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Marburg scare: Ministry issues travel advisory

By Getrude Mbagu

THE government has issued a travel advisory following the outbreak of Marburg virus disease (MVD) in Kagera Region, urging both residents and travellers to stay vigilant and adhere to precautionary health measures.

Dr Seif Shekalaghe, the Health permanent secretary, said in a statement yesterday that travellers leaving Kagera Region will be required to complete an online traveller's surveillance form through the ministry official portal.

Similarly, individuals directly contacting a confirmed MVD case will be closely monitored, restrained from traveling until cleared by medical authorities, he said.

At all points of entry, including airports, ground crossings, and ports, travellers will undergo body temperature screenings, where those displaying fever-like symptoms will be further evaluated by the relevant agencies, the statement affirmed.

Travellers will also receive health information and be advised to monitor for any signs of MVD, with instructions to report any symptoms by calling the toll-free number 199, it specified.

Stringent infection prevention and con-

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NECTA laments Maths scores in 2024 Form IV exam results



NECTA Executive Secretary, Dr Said Ally Mohamed addresses a news conference in Dar es Salaam yesterday. Photo: Correspondent

A total of 221,953 candidates, or 42.96 percent, achieved division I-III. In 2023, 197,426 candidates (37.42 percent) achieved division I-III, indicating an improvement of 5.54 percent compared to the previous year

By Guardian Reporter

SIGHTLY less than 43 per cent of candidates obtained division I to III in the past year's secondary school leaving certificate exams, while the pass rate for Mathematics remained at around 26 per cent.

This summary is scattered in a report by the National Examination Council of Tanzania (NECTA) for the 2024 Certificate of Secondary Education Examination (CSEE) results, which admits that the Mathematics pass rate remains a significant challenge.

Dr Said Ally Mohamed, the NECTA executive secretary, said in announcing the results in Dar es Salaam yesterday, that the pass rate for Basic Mathematics remained far below average, standing at 25.35 per cent.

Performance in Basic Mathematics has shown some improvement over the past decade, he said, noting that the pass rate increased from 16.76 per cent in 2015 to 25.35 per cent in 2024.



A suspension was slapped on P6384 BSL Open School in Shinyanga from conducting future national exams due to involvement in exam malpractice

Further efforts are required to improve teaching of the subject schools, he said, affirming that the pass rate for Basic Mathematics dipped by 0.07 percent while the score in Additional Mathematics dropped by 2.70 percent compared to 2023.

"The quality of performance in Basic Mathematics has decreased slightly by 1.04 percent," he said, meanwhile as overall results showed that 477,262 out of 516,695 candidates, representing 92.37 percent, passed the exam with division I, II, III and IV.

In 2023, 471,427 candidates passed, which was 89.36 percent, marking a 3.01 percent increase in the pass rate in 2024 compared to the previous year.

Of the successful candidates, 249,078 were female (91.72 percent of female candidates) and 228,184 were male (93.08 percent of male candidates), he said.

Subjects such as Chemistry, Agriculture, Engineering Science, Information and Computer Studies, Additional Mathematics and Food and Human Nutrition recorded pass rates ranging from 93 percent to 100 percent.

The highest pass rate was recorded in Food and Human Nutrition, where all candidates passed, followed by Chemistry with a pass rate of 96.36 percent.

For Physics and Biology, pass rates ranged

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ICT commission readies Tanzanite laptop project

By Guardian Reporter, Dodoma

TANZANIA is on track to establish a large factory for manufacturing laptops under the brand name Tanzanite.

Dr Nkundwe Mwasaga, the Information and Communication Technologies Commission (ICTC) director general, said in a presentation to a parliamentary committee here yesterday that a substantial por-

tion of the laptops will be dedicated to advancing ICT proficiency in schools, from primary to secondary levels.

He stated before members of the parliamentary standing committee on In-

frastructure that these achievements are a result of government efforts to attract investment and promote the local production of ICT equipment.

"We are making good progress," he said, noting that commission officials had visited QuadGen Wireless Solutions Pvt. Ltd in the Indian city of Bangalore.

