. While many may shy away from engaging in office politics, seeing it as distasteful or unnecessary, ignoring it can be a costly mistake. After all, organizations, like any social group, are inherently political. We all are aware of political tendencies in our faith and religious institutions. No one is exempted.

Understanding Organizational Politics

Office politics involve leveraging power and influence to achieve goals, sometimes at the expense of the organization's mission. This might mean forming alliances, selectively sharing information, or engaging in power struggles. It's crucial to differentiate between ethical and unethical politics. The former aligns with the company's values; the latter often involves ma-



nipulation for personal gain. Politics often arise from competition for scarce resources, unclear roles, or ambiguous decision-making. A culture that prioritizes competition over collaboration, or short-term wins over long-term goals, can also fuel political behavior.

Navigating the office Politics

Office politics aren't inherently

negative. They revolve around influence and relationships. True power often lies not with those at the top, but with those who master the art of connection and understand the informal power structures. In many organisations, some individuals are powerful for being close to power.

To navigate this landscape, expand your network across the

organization. Build relationships, seek mentors, and get involved in cross-functional projects. Authenticity is your greatest asset—be true to your word and reliable in your commitments. This earns trust and respect. Stay neutral in conflicts that has nothing to do with you and document your work to protect yourself from unjust accusations or credit theft. Integrity matters; guard it fiercely by delivering on your KPIs and keeping personal plans private. Remember, colleagues aren't necessarily friends, and trust must be earned.

Workplace romance is a common topic in office gossip and politics, with over 60% of adults having experienced it. While 43 percent of these relationships lead to marriage. However, workplace romances aren't for everyone. They bring their own set of challenges and potential pitfalls. When a romance involves a subordinate, it can create perceptions of favoritism and power abuse while Dating a teammate may raise concerns about loyalty—whether your focus is on the job or on pleasing your partner. Similarly, when involved with someone in a senior position, it can foster an atmosphere where others believe you're seeking favors or special treatment. In these situations, common sense becomes crucial. I've

seen both strict policies against office romance and environments that allow it. To me, both approaches have their merits. It ultimately comes down to weighing the risks and maintaining a professional environment. As my late mother Odilia used to say, "Is it really worth all the fuss?" The decision is yours.

In office set-up, conflicts are bound to happen. When conflicts arise, handle them with diplomacy. Focus on solutions, not blame. Avoid pointing fingers. Also, emotional intelligence is key—manage your emotions and understand others'. It is crucial to play to your strengths, ensure your contributions are noticed, and speak up when it counts. For any collective work, acknowledge other. "We" instead of "I" is crucial. Give credits where due.

However, If the environment turns toxic despite your best efforts, prioritize your mental health. Sometimes, the best way to navigate office politics is to walk away and find a healthier place to thrive.

Thank me late

Godwin Jaha Semuny (pictured) is a seasoned marketer and communication analyst. These are his personal views.

CONSTRUCTION

By Guardian Reporter

In a significant step towards enhancing Tanzania's trade infrastructure and economic competitiveness, the Government of Ireland, through its Embassy in Tanzania, has committed €2.4 million (7.26bn/-) to support TradeMark Africa (TMA)'s programming initiatives aimed at strengthening trade and economic growth in Tanzania for the 2024/25 to 2025/26.

The funding was formalised through the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) by Ireland's Ambassador to Tanzania, Nicola Brennan, and TMA's Country Director Tanzania, Elibariki Shamy, marking a significant moment in the partnership between Ireland and TMA.

The three-year agreement is designed to drive substantial improvements in Tanzania's trade infrastructure, reduce trade barriers, and enhance business competitiveness.

This funding will also be instrumental in advancing digital systems, improving market access, fostering inclusivity, particularly for women traders transitioning from informal to formal trade routes and greening trade - a new priority area to promote more sustainable trade

IRELAND GRANTS 7.2BN/- FOR ENHANCING TANZANIAN'S TRADE, ECONOMIC GROWTH

and transport corridors through integrating climate action.

At the signing ceremony, Ambassador Brennan expressed her optimism about the partnership's impact, stating, "Ireland is proud to partner with TradeMark Africa in this crucial initiative.

By improving trade infrastructure and reducing barriers to trade, we can make a significant contribution to Tanzania's economic growth and the prosperity of its people. This funding reflects our shared commitment to fostering sustainable development and economic opportunities in Africa, while also strengthening the economic ties between our two nations."

The TMA Tanzania Country Programme aligns with TMA's broader strategic objectives, addressing critical challenges in the trade environment, such as improving transport infrastructure, enhancing trading standards, reducing non-tariff barriers and promote



Ireland's Ambassador to Tanzania, Nicola Brennan (L), TMA's Country Director Tanzania, Elibariki Shamy, sign of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to strengthen trade and economic growth in Tanzania from 2024/25 to 2025/26. Photo: Embassy of Ireland

green trade practices.

The strategy prioritises inclusivity, with a particular focus on supporting women traders as they

transition from informal to formal trade, thereby promoting gender equality.

The Embassy of Ireland's sup-

port will further strengthen TMA's efforts to improve transport systems, advance trade standards, and accelerate trade digitalisation, thereby boosting Tanzania's competitiveness.

Elibariki Shamy, TMA Country Director, Tanzania, highlighted: "This funding from the Embassy of Ireland is essential in enabling us to effectively execute our strategy. It allows us to drive significant improvements in trade facilitation, which are crucial for Tanzania's economic growth. Our focus is on ensuring that our programmes benefit all traders, especially women, who play a vital role in the economy. With this funding, we can scale up our efforts in facilitating trade and investment, improving the quality of traded goods, and promoting inclusivity and green trade practices. These interventions are critical to achieving sustainable economic growth in Tanzania and the wider East African region."

The TMA Tanzania Country Programme Strategy 2023-2030 is focused on delivering two primary outcomes: increased market access through improved transport infrastructure and reduced trade barriers, and enhanced business competitiveness through capacity building and public-private dialogue.

The programme also places a strong emphasis on supporting women traders, particularly in transitioning from informal to formal trade routes.

Shamy added that Ireland's support comes at a crucial time as TMA works towards unlocking Tanzania's trade potential. "By investing in trade infrastructure and improving the business environment, we are laying the foundation for sustainable economic growth. We are particularly focused on empowering women traders, ensuring they have access to the resources and opportunities they need to thrive," he concluded.

This new funding from Ireland builds on the success of previous partnerships, enabling TMA to further reduce trade costs, improve border efficiency, and foster economic integration in the region. The collaboration is expected to have a lasting impact on Tanzania's trade landscape, driving economic growth and creating opportunities for all Tanzanians.

By Correspondent James Kandoya

A Brazilian company, BR Food Industries, has unveiled plans to plant five million coffee trees in Tanzania's Kagera region by 2030, in a move aimed at complementing government efforts to boost cash crop production.

Speaking at Kerezange Primary School in Ilala District, Dar es Salaam, this Wednesday, Colin Francis, the company's CEO, announced that the project will cover 1,000 hectares. The initiative not only seeks to enhance Tanzania's coffee production but also aims to promote the crop in the global market.

During the tree-planting event, the company also donated sports equipment to the school to support the development of football culture among students.

Francis emphasized that the new coffee variety introduced through this initiative will allow farmers to begin harvesting within three to four years, with the breed known for its high yield potential.

"The coffee plantation will create employment, increase farmers' incomes, and uplift the livelihoods of the local community," said Francis.

"Brazil and Tanzania share similar climates, making this project an ideal collaboration. Our goal is to plant five million coffee trees in Tanzania and help promote the coffee market globally when the harvest begins."

In addition to boosting coffee production, BR Food Industries is promoting tree planting as a means for local com-

Brazilian company to plant 5m coffee trees in Kagera



munities to benefit from the growing global carbon credit market.

Francis highlighted the importance of tree planting in mitigating greenhouse gas emissions and generating additional income for the community.

Ernest Mzirah, the Investment Manager for the African Carbon Agency, noted that the

tree-planting initiative aligns with efforts to achieve zero greenhouse gas emissions, stressing that such projects will contribute to reducing carbon emissions globally.

Kerezange Primary School Headteacher, Job Ndugussa, expressed gratitude for the donation of sports items, including footballs and jerseys, and pledged to ensure that the cof-

fee trees are well-maintained.

Coffee remains a cornerstone of Tanzania's agricultural economy, generating an estimated \$100 million annually and serving as a primary source of foreign exchange.

The sector supports over 400,000 households across 52 coffee-producing districts, playing a crucial role in the country's socio-economic

landscape. Tanzania's coffee production, which includes both Arabica and Robusta varieties, primarily supplies global markets such as Japan, Italy, Germany, and the United States.

The country's coffee-growing regions span the northern, northwestern, and southern areas.