An ICTC team was there to assess the company's capabilities after the firm expressed readiness to invest in a factory that will assemble laptops and smart boards for

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Make use of rainfall updates, agro-sector stakeholders told

The media need to disseminate weather information promptly as TMA was monitoring weather patterns and providing updates

By Guardian Reporter

THE Tanzania Meteorological Authority (TMA) has urged stakeholders across various economic sectors to plan their activities in line with updated seasonal forecasts to avoid disasters.

Dr Ladislaus Chang'a, the TMA director general, issued this appeal at a press conference in Dar es Salaam yesterday when updating the seasonal rainfall forecast, focusing on March to May.

The agriculture sector risks excessive moisture and potential flooding which could harm crops in areas expecting above average rainfall, he stated.

Also at issue is a potential rise in pests and diseases like mould, affecting a range of crops like bananas, maize, rice, cassava and beans, he stated.

Farmers are advised to prepare fields using proper inputs, and adopting technology to prevent waterlogging and soil erosion, he elaborated.

The livestock and fisheries sector faces considerable risk of livestock diseases like Rift Valley fever as well as the foot and mouth disease, as water shortages affect livestock water supply in wide ranging areas likely to face largely below normal rainfall patterns, he cautioned.

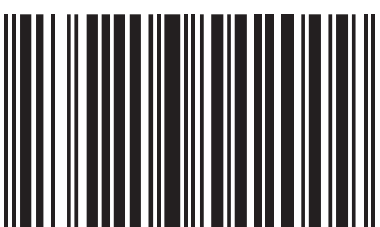
Farmers need to take up rainfall pattern forecasts and use extension services to mitigate these risks, he emphasized.

Tourism and wildlife in below-average rainfall areas face stagnant pools of water, promoting disease transmission between wildlife and

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President Samia Suluhu Hassan arrives at Dar es Salaam station yesterday after traveling from Dodoma by the standard gauge train. Photo: State House



NECTA laments Maths scores in 2024 Form IV exam results

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from 73.98 percent to 74.15 percent.

"The pass rates for Natural Sciences and Technology have improved by 0.22 percent to 8.07 percent," he asserted, noting that there was wide ranging quality of performance in various subjects, Chemistry, Agriculture, Engineering Science, Information and Computer Studies, Additional Mathematics as well as Food and Human Nutrition were exceptional, with 64.52 percent to 97.88 percent of candidates achieving grades A to C, he stated.

The pass rate for Biology improved from 35.36 percent in 2023 to 40.04 percent in 2024, he said, highlighting that Kiswahili had a high pass rate of 97.43 percent, with 71.53 percent of candidates achieving grades A to C.

The pass rates for French and Arabic were lower, with results ranging from 13.34 percent to 26.10 percent, he pointed out.

The number of candidates scoring Division IV and zero decreased, signalling an overall enhancement in academic performance, while pass rates for Civics, History and Geography ranged from 70.34 percent to 73.36 percent.

"Pass rates in Social Science subjects have increased by 2.51 percent to 10.16 percent compared to 2023. History saw a significant improvement of 10.16 percent, followed by Geography, which increased by 7.59 percent."

For grades A to C, History had the highest performance in Social Science subjects, with 39.69 percent of candidates achieving these grades, the results indicated.

The pass rate for Commerce was 89.17 percent, while Bookkeeping had a pass rate of 88.27 percent, with the pass rates for the subjects increasing by 8.15 percent and 9.65 percent respectively.

In terms of grades A to C, 50.98 percent of Commerce candidates and 54.98 percent of Book-Keeping candidates obtained the grades, he said.

The pass rate for Bible Knowledge was 99.08 percent, while Islamic Religious Education recorded 79.83 percent. The pass rate for Bible Knowledge increased by 0.43 percent, while the pass rate for Islamic Religious Education dropped by 1.99 percent compared to 2023, he stated.

Marburg scare: Govt issues travel advisory

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control measures are being instituted at points of entry, including mandatory hand hygiene with liquid soap or alcohol-based sanitizers, while ensuring physical distancing, it elaborated.

Conveyance operators, those enabling people or goods to arrive at border points, are also required to adhere to exit screening procedures, including hygiene inspections and immediate reporting of any symptomatic travellers, it emphasised.

The measures indicated are in line with International Health Regulations of 2005 and the travel advisory will be reviewed periodically as the situation evolves, the top ex-

ecutive intoned.

Travellers are urged to visit the ministry's website to stay updated on the latest developments, he said, urging individual travellers to adhere to the guidelines to ensure public safety and curb the spread of the viral scare.

The World Health Organisation announced an outbreak of the disease at the Kagera border zone, then met President Samia Suluhu Hassan last week.

After first discounting any proven cases of the disease, the meeting then prompted immediate public health measures to avoid other countries taking measures regarding travellers from Tanzania, analysts noted.

As the commercial gateway to East Africa as well as the rest of the continent," Sing'Oei said.

He vowed to work with other African investment promotion agencies to utilize the platform to showcase the continent as a unified investment destination.

Hosted in conjunction with the Kenya National Chamber of Commerce and Industry, a trade lobby, the three-day inaugural Africa Global Summit will bring together more than 4,500 delegates from 70 countries, including heads of state and government, entrepreneurs and innovators under the theme "Africa's Global Future: Integrated, Innovative and Sustainable."

Of the 529,329 school candidates registered, 517,460 (97.76 percent) sat for exams, including 271,918 girls (97.54 percent) and 245,542 boys (98.00 percent). Of the 28,467 private candidates registered, 25,151 (88.35 percent) participated, the results indicated.

NECTA had annulled the results of 67 candidates found to have engaged in malpractice, while the results of five candidates who wrote offensive language in their scripts were similarly cancelled.

A suspension was slapped on P6384 BSL Open School in Shinyanga from conducting future national exams due to involvement in exam malpractice, he said, underlining that the matter is currently in court.

A total of 459 candidates whose results were withheld due to various challenges, including health issues, will be allowed to retake their exams in 2025, he added.



Feza Boys' Secondary School pupils celebrate while lifting their colleague, Alan Masaka in Dar es Salaam yesterday. Masaka performed well in the Form Four examination results, scoring a distinction with Division A.7 Photo: Correspondent

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use in schools, he stated.

Discussions are being pursued with the company to facilitate joint-venture investments in local semi-knocked down assembly plants and completely knocked down manufacturing plants, he elaborated.

This objective is aligned with the African Union's goal for the continent to establish assembling plants for producing ICT equipment, he specified.

A collaboration agreement has been struck with AlmaWave, an Italian company specialising in the development of artificial intelligence systems for proto-human

ICT commission readies Tanzanite laptop project

communication, using Kiswahili.

ICTC intends to work with the company and various other institutions' large language model (LLM) enabling the growth of Kiswahili in the artificial intelligence domain globally, he stated.

"This initiative will create opportunities for Tanzanians to use Kiswahili in developing innovations across various economic sectors," he said, underlining its potential to significantly expand the

market for Kiswahili and strengthen Tanzania's digital economy.

Selemani Kakoso (Mpanda Rural), the parliamentary committee chairman, praised ICTC initiatives urging it to expedite its implementation.

The nation is now focused on building a digital economy, especially leveraging its large youth population, he said, insisting on seizing such opportunities to benefit the country.

"Mistakes were made in the past when investors expressed interest in producing goods locally but eventually relocated to neighboring countries," he admitted.

"We are the ones who speak fluent Kiswahili, but others are the ones benefiting from it the most. Let's change that," the parliamentarian insisted.

"You must oversee this to ensure that Kiswahili brings greater benefits to the country," he added.



Nzega District Commissioner Naitapwaki Tukai (R) serves food to pupils from various primary and secondary schools during an event to hand over school supplies donated by development stakeholders towards orphans and children with special needs in the district yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Gift Thadey

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domestic animals using the same water sources, he said.

There is a need for authorities to improve infrastructure in game reserves and raising community awareness on the risks of such water spots to avoid them, he appealed.

In transport, he noted that both excessive and insufficient rainfall could damage roads and railways, leading to accidents and delays in air and maritime travel. Stakeholders are advised to take steps to improve infrastructure and conduct regular checks.