In a bid to further develop the sector, Tanzania recently launched a five-year coffee industry development strategy (2021-2025), aiming to increase national coffee production from nearly 70,000 tonnes in 2020 to 300,000 tonnes by 2025.

The strategy focuses on expanding coffee tree populations by distributing improved seedlings and replacing older, less productive trees with resilient, high-yielding varieties that can better withstand climate challenges.

Post forecasts Tanzania's coffee production at 1.5 million bags (60-kilogram) in the marketing year 2024/25, up from 1.4 million bags in 2023/24, due to increased production from recently rehabilitated plantations.

To boost future production, the Tanzania Coffee Board (TCB) distributed 13 million improved seedlings to farmers as of November 2023, with plans to distribute 25 million by the end of 2025.

Women, youths empowered to bid for public tenders

By Correspondent Restituta James

Women and youth are receiving training to compete for public tenders and access the 30 percent of the government procurement budget set aside for companies led by women, youth, and people with disabilities.

The training, facilitated by the Tanzania Chamber of Commerce (TWCC) and funded by TradeMark Africa, aims to equip these groups with the skills necessary to prepare tender documents that meet legal standards for bidding on various projects and services.

Speaking in Dar es Salaam yesterday, TWCC Managing Director Mwachumi Hamza stated that the goal is to provide entrepreneurs with the knowledge required to navigate the tendering process, ensuring that their bids comply with the Public Procurement Law, rules, and regulations.

Hamza noted that the first phase of training has already begun in Dar es Salaam with 30 participants, with the objective of reaching at least 400 entrepreneurs over the next three years.

"The training will provide a deep understanding of public procurement laws and help participants prepare tender documents that meet all legal requirements," she said.

Hamza added that the training is designed to help women, youth, and entrepreneurs with disabilities grow their businesses by successfully bidding for both local and international tenders.

"Participants will receive support in bidding for tenders from government institutions, the private sector, and international agencies, enabling them to develop sustainable businesses," she explained.

To achieve these goals, the program will also register qualified participants on digital bidding platforms, including the government's public procurement system (NeST), United Nations systems, and private sector platforms.

Additionally, participants will be connected with business experts to assist them with identifying tender opportunities, preparing business plans, and creating strong company profiles.

Elibariki Shamy, Resident Director of TradeMark Africa, praised the TWCC for launching the program and confirmed his organization's commitment to supporting its success.

The training is part of the "BID FOR SUCCESS" (B4S) program, which seeks to increase the participation of women, youth, and people with disabilities in public procurement.

According to the Public Procurement Management Authority (PPRA) Act, Chapter 410 of 2023, Section 64, all government institutions are required to allocate a portion of their procurement budget each year to companies led by women, youth, and people with disabilities.

The Public Procurement Regulations (PPR), effective for the fiscal year 2024/2025, mandate that 30 percent of this budget be allocated to these groups.

Kenya real estate firms tap diaspora market as housing, land deals surge

NAIROBI

Kenyan real estate agents are increasingly turning to the huge diaspora population as a key market for land and property deals.

With over three million Kenyans living abroad, real estate firms see a significant opportunity to attract investment from this lucrative demographic.

Many Kenyans living overseas maintain strong ties to their homeland as they look for ways to build wealth back home.

According to a report by the Central Bank of Kenya (CBK), remittance inflows in June 2024 totalled \$371.6 million (Sh47.8 billion) compared to \$345.9 million (Sh44.6 billion) in the same period last year, an increase of 7.4 per cent.

"The cumulative inflows for the 12 months to June remained steady at \$4,535 million (Sh584 billion) compared to \$4,017 million (Sh518 billion) in a similar period in 2023, an increase of 12.9 per cent," noted the report.

"The remittance inflows continue to support the current ac-



count and the foreign exchange market. The US remains the largest source of remittances to Kenya, accounting for 54 per cent in June 2024."

A report by Statista shows that the real estate market in Kenya is forecasted to grow to about Sh89.7 trillion (\$697.80 billion) in 2024.

Looking ahead, the market is projected to see steady growth, with an annual growth rate of 3.84 per cent from 2024 to 2028, reaching a market size of Sh104.4 trillion (\$811.40 billion) by 2028. According to the director of Famyard Real Estate agency George Wamariu, the diaspora market is a major focus for real estate.

"Kenyans who have the

means to invest in land or a home, but may not be able to physically come and look at properties. We are making it easier for them to purchase remotely," he said.

"Because of issues with untrustworthy agents and family members back home, more and more Kenyans living in the diaspora are looking to work with reputable real estate firms that have strong portfolios. This allows the diaspora investors to make property purchases in Kenya without having to travel there themselves," he said.

Purchasing power

He noted that realtors are increasingly leveraging technology to reach potential home-

buyers in the diaspora market as most of the Kenyans living in these countries are professionals; they have strong purchasing power and are looking for long-term investments.

"As real estate agents, we are using modern technology to make it easier for people living abroad to buy property back home. We are creating virtual tours of local listings and advertising them on social media targeting online advertisers," he said.

"This allows them to connect with potential buyers who may be located far away, making it simpler for those diaspora clients to browse available properties, schedule viewings, and ultimately invest in the local real estate market. They can afford plots going for Sh400,000 and above."

Wamariu said they are attending events for Kenyan communities abroad and networking with them to promote investment opportunities back in the home country, a strategy that appears to be paying off.

"When a person in the diaspora buys land in Kenya, I deliver the title to them. I attend

real estate expos in the diaspora where I get to connect with investors. We offer a range of payment plans tailored to our client's financial capabilities," he said.

Diaspora investment currently accounts for an estimated 20 per cent of real estate transactions in Kenya, up from just 10 per cent five years ago.

A recent report by Cyttonn on Real Estate Investment Trusts (REITs) says the real estate sector has been a significant contributor to the country's GDP, growing at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 5.5 per cent for the past five years. In the third quarter of 2023, the sector expanded by 5.4 per cent reaching Sh785.9 billion compared to Sh743.4 billion recorded in the same period in 2022.

"Owning a piece of Kenya is a point of pride for many in the diaspora, it's a way to stay connected to my roots and build for the future, even if I'm not there full-time," said Norman Magenda, who purchased a plot of land in Chaka Nyeri county while living in Kuala Lumpur Malaysia.

WORLD

UK's Starmer calls for European cooperation to tackle far right

BERLIN

BRITISH Prime Minister Keir Starmer expressed concern at the growing threat from far-right groups in the United Kingdom and called on progressive political parties across Europe to work together to deal with the shared challenge.

Britain was hit by anti-immigrant riots earlier this month after a deadly knife attack on a children's dance class was followed by false claims, amplified by people on the far right, that the attacker was a Muslim asylum seeker.

Speaking on Wednesday on a visit to Germany, where the anti-immigration Alternative for Germany has reported a surge in membership, Starmer said populism would be defeated by making people feel better

off and promised that life in Britain would improve before the end of his first term in power.

"We should be alive in the UK to the challenge of the far right and populism and nationalism," he told reporters. "There are a number of reasons for my concern, partly what's happening in the UK, partly what you can see happening in other European countries, including in France and in Germany."

Starmer's center-left Labour Party won a landslide election victory in early July, in contrast to recent gains by the far right in Europe. But the anti-immigration riots have already created his first major crisis.

British police have arrested more than 1,160 people over the rioting that involved violence, arson and looting, as well as rac-



Britain's Prime Minister Keir Starmer attends a joint news conference with German Chancellor Olaf Scholz, after talks at the Chancellery in Berlin, on Wednesday. PHOTO

ist attacks targeting Muslims and migrants.

Starmer pledged to tackle the far-right and the "snake oil of populism and nationalism," saying he would be honest about the country's problems and how to solve them.

But that task has been made more difficult as it comes against a backdrop of a cost of living crisis and deteriorating public services.

On Tuesday, Starmer warned that his government's budget statement in October would be "painful" and asked people to accept "short-term

pain for long-term good".

He told reporters on a trip aimed at rebuilding Britain's fractured relationships with one of its European allies that it was a "tough message" to deliver, but necessary.

He again compared Britain to a house that needs more than cosmetic repairs, saying you need to "get rid of the damp and the cracks first" before you can improve it.

"This is actually a project of hope, but it's got to start with the hard yards of doing the difficult stuff," he said. **Agencies**

India offers to undertake USD 50,000 worth Quick Impact Project in each of 14 Pacific Island countries

TONGA

UNION Minister of State for External Affairs Pabitra Margherita who is on a visit to Tonga has emphasised India's strong commitment to partnering with the Pacific Islands countries to address the challenges and aspirations of the Pacific community.

"As part of our continuous solidarity with our Pacific Partner Countries and the Pacific Islands Forum, I am pleased to announce that Government of India will undertake one Quick Impact Project or QIP of each country's choice worth USD 50,000 in each of the 14 Pacific Island Countries. We will be happy to receive proposals in this regard from the respective countries," Margherita said.

The Union MoS for External Affairs was addressing the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) Dialogue Partners Session in Nuku'alofa the capital city of Tonga, which is hosting the PIF.

Margherita reaffirmed India's strong commitment to work closely with Pacific partner countries and the Pacific Islands Forum, as the foremost regional mechanism, in line with the priorities outlined in the 2050 Strategy to help build a stronger, more resilient and prosperous Blue Pacific Continent.

India's bilateral development partnership in the form of grant-in-aid projects is worth about USD 3 million per annum. These are demand-driven and have had high impact in the 14 Pacific partner countries.

The minister said that India's approach to the Blue Pacific Continent is based in its ancient philosophy of "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam" or the 'World is one Family'.

Later, taking to a post on social media platform X on Thursday the MoS said, "Addressed the Pacific Islands Forum Leaders PIFLM53 Dialogue with Forum Partners today in Nuku'alofa. Emphasized India's strong commitment to partner the Pacific Islands Countries to address the challenges & aspirations of the Pacific Community."

India's multifaceted engagement with the Blue Pacific Continent is anchored in its 'Act East' Policy and is strengthened both bilaterally and through different mechanisms such as the Forum for India-Pacific Islands Cooperation (FIPIC).

At the 3rd FIPIC Summit held in Papua New Guinea last year, Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced a 12 Point Action Plan, which includes the setting up of a 100-bedded regional Super-specialty Hospital in Suva, Fiji, a Regional IT and Cyber Security Training Hub in Papua New Guinea, 1,000 Scholarships over the next five years, supply of Dialysis Units, and Generic Medicine Pharmacy outlets.

"The countries in the Pacific have benefited from the India-UN Development Partnership Fund which supports demand-driven sustainable development projects such as the Parametric Microinsurance project in Fiji, construction of water cistern in Tuvalu and solarisation of the Langafonua building of Tonga's National Council for Women which will be commissioned on August 30," the MoS said.

The 3rd Voice of the Global South Summit (VOGSS) that was held earlier this month with the overarching theme of "An Empowered Global South for a Sustainable Future" saw participation by over 120 countries including many PIF members who provided valuable inputs.

The MoS stated that India is committed to responding to the vulnerabilities caused by natural hazards in the Pacific region.

India has shared its concern regarding threat posed by climate change and rising sea level and has successfully reduced the emission intensity vis-a-vis its GDP by 33 per cent between 2005 and 2019, thus achieving the initial Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) target for 2030, 11 years ahead of the scheduled time, the minister said.

India leads a number of global initiatives such as the International Solar Alliance (ISA) and the Green Grids Initiative -- One Sun, One World, One Grid, the Infrastructure for Resilient Island States (IRIS), the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI), and the Global Biofuel Alliance which benefit its Pacific partners. **ANI**



The MoS stated that India is committed to responding to the vulnerabilities caused by natural hazards in the Pacific region

WFP launches probe into its Sudan operations as famine spreads

NAIROBI/CAIRO

THE UN World Food Program is investigating two of its top officials in Sudan over allegations including fraud and concealing information from donors about its ability to deliver food aid to civilians amid the nation's dire hunger crisis, according to 11 people with knowledge of the probe.

The investigation by the WFP's Office of the Inspector General (OIG) comes as the UN's food-aid arm is struggling to feed millions of people in war-plagued Sudan, now suffering one of the world's most severe food shortages in years.

As part of the probe, investigators are looking at whether WFP staff sought to hide the alleged role of Sudan's army in obstructing aid amid a brutal 16-month war with a rival paramilitary for control of the country, according to five of the sources who spoke to Reuters.

One of those being examined in the inquiry is the WFP's deputy country director in Sudan, Khalid Osman, who has been given a "temporary duty assignment" outside Sudan, a de facto suspension, according to six sources.

A second senior official, WFP area manager Mohammed Ali, is being investigated in connection with the alleged

disappearance of more than 200,000 liters of the UN organization's fuel in the Sudanese city of Kosti, according to four sources. Reuters could not confirm whether Ali remains in his role.

Osman and Ali declined to comment when contacted by Reuters, referring the news agency to the WFP's media office.

Asked about the probe by Reuters, the WFP said that "allegations of individual misconduct related to irregularities in pockets of our operation in Sudan" are under urgent review by its inspector general's office. It declined to comment on the nature of alleged wrongdoing or the status of specific employees.

The US government's aid agency, USAID, told Reuters in a statement that it was notified by the WFP on Aug 20 of "potential incidents of fraud affecting WFP operations in Sudan." USAID says it is the single largest donor to the WFP, providing nearly half of all contributions in a typical year.

"These allegations are deeply concerning and must be thoroughly investigated," the USAID statement said. "USAID immediately referred these allegations to the USAID Office of the Inspector General."

The investigation comes



A man sells bananas at a market during a cease-fire in Khartoum, Sudan, May 27, 2023. AP

at a critical time for the WFP, which describes itself as the world's largest humanitarian organization. It won the 2020 Nobel peace prize for its role in combating hunger and promoting peace.

The WFP is battling severe hunger on many fronts. It is seeking \$22.7 billion in funding to reach 157 million people, including some 1.3 million on the brink of famine, mostly in Sudan and Gaza, but also in countries such as South Sudan and Mali. In addition to distributing food itself, the WFP also coordinates and provides logistical support for large-scale emergencies globally for the

wider humanitarian community.

In recent years, however, its operations have been rocked by diversion and theft of aid in countries including Somalia and Yemen. The WFP and USAID last year temporarily suspended food distribution to Ethiopia following reports of the widespread stealing of food aid there.

More than half a dozen humanitarians and diplomats told Reuters they are worried that mismanagement at the heart of the WFP's Sudan office could have contributed to the failure so far to deliver enough aid during the war between Sudan's army

and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF). The conflict has been raging for more than 16 months.

The investigation at the WFP comes weeks after the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC), an international technical group tasked with measuring hunger, determined that famine had taken hold in at least one site in Sudan's Darfur region. The IPC has classified 13 other areas across the country as being at risk of famine. And it says that more than 25 million people, or over half Sudan's population, face crisis levels of hunger or worse.

EAM Jaishankar receives Israel's Director General, talks of situation in West Asia

NEW DELHI

EXTERNAL Affairs Minister S Jaishankar estersday received Director General Yaakov Blitshtein of Israel in Delhi where the two noted the development of India-Israel cooperation.

Jaishankar said that they exchanged views on the ongoing situation in West Asia.

In a post on X, Jaishankar said, "Pleased to receive Director General Yaakov Blitsh-

tein of Israel today in Delhi. Noted the continued development of India-Israel cooperation. Exchanged views on the ongoing situation in West Asia."

Earlier on Wednesday, India and Israel held the 17th Round of Foreign Office Consultations, during which Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri shared India's concern at the escalating situation in West Asia and emphasized restraint, dialogue, and diplomacy.

According to the Ministry of External

Affairs, the Indian side was led by the Foreign Secretary, Vikram Misri, and the Israeli side was led by the Director General of the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs Yaakov Blitshtein.

"Reflecting on the strength of the India-Israel Strategic Partnership, both sides discussed various issues of bilateral interest in depth and reviewed the entire gamut of bilateral endeavours. The two sides also shared views on the prevailing situation in West Asia and the Indo-Pacific," the min-

istry added. Further, during the event, the Foreign Secretary also reiterated India's strong and unequivocal condemnation of the October 7 terror attacks on Israel and called for the immediate release of all hostages and a ceasefire.

Earlier in the day, Blitshtein paid tributes to victims of the 26/11 terror attack at the Nirman House in Mumbai and inaugurated the Advanced Antimicrobial Emergency Room at JJ Hospital in Mumbai. **ANI**

Xi Story: Decades-long paired-up assistance delivers better lives for people on 'roof of world'

LHASA

IN June 1998, Xi Jinping traveled thousands of miles from the coastal province of Fujian to the Xizang Autonomous Region on a special mission -- to see off a new group of Fujian officials dispatched to assist this high-altitude region, known as the "roof of the world."

As many recalled, Xi, who served as Fujian's deputy Party chief then, was the most senior provincial official to accompany paired-up assistance officials all the way to Xizang back then.

During his tightly-scheduled journey, Xi also visited the previous group of Fujian officials in Nyingchi

who had been stationed at the high-altitude region for several years.

In particular, Xi put Nang County on his itinerary, even though locals tried to dissuade him from going there due to the treacherous road conditions.

"Anyone but me has the right to flinch," Xi insisted.

After arriving at the county, Xi met with Fujian officials there and asked for details about their living conditions, such as how they cooked meals and managed to keep in touch with their families. He also attended symposiums to learn about Fujian officials' assistance efforts.

"The affairs in Nyingchi are as

important as those in Fujian," Xi assured locals. "The officials we dispatch here should be the best of ours."