Make use of rainfall updates, agro-sector stakeholders told

Regarding energy and minerals, rising water levels from moderate to above-average rainfall could cause flooding. Authorities are urged to take protective measures for infrastructure and conduct public education on the expected weather.

Health emergencies are similarly likely on account of water contamination due to damaged infrastructure in flooded areas where water

pipes and dams are besieged with debris.

Mixing clean and dirty water could lead to disease outbreaks, meanwhile as the health authorities need to mitigate health risks by eliminating mosquito breeding sites and treating water.

Commercial agro-sector producers face inadequate rainfall that could disrupt farming activity and processing operations, leading to

higher costs and quality issues.

Businesses need to collaborate with ecosystem experts to ensure resilience, he said, citing banking and insurance services as well positioned to solve most envisaged risks.

The media need to disseminate weather information promptly as TMA was monitoring weather patterns and providing updates, he added.

Kenya to leverage global summit to boost foreign investments, officials

NAIROBI

KENYA plans to leverage the World Chamber Forum-Africa Global Summit 2025 scheduled to take place in April in Nairobi, Kenya to boost foreign direct investment.

Abraham Korir Sing'Oei, principal secretary in the Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs, said Thursday that the summit represents a pivotal moment in the country's commitment to increasing private investments and channelling them into priority sectors of the national development blueprint.

"We are committed to leveraging on the summit to cement our posi-



Mara Regional Commissioner Colonel Alfred Mtambi speaks during a meeting to introduce the Cereals and Other Produce Regulatory Authority (COPRA) in Musoma on Wednesday. He is flanked by the COPRA Director General Irene Mlola. Photo: Correspondent

RC urges residents to be cautious amid Marburg virus disease threat

By Correspondent Sabato Kasika, Musoma

MARA Regional Commissioner Col. Alfred Mtambi has urged residents to take necessary precautions to protect themselves against the threat of Marburg virus.

Speaking at a meeting convened to introduce the roles and responsibilities of the Cereals and Other Produce Regulatory Authority (COPRA) early this week, Col. Mtambi said although only one case has been confirmed in Kagera Region, the possibility of undetected cases remains high.

He called on residents to follow the advice of health experts in combating the virus, including abandoning certain traditional practices, saying washing hands properly with soap and water can help prevent the spread of bacteria and viruses that cause diseases.

"Health experts, district leaders and local government officials must continue educating the public and providing clear guidelines on preventing spread of this disease," he said.

Erick Muhigi, Assistant Regional Administrative Secretary in charge of health, nutrition and social welfare, noted that the region has intensified public awareness on Marburg virus following the confirmed case in Kagera Region.

Muhigi explained that symptoms of the

virus include high fever, severe headache, body malaise, muscle aches and pains as well as severe watery diarrhoea, abdominal pain and cramping, nausea, and vomiting, which can begin on the third day.

Non-itchy rashes have been reported in patients between two and seven days after the onset of symptoms.

"The virus spreads through various means, including contact with sweat, urine, blood, faeces, vomit, clothing, bedding or direct contact with an infected person or animal," Muhigi said.

He emphasised the need for precautions such as washing hands with running water and soap, avoiding touching or handling bodies of those who have died from the disease, and refraining from consuming animal carcasses.

"The virus spreads rapidly within communities, and infected individuals can begin showing symptoms within two to 21 days. They may also transmit the virus to others, even if they are asymptomatic," he said.

To prevent a potential outbreak, the region has strengthened monitoring measures at the Sirari border with Kenya, other crossing points used by individuals entering the country, Musoma Airport and other regional airstrips.

By Guardian Reporter

THE government through Tanzania Electrical, Mechanical and Electronics Services Agency (TEMESA) has resolved long-standing transport challenges for Kigamboni residents with the launch of a new ferry service in collaboration with the private sector.

The service, which includes two ferries operating between Magogoni and Kigamboni, aims to improve daily commutes for more than 50,000 passengers.

The partnership between TEMESA and Azam Marine Ltd, worth 5.98bn/-, will last for eight years, improving travel times for commuters.

Speaking during the launch

Two more ferries to ease transport problems for Kigamboni residents

in Dar es Salaam yesterday, Minister for Works Abdallah Ulega highlighted that the introduction of private ferries would not replace government-operated services but would instead offer passengers more options.