Fujian and Nyingchi established this close partnership as part of China's unique paired-up assistance mechanism, initiated in 1994, to provide direct and consistent support to localities in Xizang from more developed provinces and regions.

Through this mechanism, officials are selected to work in Xizang for a period, bringing capital, experience and skills to help launch infrastructure, industrial, cultural and livelihood projects in the region.

In his following tenures in Zheji-

ang Province and Shanghai City, Xi continued to attach great importance to the paired-up assistance initiatives.

In March 2013, not long after assuming the post of general secretary of the Communist Party of China Central Committee, Xi stressed the need to accelerate Xizang's leapfrog development.

China has, under his leadership, dedicated unprecedented funds and manpower to Xizang's development.

Herder Sangtso, in her 60s, is among the beneficiaries of paired-up assistance projects.

Residing in a village perched at remote Nagqu City, her family had to

put up with freezingly cold winters for years. The situation changed after the CHN Energy Investment Group installed solar panels to provide heat for every household in the village in 2023.

By harnessing the region's abundant sunshine in an environmentally friendly and low-carbon way, photovoltaic heating projects like this have substantially improved the living conditions of Xizang's residents.

"My house is now warm in winter and the children don't have to worry about frostbite on their hands and feet anymore," said Sangtso.

Paired-up assistance has also enhanced the ecological conservation

of Xizang, considered a key ecological security barrier for China.

In Namling, a county once stricken by constant sandstorms, a paired-up assistance team planted over 2.8 million seedlings and built a corridor of green forest and waterways stretching 100 kilometers. This has reduced sandstorms by a third and boosted the humidity rates.

Overall, since 1994, approximately 12,000 officials have been dispatched to Xizang through the paired-up assistance mechanism. Among them, Party members have formed the backbone of this mission, which has been sustained across generations. **Xinhua**

China-Africa cooperation fosters Africa's regional economic integration

By Zhang Zhiwen

AFRICA has witnessed a steady process of regional economic integration in recent years. In February 2024, the African Union (AU) launched the Second 10-Year Implementation Plan of Agenda 2063 during the 37th AU Summit.

Mohamed Ould Cheikh Ghazouani, Mauritanian president and chairperson of the AU for 2024, said that the AU is committed to unleashing the development potential of the African continent, promoting regional economic integration, increasing infrastructure connectivity, and enhancing agricultural productivity, so as to ensure the smooth implementation of the second 10-year implementation plan.

The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) was officially established in July 2019 and went into operation in January 2021. It aims to facilitate trade and investment and achieve the free movement of goods, services, and capital across the African continent through tariff reduction and removal of trade barriers. It works to create a large single market of over 1.3 billion people and with a combined gross domestic product of \$2.3 trillion.

According to the Economic Development in Africa Report 2023 released by the United Nations Trade and Development



The Chinese-built Lagos-Ibadan Railway in Nigeria connects Nigeria's economic center Lagos and the south-west industrial city Ibadan, which not only facilitates people's travel, but also helps improve the efficiency of port and inland cargo transportation. Photo shows a train at a railway station along the Lagos-Ibadan Railway in Nigeria. (Photo by Lan Yuanhong)

(UNCTAD), the AfCFTA offers advantages by easing regional market access and strengthening production chains across the continent, helping African domestic industries become more prepared for the global arena.

As Africa's largest trading partner, China actively supports African regional economic integration and the development of the AfCFTA. Recent years have seen an expansion in both the volume and quality of trade between China and the African continent.

According to the China-Africa Trade Index, published for the first time in 2023, the value of China's imports from and ex-

ports to Africa increased from less than 100 billion yuan (\$14 billion) in 2000 to 1.88 trillion yuan in 2022, a cumulative growth of over 20 times. In 2023, the China-Africa trade volume reached a record high of \$282.1 billion, a year-on-year increase of 1.5 percent. Among them, China's imports of African nuts, vegetables, flowers and fruits increased by 130 percent, 32 percent, 14 percent, and 7 percent year-on-year, respectively. Meanwhile, Chinese exports of new energy vehicles, lithium batteries, and photovoltaic products to Africa increased by 291 percent, 109 percent, and 57 percent year-on-year, respec-

tively, strongly supporting Africa's green transition.

China and the AfCFTA Secretariat have jointly established an expert group for economic cooperation, aiming to enhance the sharing of policies and experiences to facilitate trade and investment. Both sides have been deepening cooperation in areas such as infrastructure, trade and finance, industrial investment, talent training, and capacity building, providing continuous support for Africa's regional economic integration.

Over the past decade, China has provided Africa with development support as much as it



The expansion project of Abidjan Port in Cote d'Ivoire, built by a Chinese company, is a significant achievement of China-Africa cooperation under the framework of the Belt and Road Initiative. Since its inauguration in 2022, Abidjan Port has experienced a notable rise in its capacity, promoting local economic and social development. Currently, Abidjan Port has become a crucial hub in West Africa. Photo shows Abidjan Port. (Photo by Chuai Zhichao)

can and has been involved in the construction of over 6,000 kilometers of railways, 6,000 kilometers of roads, and more than 80 large power facilities in Africa.

Among them, the 2Africa submarine cable project, invested and developed by China Mobile International and other companies, encircles the African continent with a total length of over 45,000 kilometers. Once completed, it will become the longest submarine cable in the world. This cable project will deliver much-needed internet capacity and reliability in Africa, promote digital transformation in sectors

such as healthcare, education, and finance, and provide digital support for the regional economic integration of the African continent.

In August 2023, at the China-Africa Leaders' Dialogue, China proposed to launch the Initiative on Supporting Africa's Industrialization, the Plan for China Supporting Africa's Agricultural Modernization, and the Plan for China-Africa Cooperation on Talent Development, to help Africa bring its integration and modernization into a fast track.

According to an article pub-

lished in the African Leadership Magazine, large-scale infrastructure projects, like the building of roads, trains, ports, and power plants, are common in China. These investments support economic growth and regional integration by filling the infrastructural deficit in Africa.

James Mwangi, chief executive officer of Equity Group Holdings based in Kenya, said that China is an important source of investment for Africa and the largest export market for African countries. This strong support has enabled African nations to participate in global trade.

China-Africa cooperation leads to greener Africa

By Li Jiabao

IN the lower reaches of Sassandra River in Cote d'Ivoire stands the grand Gribo-Popoli hydropower plant, delivering clean electricity to numerous households.

The hydropower plant was built by the Power Construction Corporation of China (PowerChina) and financed by the Export-Import Bank of China. Recently, the first and second power generation units of the hydropower plant were successively connected to the grid. Upon full completion, it is expected to generate 554 million kWh of electricity for Cote d'Ivoire on an annual basis.

A number of eco-friendly projects built by Chinese companies are making the African continent greener.

Green development is not only a part of the eight major initiatives and nine programs jointly implemented by China and Africa under the framework of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC), but also a key area of high-quality Belt and Road cooperation between China and Africa.

In November 2021, the Eighth Ministerial Conference of the FOCAC held in Senegal adopted the Dakar Action Plan (2022-2024) and the China-Africa Declaration on Climate Change Cooperation, which has further improved the top-level design and institutional mechanisms for China-Africa cooperation on green development.

China is making extensive efforts to share its green development experience with African countries, providing tangible support in technology and capacity building. To date, China has undertaken more than 100 clean energy and green development projects under the FOCAC framework, supporting African countries in green and sustain-



African tech experts join a field trip to shelter forest along Tarim Desert Highway in north-west China's Xinjiang Uygur autonomous region. (Photo provided by the Xinjiang Institute of Ecology and Geography (XIEG) with the Chinese Academy of Sciences)

able development. Energy shortage is one of the bottlenecks hindering the development of African countries. According to data from the World Bank, only 46.7 percent of Sub-Saharan Africa's population had access to electricity in 2019.

Africa has enormous potential for renewable energy development. According to the International Energy Agency (IEA), Africa is home to 60% of the best solar resources globally. There is also great potential for hydro, wind, and geothermal power in many African countries.

As China-Africa deepens their cooperation in green energy cooperation, a number of solar power plants, wind farms, and hydroelectric stations are sprouting up across Africa. The abundant resources provided by nature on the African continent are rapidly transforming into green energy sources driving economic and social development.

For instance, the Chinese-built NOOR Solar Complex in Morocco, the world's largest Concentrated Solar Power (CSP) station, has provided clean energy for more than 1 million

Moroccan households, putting an end to the country's long-standing reliance on imported electricity.

In South Africa, the De Aar Wind Farm developed by a Chinese company has supplied 760 million kWh of clean electricity annually, meeting the demand of 300,000 households while reducing 619,900 tons of carbon emissions each year.

In Uganda, the Chinese-built Karuma Hydropower Plant recently connected its final unit to the country's national grid, becoming the largest hydropower station in the country. It has increased Uganda's total installed capacity by nearly 50 percent, saving 1.31 million tons of raw coal and reducing carbon emissions by 3.48 million tons each year, equivalent to planting 1.5 million trees.

China-Africa green energy cooperation has illuminated countless homes across the African continent and paved the way for sustainable development.

Desertification poses a severe challenge to many African countries. In 2017, the Xinjiang Institute of Ecology and Geography (XIEG) with the Chinese Academy of Sciences signed a memorandum of understanding with the Pan-African Agency for the Great Green Wall to enhance cooperation in sand control. Through such collaboration, China and Africa have shared experiences and support each other in combating desertification in recent years.

In 2015, China's Ministry of Com-

merce and the Ningxia government established an animal husbandry technology demonstration center in Mauritania, which has introduced water-saving irrigation methods to the country, including drip and sprinkler irrigation, and promoted the use of organic fertilizers such as cattle and sheep manure to improve the soil.

In Kano State, Nigeria, a desertification control project was launched by the African Desertification Control Initiative (ADCI) with support from the Chinese Academy of Sciences to help Nigeria build a "green wall" against desertification.

A joint effort by China and Ethiopia has led to the development of a model aimed at restoring and maintaining the ecological health of grasslands invaded by shrubs in low-altitude areas, which involves removing bushes to promote grass growth, rotating livestock in fenced-off sections, and incorporating different pastoral farming practices.

The Sahel region, a belt located on the southern border of the Sahara Desert, has long suffered from desertification. According to studies by Chinese and African experts, the ratio of desertified land in the region has decreased from 72.31 percent in 2000 to 69.23 percent in 2020. The completion of the Great Green Wall in Africa will greatly improve the natural environment of more than 10 countries south of the Sahara Desert, benefiting millions of local people.

By Sheng Yulei

Eco-friendly designs in China's major engineering projects

HOW do migrating fish overcome a 63-meter-high dam?

The answer is artificial fishways. At the Huangjinxia water control project in Hanzhong city, northwest China's Shaanxi province, a 1,908-meter-long ecological fishway extends upward along the dam.

The water control project is the major water source of the Hanjiang-to-Weihe River water diversion project, which brings water from Hanjiang River, the Yangtze River's biggest tributary, to Weihe River, the Yellow River's biggest tributary, to meet the water demand in central part of Shaanxi province.

About 3,000 fish migrate at the dam every day during the spawning season, thanks to the water replenishment channels, fish gathering channels, and fish entry holes built by the fishway.

"Since the design stage of the project, we have planned to build an eco-friendly fishway to ensure the smooth migration of fish species in Hanjiang River, considering their migration and spawning characteristics," explained a staff member of the Huangjinxia hydropower station.

Eco-friendly designs such as fishways, bird corridors, culverts, and

green bridges have become essential for major engineering projects in China, offering a unique perspective on the high-quality development of the country.

From bays to mountaintops, from plains to deserts, China's major engineering projects are increasingly embracing green and innovative approaches.

The Qinghai-Xizang Railway, which links northwest China's Qinghai province and southwest China's Xizang autonomous region, is the highest and longest plateau railway in the world. To protect the plateau ecosystem and biodiversity, a total of 1.54 billion yuan (\$215 million) was invested in ecological conservation along the railway when the construction started.

Besides, 33 dedicated passages were built to facilitate the migration of local wildlife. Train conductors are strictly prohibited from sounding the horn when passing through the passages to minimize the disturbance to wildlife.

The roof of the Xiong'an Railway Station in Xiong'an New Area, north China's Hebei province, is a photovoltaic power station, with 17,700 polycrystalline silicon photovoltaic panels installed, which can generate 5.8 million kilowatt-hours (kWh) electricity

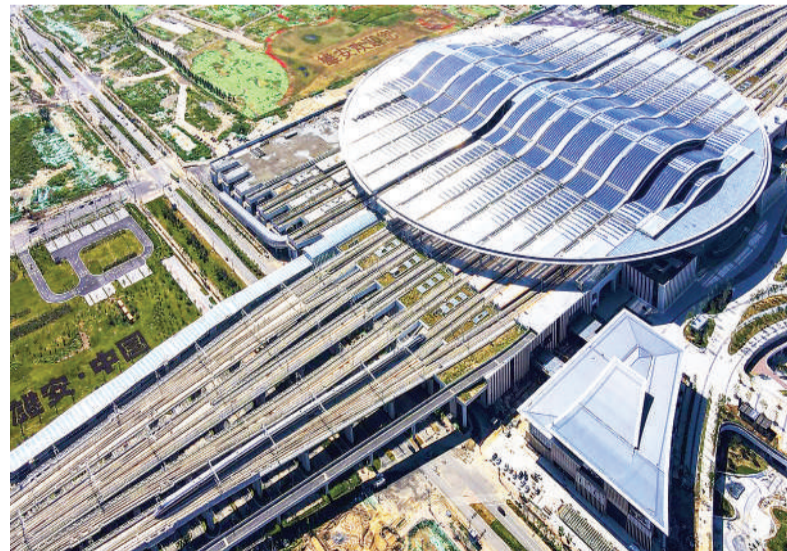


Photo shows an aerial view of the Xiong'an Railway Station in Xiong'an New Area, north China's Hebei province. (Photo by Sun Lijun/People's Daily Online)

on average annually.

The roof can save 1,800 tonnes of standard coal and reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 4,500 tonnes on an annual basis, which is equivalent to planting 12 hectares of trees.

During the construction of China's Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge, the longest bridge-and-tunnel sea crossing in the world, the population of Chinese white dolphins, an endangered dolphin species under

first-class state protection in China, increased from 1,200 to over 2,000.

The mega-project marks more than a step forward for China in bridge construction, but stands as a symbol of the harmonious coexistence between humans and the ocean in the country.

China attaches great importance to harmony between humanity and nature in its development planning.

Based on the carrying capacity

of resources and the environment, the country has been cultivating new growth drivers and advantages through high-level environmental protection.

By effectively reducing the resource and environmental costs of development and continuously enhancing the potential and momentum of development, the country has managed to improve economic, social, and ecological benefits.

The innovations and breakthroughs in China's major projects make it easier to understand the deep connotation of "new productive forces are in itself green productive forces."

For instance, during the construction of the Shenzhen-Zhongshan Link, a mega cross-sea passage in south China, builders faced the challenge of transporting 5,035-meter-long prefabricated immersed tubes from the manufacturing base to the construction site, a distance of roughly 50 kilometers, using floating transportation.

The project team came up with a creative idea to build an integrated ship for transporting and installing the immersed tubes, leading to a reduction of dredging volume by over

10 million cubic meters and exhaust emissions by about 1 million cubic meters compared to traditional towing methods.

China defined the harmony between humanity and nature as a key feature of its drive to advance Chinese modernization.

In order to promote innovation in development models, it is crucial to uphold the principle that lucid waters and lush mountains are invaluable assets, accelerate innovations in green technologies and the application of advanced eco-friendly technologies, integrate digital and intelligent development with green endeavors in industrial development, thus laying a solid green foundation for high-quality development.

China attaches equal importance to protection and development when formulating plans for major engineering projects.

Focusing on the big picture while also paying attention to details, the country has proactively adopted proactive strategies for its major engineering projects, ready to create more miracles and write a new chapter of Chinese modernization featuring harmonious coexistence between human and nature.

Mzize's future hangs in balance as Young Africans extend contract amid big offers

By Correspondent Nassir Nchimbi

YOUNG Africans forward Clement Mzize has become a hot commodity in the transfer market, drawing significant interest from top clubs in Africa and Europe.

Despite numerous offers, Young Africans have maintained a firm stance on their valuation of the prized striker, demonstrating their intent to keep him at the club.

Moroccan giants Wydad AC and South Africa's Kaizer Chiefs have expressed strong interest in acquiring Mzize (pictured). However, Young Africans recently rejected a formal bid of \$200,000 (approximately Sh542.3 million) from Kaizer Chiefs, signaling that they value Mzize far higher.

As the transfer window progresses, more clubs are likely to join the race for Mzize, and Young Africans' decision to hold on to him could potentially increase his market price. In a move to secure his future, the club has extended Mzize's contract until 2027, reflecting the growing stature of Tanzanian football and the rising recognition of local talent.

However, the decision to retain the 20-year-old striker has sparked debates among fans. While some believe that the club should capitalize on the high demand for Mzize and sell him for a substantial profit, others argue for keeping him and further developing his talent.

The situation with Mzize highlights the complexities of player transfers and the delicate balance between a club's financial interests and a player's career aspirations. As rumors continue to swirl about a potential departure, Young Africans must carefully weigh the financial benefits against the potential impact on their team's performance and fan morale.