The minister assured the public that government ferries will continue to undergo regular inspections and maintenance as needed.

"When government ferries

namely Mv Magogoni and Mv Kigamboni go for repairs, it won't be for good as they will be back to services after being upgraded for enhanced efficiency," he said.

The additional ferries, which will take just five to six minutes to cross, are expected to increase daily passenger capacity from 60,000 to 70,000.

Ulega also encouraged the investor to expand ferry services to larger lakes in the country.

Selemani Kakoso, Chairman of Parliamentary Standing Committee

on Infrastructure recommended that the government involve local experts in ferry maintenance to ensure sustainability and cost-effectiveness.

Dar es Salaam Regional Commissioner Albert Chalamila welcomed the new investment, stating that it would eliminate delays and improve efficiency of commuting for residents.

TEMESA Chief Executive Lazaro Kilahala explained that the eight-year agreement includes building

passenger terminals, fare collection systems and deploying three high-speed ferries.

He also noted that the contract would be reviewed every three years.

"Passengers will pay 500/- per trip," Kilahala stated, adding that the introduction of the ferries will reduce waiting times from 45 minutes to under five minutes.

He said residents of Kigamboni will now have the freedom to choose which ferry they use, greatly

improving their travel experience.

Kilahala also mentioned that TEMESA continues with the refurbishment of government ferries, with MV Kigamboni (10 percent) and MV Magogoni (55 percent), adding that the repairs will cost 23,04bn/-.

Aboubakar Aziz, CEO of Azam Marine Ltd, confirmed that each ferry will carry 250 passengers at a time and services will run from 5am to 23hrs daily.

Aziz added that four additional ferries are under construction and will be operational before May this year.

Each ferry is equipped with two engines and meets the safety standards set by the Tanzania Shipping Agencies Corporation (TASAC).

By Correspondent James

Kandoya

DEPUTY Minister for Trade and Industry Exaud Kigahe has called on foreign investors to focus on value addition and packaging solutions to tackle growing issue of post-harvest losses in the country.

Speaking in Dar es Salaam yesterday at the opening of the 9th Agro Food Packaging International Trade Exhibition, Kigahe stressed the importance of addressing post-harvest losses, which are a significant challenge for the country.

The event brought together investors from 17 countries across Africa and beyond, including Kenya, South Africa, Italy, China, Spain, the United Arab Emirates, Pakistan, Turkey, Japan, Egypt, Jordan and France among others.

Kigahe pointed out efforts of the government to boost trade which have led to increased agro-production, particularly in the poultry subsector.

However, he acknowledged that the major hurdle now is post-harvest management.

"Investing in value chains and packaging solutions will help reduce these losses," he said.

He further encouraged investors to explore opportunities for setting up factories focused on packaging and value addition.

He highlighted that Tanzania's business environment has become increasingly investor-friendly, offering opportunities in the wider

Minister seeks solutions to address post-harvest losses

East African Community and Southern African Development Community markets which collectively have a population of over 400 million people.


Oscar Kisanga, CEO of Tanzania Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture (TCCIA), emphasized that the exhibition serves as an essential platform for knowledge-sharing and networking.

He also noted that it plays a crucial role in exploring untapped opportunities in agriculture and poultry-two areas that hold significant potential for growth.

Post-harvest food loss remains a critical food security challenge in Tanzania, with approximately 50 percent of fresh fruits and vegetables rotting before reaching the market.

Additionally, nearly 25 percent of rice and maize is lost due to inadequate post-harvest infrastructure.

Addressing the losses through investments in value addition and packaging is seen as a vital step towards improving food security and strengthening the agriculture sector in Tanzania.



ARA PETROLEUM TANZANIA LTD.

GLOBAL EXPRESSION OF INTEREST / PRE-QUALIFICATION FOR PROVISION OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT.

ARA Petroleum Tanzania Ltd. (APT), a Tanzanian Oil and Gas company, is the Operator of the Ruvuma concession with operations in and around Mtwara.