Despite the pressure from some fans to sell Mzize, Young Africans' leadership should remember that the team's success does not depend on just one player. The squad boasts depth and talent, and other players are ready to step up



Tanga Regional Athletics Association (TRAA) chairperson, Sophia Wakati, addresses the press recently about preparations for this year's Tanga City Marathon Season 8 slated to take place in Tanga on September 22. PHOTO: CORRESPONDENT CHEJI BAKARI

Tanga regional athletics body pledges support for Tanga City Marathon organizers

By Correspondent Cheji Bakari, Tanga

TANGA Regional Athletics Association (TRAA) has pledged to provide maximum support for this year's Tanga City Marathon Season 8 slated for September 22.

The association's leaders stressed they are eager to ensure the race is organized smoothly, doing away with challenges that arose during last year's edition.

Some of the challenges that came about in last year's edition included the failure of organizers to hand over medals and prizes to some of the participating runners.

Sophia Wakati, the regional athletics body's chairperson, made such a revelation while addressing the media here in the city.

Among the issues, she outlined the need for organizers to follow all mara-

thon procedures and preparations.

They include all procedures set by Athletics Tanzania, the National Sports Council of Tanzania (NSC), and the Regional Sports Office.

She pointed out: "We, this time around, need to ensure that this year's race is efficient and better than past ones because of its potential to our region."

Sophia insisted: "The showdown has a positive impact on both sports and economy and that is why we decided to include it in the regional athletics calendar."

Tanga City Marathon Season 8 has been slated to take place in Tanga on September 22, with participants featuring in three races - 21km, 10km, and 5 kilometers Fun Run.

The regional athletics body disclosed that all registration procedures for the race are done online.

Jay Monahan preaches patience on PGA Tour getting investment deal with Saudi backers of LIV

By DOUG FERGUSON

COMMISSIONER Jay Monahan spent 20 minutes Wednesday talking about momentum from a \$1.5 billion private equity investment in the PGA Tour at the start of the year. When it came to an investment deal with Saudi backers of LIV Golf, he preached patience.

Monahan said a deal with the Public Investment Fund of Saudi Arabia remains a priority, though he said there was no deadline.

"I don't think we want to restrict ourselves in that way," Monahan said at the season-ending Tour Championship. "We want to achieve the best and right outcome at the right time."

It was a stark contrast to a year ago at East Lake. Monahan agreed to a stunning deal with PIF on June 6, 2023, to create a commercial arm called PGA Tour Enterprises. The deadline for that deal was the end of year.

Monahan said last year, "As I sit here today, I am confident that we will reach an agreement that achieves a positive outcome for the PGA Tour and our fans - I see it and I'm certain of it."

So much has changed since then. The Justice Department asked that an anti-poaching clause be removed from the framework agreement in July. Jon

Rahm defected to LIV Golf for Saudi riches in December. And the tour signed on Strategic Sports Group in January for an investment worth as much as \$3 billion, which included a first-of-its-kind equity program for players.

"When you look at where we are today and ... what we hear from fans and what we're hearing from players, ultimately we're both in a position to bring the best players in the world back together. I think that's a good and aspirational goal," Monahan said. "As I said earlier, we're in those discussions. We're at the table. They're complex, and it's going to take time."

In the meantime, the PGA Tour is wrapping up its first season of eight \$20 million signature events, which still produced roughly the same turnover of players who reached the postseason. The tour has announced a similar schedule for 2025, and Monahan made it sound as though that would be the blueprint for the immediate future.

And it still doesn't include players at LIV, some of whom might fall out of the 54-man league depending on the contracts they signed.

There is a road back, although it is a long one.

Tyler Dennis, the PGA Tour president, confirmed that players competing on LIV Golf will have to wait one year from their



Commissioner of the PGA Tour, Jay Monahan IV speaks during a news conference ahead of the Tour Championship golf tournament on Aug. 28 in Atlanta. (Agencies)

last competition to be eligible for the PGA Tour provided they were never members. Laurie Canter of England, who is in good shape to earn a PGA Tour card if he stays in the top 10 on the European tour,

played as an alternate at LIV Golf Las Vegas in February. He would not be eligible until Feb. 11.

"Players who were members of the tour also have all of our tournament regula-

considerable loss for the club.

Amid the transfer speculation, Young Africans' president, Hersi Said, has emphasized Mzize's importance to both the club and the national team. Said praised Mzize's development under the guidance of coaches Nabi and Miguel Gamondi, highlighting his undeniable potential.

Young Africans' struggles to replace Congolese striker Fiston Mayele, who departed for Pyramids FC in Egypt during the 2022/23 season, are still fresh in the club's memory. Despite efforts to retain him, the Egyptian club's substantial offer proved irresistible, creating a void in the team's attack.

Coach Gamondi attempted to fill the gap by deploying midfielders Stephane Aziz KI, Pacome Zouzoua, and Max Nzengeli as forwards. However, it was clear that these players lacked Mayele's specific skills and finishing abilities, underlining the team's reliance on a

dedicated striker.

While Young Africans continue their search for a forward capable of replicating Mayele's impact, recent signs of promise have come from Dube. His potential in the forward position offers hope, but consistency at the highest level remains a challenge that Young Africans must address to maintain competitiveness in future seasons.

As the new season starts, Young Africans are poised for a successful campaign, buoyed by strategic signings and the continued development of key players. Whether Clement Mzize remains a part of that journey will depend on the club's assessment of both the financial and sporting implications of his potential transfer. The decisions made in the coming weeks will shape not only the club's immediate future but also its long-term strategy in Tanzanian and African football.

tions and conduct policies applying to them," Dennis said. "I'm not going to get into details about that, but there's an additional set of guidelines there to consider."

Monahan was asked about a path back for LIV players and chose to look at some of the younger players who have emerged this year, such as Robert MacIntyre and Matthieu Pavon through the European tour and Ludvig Aberg through the PGA Tour University program.

Another was Nick Dunlap, the U.S. Amateur champion who won The American Express in January, turned pro and won in July and advanced to the second stage of the postseason.

"The system that we have, which extends to the international tours around the world, is really performing at a really high level, and that's what we're excited about," Monahan said.

As for a PIF deal, Monahan said the priority to get it done is still there, without offering details or being willing to discuss any negotiations publicly.

"I think when you get into productive conversations, that enhances the likelihood of positive outcomes, and that enhances the spirit of those very conversations," Monahan said. "I think that's where things stand."

Who is Mikel Merino? The 'strong and positive character' who could be a perfect for Arsenal

LONDON

ARSENAL have completed the signing of Spain midfielder Mikel Merino from Real Sociedad - and he could be just what the club need to become a title-winning team.

An agreement in principle was struck on Thursday night between the clubs for an initial £28.4m transfer with a further £4.2m in add-ons. Merino completed his medical over the weekend and has been unveiled as an Arsenal player on a long-term contract.

The manager, Mikel Arteta, told the club's official website: "Mikel is a player who will bring us huge quality with his experience and versatility. He has played at the top of the game at both club and international level for a number of seasons now.

"Mikel will make our squad significantly stronger, with his technical ability, together with his strong and positive character and personality. As we all saw in the summer, Mikel is also a winner, with his strong performances throughout the Euros helping Spain win the tournament.

"We are delighted to welcome Mikel and his family to the club and can't wait to start working with him."

The 28-year-old started his career at Osasuna before brief spells with Borussia Dortmund and Newcastle followed. After a solitary season with Newcastle under Rafael Benitez, Merino returned to Spain to join Sociedad where he established himself as one of the best midfielders in the country.

International recognition followed and after Merino helped Spain win an Olympic gold at Tokyo in 2021, he played a key role in the nation's Euro 2024 triumph last month and scored a 119th-minute winner against Germany in the last eight.

He has developed a reputation as a determined ball winner with the technical ability to control the tempo of a game and play defence-splitting passes, and he could be the perfect complement alongside Declan Rice's more adventurous spirit and captain Martin Odegaard's creative instincts.

Merino departs Sociedad after 242 appearances, scoring 27 goals, and becomes Arsenal's second major summer signing after Italy defender Riccardo Calafiori joined from Bologna.

Arsenal sporting director Edu said: "We are so happy to have completed the transfer of Mikel Merino. This has been another great team effort from many people at the club to finalise the transfer of a player who attracted interest from a number of clubs over the summer.

THE INDEPENDENT

Messi joins group training with Inter Miami, another step toward his return after ankle injury

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla.

LIONEL Messi returned to group training with Inter Miami on Wednesday, more than six weeks after the Argentina captain left the Copa America final with a badly sprained right ankle.

There is still no official timetable for when Messi, the eight-time Ballon d'Or winner, will play again for Inter Miami - which has the best record in Major League Soccer so far this season. Inter Miami visits Chicago on Saturday, then doesn't return to MLS play until a Sept. 14 match with Philadelphia. If Messi doesn't play this weekend, that means he'd have two more weeks to continue rehabbing before returning to game action.

Messi was not selected by Argentina to play in World Cup qualifiers in early September.

"To see him on the field is great," Inter Miami goalkeeper Drake Callender said after the Wednesday workout. "I know he's been getting treatment every single day, training every single day. He's dealt with things before. He's been there, done that and he's still doing it at the highest level. To see him recoup from the kind of injury we saw at Copa America and be available for us this season, it goes to show the quality of care we have here."

Messi has 12 goals and 13 assists in 12 MLS games with Inter Miami this season. He's missed 14 of the club's league matches, including each of the last eight either because he was playing for Argentina or recovering from the ankle injury. Also missed by Messi in that span: all four of Inter Miami's matches in Leagues Cup play, as the team tried to defend the trophy it won a year ago.

Messi last played on July 14, leaving in the second half of Argentina's win over Colombia in the Copa America final. He was dealing with leg issues throughout that tournament, plus left the field briefly in the first half of the final because of a left ankle issue - then got hurt again in the second half and had to leave for good.

AP

Organizers of automated draw for new Champions League format insist it will be safe from hackers

MONACO

ORGANIZERS of the new-style Champions League draw that relies on a software program said Wednesday it will be fast and safe from hackers.

UEFA hired a specialist technology firm that will help create match pairings Thursday in the 36-team, single-league format that replaces the traditional group stage which could be drawn manually with balls picked from bowls.

"We have taken all steps we possibly can to make it as safe and secure as possible," said David Gill of AE Live, the English software firm that designed the draw process for a gala ceremony in Monaco. "This is not new for us."

Gill said the firm also worked with FIFA and faced a "supply chain attack" after the Russian invasion of Ukraine. After the invasion started in February 2022, FIFA and UEFA removed Russia from qualifying play-offs for the 2022 World Cup ahead of the finals tournament draw ceremony in Qatar that April.



Real Madrid's Luka Modric lifts the trophy after winning the UEFA Super Cup Final soccer match between Real Madrid and Atalanta at the Narodowy stadium in Warsaw, Poland, Wednesday, Aug. 14, 2024. Real Madrid won 2-0. (AP Photo)

UEFA deputy general secretary Giorgio Marchetti said at an eve-of-draw briefing it had full confidence in AE Live, which has not shared its software code with the Champions League organizer.

Asked about conspiracy theories regarding the integrity of UEFA competition draws, Marchetti acknowledged "many people didn't trust us in the past."

"They thought the ball was hot or cold or God only knows which systems to manipulate the

balls," Marchetti said. "People can trust us."

After 21 years playing in the traditional Champions League format - 32 teams each playing six games in a group to advance to the round of 16 - the new system has 36 teams each playing eight different opponents. They are ranked in a single league standings in January to decide who advances to the knockout phase.

This format created so many permutations of possible pairings that an old-style manual draw

would have taken several hours instead of about 30 minutes.

Instead, each ball will be picked from one of four bowls of seeded teams before the software decides its eight opponents that are quickly displayed.

"The response of the system will happen in a few seconds so there is no possibility for anyone to intervene," Marchetti said.

Last December, unexplained moaning noises disrupted the draw ceremony for the

men's European Championship. The interruption was clearly heard for several minutes on the broadcast from a concert hall in Hamburg, Germany. A British prankster claimed credit for the stunt.

Meanwhile, historic rivals Dinamo Zagreb and Red Star Belgrade won their Champions League qualifying play-offs on Wednesday and can now be drawn to meet for the first time in 33 years.

Dinamo and Red Star last played each other in May 1991 in the Yugoslavian league that started to break up after that season as ethnic tensions moved toward war in the Balkans. One year earlier, their match in Zagreb saw violent clashes in the stadium.

On Wednesday, Dinamo beat Qarabag 2-0 in Azerbaijan to win 5-0 on aggregate score, and Red Star overturned a 2-1 deficit from the first leg against Bodo/Glimt with a 2-0 win in Belgrade.

Dinamo and Red Star were joined by Lille and Slovan Bratislava completing the 36-team Champions League lineup in the draw on Thurs-

day for the new format league phase that starts next month.

Lille won 3-2 on aggregate against Slavia Prague, despite losing 2-1 in the Czech capital, and Slovan won 3-2 on the night and 4-3 on aggregate score against Midtjylland.

In Thursday's draw, Dinamo and Red Star will be in the pot of third-seeded teams who can be paired to play each other once.

The Champions League has abolished the traditional group phase and will now have an opening stage of a single league standings to decide which teams advance to the knockout rounds starting in February.

Each of the 36 teams will play eight games against eight different opponents, with four at home and four away.

The top eight in the standings in January advance direct to the round of 16. The teams ranked Nos. 9-16 are drawn to face teams Nos. 17-24 in two-leg knockout playoffs to join the last 16. The bottom 12 teams are eliminated.

AP

Who is Liverpool target Chiesa and why is the fee £10m?

By Matthew Howarth

JUVENTUS and Italy winger Federico Chiesa is closing in on a move to Liverpool.

Manager Arne Slot's team have agreed a fee of £10m for the 26-year-old, who told reporters on Wednesday he was ready for a "new adventure".

Chiesa is expected to undergo a medical in the coming days and could become Slot's first buy at the club, who have already agreed a deal to bring in Valencia goalkeeper Giorgi Mamardashvili for the start of the 2025-26 season.

So who is Chiesa? Where will he fit in at Anfield? And why are Juventus letting him go for only £10m? BBC Sport finds out...

"He did everything, and did it well"

The son of former Italy striker Enrico Chiesa, who scored 139 goals in 380 Serie A appearances for the likes of Sampdoria, Parma, Fiorentina and Lazio, Federico had a lot to live up to when he joined La Viola from local club Settignano as a 10-year-old.

Blessed with blistering pace, he quickly rose through the youth ranks in Florence before breaking into the first team as an 18-year-old, making his senior debut for the club in August 2016 - against none other than Juventus.

Though still a teenager, it wasn't long before Chiesa established himself as one of the first names on the team sheet.

"Chiesa was a fantastic player - very unique with a complete set of skills," a Fiorentina club journalist told BBC Sport. "He was great at pressing, defending, and of course attacking, often



A ruptured anterior cruciate knee ligament kept Chiesa sidelined for 10 months in 2022. Agencies

creating chances out of nowhere.

"He played left and right winger in a 4-3-3, and as a second striker and wing-back in a 3-5-2. He did everything, and did it well. He needed to improve his finishing, but he was also playing in an average, defensively-minded Fiorentina side who created little up front."

Chiesa's final season in Florence was his most prolific. He registered 10 goals and nine assists across 34 Serie A appearances in 2019-20, earning him a move to Juventus in October 2020.

His debut campaign in Turin yielded similar numbers, and he appeared to have the world at his feet after being named in the Euro 2020 team of the tournament on the back of several eye-catching displays for winners Italy - only to suffer an anterior cruciate ligament injury in early January 2022 which kept him out for 10 months.

When he finally returned to action in November 2022 he struggled to recapture his fitness and form, managing just 11 goals and eight

assists across 54 Serie A outings since - with nine of those goals coming last season under Massimiliano Allegri.

"Why is he so cheap?"

Capturing a player of Chiesa's calibre and versatility for as little as £10m will be viewed as a shrewd piece of business by the Reds hierarchy, who will hope he can recapture the kind of form that made him one of Italy's hottest commodities prior to his ACL injury.

With Chiesa's contract set to expire next summer, new Juventus man-

ager Thiago Motta would clearly rather cash in on the 26-year-old now than lose him for free in less than 12 months' time.

Allegri's successor, who has left Chiesa out of his first two match-day squads this season, is also known to prefer a high-pressing style of play - an approach ill-suited to a player who has struggled with injuries in recent years.

"Motta has already told him and several other players that they are not part of his plans and are better off looking for

another club," says Italian football journalist Daniele Verri.

"He would go for free at the end of next year. He is not part of the programme.

"But the deal for Chiesa is also part of rejuvenating the team and paying less money in salaries.

"He has trained sometimes alone, sometimes with the group recently, but he has not played because they want to get rid of him."

"Chiesa brings 'proper speed' but is a 'dangerous move'

Long-time admirers of Chiesa, Liverpool are bringing in the Italy international to complement a forward line already boasting Mohamed Salah, Darwin Nunez, Diogo Jota, Cody Gakpo and Luis Diaz.

Chiesa started three of Italy's four Euro 2024 matches on the right flank - Salah's preferred position at Anfield - but at Juventus last season he was mainly deployed as a second striker in Allegri's favoured 3-5-2 system.

Slot will be confident of bringing the best out of Chiesa at Anfield - wherever he decides to play him - but it remains to be seen whether a player who has spent over 400 days out injured since November 2021 can stay fit in such a physically demanding league.

"He can bring some proper speed to Liverpool, but he is very prone to injuries," says Verri. "With the rhythm and intensity of English football, I'm not sure he will cope with that.

"It is a bet for Liverpool. He won't cost that much, but it is a dangerous move."

BBC

Gwiji by David Chikoko



SPORT

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Suspects in foiled plot to attack Taylor Swift shows aimed to kill 'tens of thousands', CIA official says

BERLIN

THE suspects in the foiled plot to attack Taylor Swift concerts in Vienna earlier this month sought to kill "tens of thousands" of fans before the CIA discovered intelligence that disrupted the planning and led to arrests, the agency's deputy director said.

The CIA notified Austrian authorities of the scheme, which allegedly included links to the Islamic State group. The intelligence and subsequent arrests ultimately led to the cancellation of three sold-out Eras Tour shows, devastating fans who had traveled across the globe to see Swift in concert.

CIA Deputy Director David Cohen addressed the failed plot during the annual Intelligence and National Security Summit, held this week in Maryland.

"They were plotting to kill a huge number – tens of thousands of people at this concert, including I am sure many Americans – and were quite advanced in this," Cohen said Wednesday. "The Austrians were able to make those arrests because the agency and our partners in the intelligence community provided them information about what this ISIS-connected group was planning to do."

Austrian officials said the main suspect, a 19-year-old Austrian man, was inspired by the Islamic State group. He allegedly planned to attack outside the stadium, where upwards of 30,000 fans were expected to gather, with knives or homemade explosives. Another 65,000 fans were likely to be inside the venue. Investigators discovered chemical substances and technical devices during a raid of the suspect's home.

Austria's interior minister, Gerhard Karner, previously said help from other intelligence agencies was needed because Austrian investigators, unlike some foreign services, can't legally monitor text messages.

The 19-year-old's lawyer has said the allegations were "overacting at its best," and contended Austrian authorities were "presenting this exaggeratedly" in order to get new surveillance powers.

Swift broke her silence about the cancellations last week after her London shows had concluded.

"Having our Vienna shows cancelled was devastating," she wrote in a statement posted to Instagram. "The reason for the cancellations filled me with a new sense of fear, and a tremendous amount of guilt because so many people had planned on coming to those shows."

She thanked authorities – "thanks to them, we were grieving concerts and not lives," she wrote – and said she waited to speak until the European leg of her Eras Tour concluded to prioritize safety.

"Let me be very clear: I am not going to speak about something publicly if I think doing so might provoke those who would want to harm the fans who come to my shows," she wrote.

Concert organizer Barracuda Music said it canceled the three-night Vienna run that would have begun Aug. 8 because the arrests made in connection to the conspiracy were too close to showtime.

The main suspect and a 17-year-old were taken into custody on Aug. 6, the day before the cancellations were announced. A third suspect, 18, was arrested Aug. 8. Their names have not been released in line with Austrian privacy rules.

The shows in London, the next stop after Vienna, came on the heels of a stabbing at a Swift-themed dance class that left three little girls dead in the U.K. In a statement issued after the Southport attack, Swift said she was "just completely in shock" and "at a complete loss for how to ever convey my sympathies to these families." News outlets reported that Swift met with some of the survivors backstage in London.

The Vienna plot also drew comparisons to a 2017 attack by a suicide bomber at an Ariana Grande concert in Manchester, England, that killed 22 people. The bomb detonated at the end of Grande's concert as thousands of young fans were leaving, becoming the deadliest extremist attack in the United Kingdom in recent years.

Cohen on Wednesday praised the CIA's work in preventing the planned violence, saying that other counterterrorism "successes" in foiling plots typically go unheralded. **AP**

Dabo calls for offensive overhaul as Azam stumble against JKT Tanzania



Azam FC winger Iddi Nado (L) dribbles past JKT Tanzania midfielder Said Ndemla in their Premier League encounter on Wednesday at Isamuhyo Stadium in Dar es Salaam. Photo: Courtesy of Azam FC.

By Correspondents Nassir Nchimbi & Michael Mwebe

AZAM FC's head coach, Youssouph Dabo, has stressed the need to overhaul his team's offensive strategy following a goalless draw against JKT Tanzania in the Premier League on Wednesday at Isamuhyo Stadium.

Azam were outplayed by their hosts, who showed more intent and creativity throughout the match.

Speaking in his post-match press conference, Dabo focused on the lackluster performance of his team's attack, highlighting the need to find solutions quickly.

He emphasized the importance of improvement, especially among new players, who must adapt faster to Azam's playing style to create more scoring opportunities.

Azam, looking to bounce back from recent disappointing results, faced another setback against JKT Tanzania.

The team's morale was already low after being knocked out of the CAF Champions League preliminary stage by Rwandan champions APR. Despite a 1-0 home victory in the first leg, Azam suffered a 2-0 defeat in the second leg in Kigali, resulting in their early exit from the competition.

The team's attacking struggles have been evident in recent matches, having failed to score from open play in three of their last four games. Their only goal in this stretch came from a penalty converted by Jhoiner Blanco in the first leg against APR.

The last time Azam scored from open play was when Feisal Salum found the net in the Community Shield mini-tournament final against Young Africans, a

match they lost 4-1.

In an effort to turn things around, Dabo made several changes to his starting lineup against JKT Tanzania. Nassor Saadun was chosen to lead the line instead of Blanco, with Salum positioned just behind as a supporting striker.

The team lined up in a 4-2-3-1 formation, featuring Colombian defensive midfielder Ever Meza and Adolf Mutasingwa as the central midfield pair, while Djibril Sillah and Iddi Nado played on the wings.

JKT Tanzania, coached by Hamad Ally, adopted a possession-based style and frequently breached into Azam's penalty area, although they lacked the finishing touch to capitalize on their chances.

Dabo reiterated the necessity for his team to sharpen their offensive play, particularly the new signings. He pointed out the need to score goals to secure wins and accumulate points.

"Offensively, we need to improve, especially with our new players adjusting to our style of play. Today, we tried a slightly different offensive setup, similar to last season with two strikers. However, the new players are finding it challenging to adapt to our structured offensive system."

"Players like Jhoiner Blanco, who had more freedom

in their previous teams, are struggling to adjust. That's why we experimented with a different formation today," Dabo explained.

"We need to keep improving because we lack efficiency in certain areas, but it's important to remember this was just our first game. No team wins every match."

Despite the setback in their league opener following their continental elimination, Dabo reminded everyone that football is a marathon, not a sprint, suggesting that a single game should not define his team's overall performance. The team's progress should be evaluated over a longer period.

"This is just one game out of thirty. Judging my team solely on today's performance isn't fair. Even the best teams don't win every match. That's the nature of football. Sometimes, the other team plays better."

"I don't understand why some people overreact to a single game. That's not what football is about," Dabo added.

Azam, who finished as runners-up last season behind champions Young Africans, will look to regroup and improve as they prepare for their next match against city rivals KMC, scheduled for September 26, right after the international break.

ZFF refutes claims of New Amaan Complex Stadium ban by CAF

By Correspondent Seth Mapoli

THE Zanzibar Football Federation (ZFF) has dismissed recent rumors circulating on social media about the closure of the New Amaan Complex Stadium.

According to an official statement from ZFF, these claims are completely unfounded and should be disregarded by the public.

The statement clarifies that there is no truth to reports suggesting that the Confederation of African Football (CAF) has prohibited the use of the New Amaan Complex Stadium for the upcoming second round of the CAF Interclub Competition, including the CAF Champions League.

ZFF urged all football stakeholders and fans to remain calm and ignore these baseless rumors. The federation emphasized that the New Amaan Complex Stadium has been officially approved by CAF for use in both the first and second preliminary rounds of the competitions.

This approval was confirmed by CAF in statements issued on July 27, 2024, and August 26, 2024.

In light of this, ZFF encourages both local and international clubs interested in utilizing the New Amaan Complex Stadium during the second preliminary round of the CAF Champions League and Federation Cup to proceed with their plans, following established procedures to ensure a smooth process.

The ZFF statement aims to reassure the public that the stadium remains fully operational and ready to host matches as planned.

The federation reiterated that any reports suggesting otherwise are false and are being spread to create unnecessary panic among the football community in Zanzibar.

As the competition progresses, ZFF

has pledged to continue providing accurate information and updates to prevent any further confusion.

The federation remains committed to supporting the development of football in Zanzibar and ensuring that the New Amaan Complex Stadium meets all CAF requirements for hosting international matches.

ZFF urged all stakeholders to disre-

gard misinformation circulating online and trust only official communications from the federation and CAF regarding the status of the New Amaan Complex.

The federation stands firm in its commitment to uphold the integrity of football in Zanzibar and facilitate the smooth operation of all football-related activities within the region.



Iboni Primary School pupils pictured on Wednesday playing soccer at the school's grounds in Kondoa, Dodoma region. PHOTO: CORRESPONDENT JUMANNE JUMA

Flexibles by David Chikoko