APT intends to issue a tender for the provision of Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) to support our operations for Ntorya Field Development in and around Mtwara. The general scope of service can be referred to below:

- Strategic Environmental & Social Impact Assessment (SESIA) Certificate.
- Transfer of EIA drilling certificate from old operator to APT.
- Perform Environmental Monitoring and Reporting by covering the environmental metrics.
- Any other ad-hoc work related to environmental support such conducting site visits in case of any environmental incident that need investigation and special report to NEMC and Sampling of testing of all samples collected from the field. Testing will include lab analysis and provision of devices and equipment's needed.

APT hereby invites companies, who have a sufficient experience and can conduct the work in and around Mtwara to submit Expression of Interest (EOI) including the following details:

- Company Profile.
- Company must be registered as "Category I firm consulting in EIA" on National Environment Management Council (NEMC).
- Experience Details.
- Audited Financial Details for the last 3 years
- HSSE documents including HSSE track record for last 3 years.

Interested companies shall submit the EOI via email to APT.Tenderbox@arapetroleum.com with subject "APT-007 EOI for provision of Environmental and Social Impact Assessment" within 10 days of publication of this EOI.

THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA
MINISTRY OF WATER



LETTER OF INVITATION

Simiyu Climate Resilience Project. Water Supply Infrastructure - Rural Water Supply - WC3

24th January, 2025
BMZ Project no.: 2015 67 411 (BMZ), 3020 00 073 (GCF)
GCF Project ID: FP041
KfW Procurement No.: 510790
TENDER NO. 49/2024/2025/W/03

- The United Republic of Tanzania (hereinafter called "Recipient") has received financing from KfW and the Green Climate Fund (GCF) in the form of a financial contribution (hereinafter called grant) toward the cost of Simiyu Climate Resilience Project. The Ministry of Water (MoW), acting as the implementing agency of the Recipient and referred to as the "Employer", intends to apply a portion of the proceeds of this grant to eligible payments under the contract for WC 3 (construction of rural water supply networks and water points). Payments by KfW will be made only at the request of the MoW and upon approval by KfW, and will be subject, in all respects, to the terms and conditions of the financing agreement. No party other than the MoW shall derive any rights from the financing agreement or have any claims to the proceeds of the grant.
- The Ministry of Water (MoW) now invites sealed Bids from eligible Bidders for the construction of 422 km of rural water supply network including 443 Water Points, 9 break pressure tanks, and all the pipeline appurtenances.
- A JV of maximum two (2) contractors will be selected.
- Projection Location is in the Simiyu Region in scattered sites.
- Implementation Period; Expected construction period is Eighteen (18) calendar months and defects notification period of Six (6) calendar months.
- Margin of Preferences; is not applicable:
- Bidding will be conducted by means of the International Competitive Bidding procedure with qualification as specified in the KfW Guidelines for Procurement of Goods, Works and associated Services in Financial Cooperation with Partner Countries ("KfW Guidelines").
- Interested Bidders may obtain further information through bellow address:

The Secretary Ministerial Tender Board,
Ministry of Water, Ground Floor (Right wing) PMU Offices,
Government City - Mtumba,
P.O. Box 456,
Dodoma,
Tanzania.
Email: pmu@maji.go.tz

- A complete set of bidding documents in English may be purchased by the Interested Bidders on the submission of a written application to the address given in paragraph 4 above and upon payment of non-refundable fee of Tanzania Shillings 100,000. Payment shall be made through electronic payment system, therefore interested bidders are invited to collect the control number for effecting the payment. The interested bidders shall request the full set of Tender Document from 24th January, 2025, in writing at pmu@maji.go.tz and collect electronic copy physically to Ministry of Water, The Secretary Ministerial Tender Board, Government City - Mtumba, P.O. Box 456, 40473 Dodoma, Tanzania.
- Qualification Documents and Bids must be delivered to the address indicated in the clause ITB 22.1 of the bidding documents on or before 10th March, 2025 at 11:00 hours local time. Late Qualification Document and Bids will be rejected.
- In the first public session, only the Qualification Documents will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' designated representatives. In the second public session only the Bids of those Bidders who have fulfilled the qualification criteria will be opened.
- All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security of an amount of 400,000 €.

Yours sincerely,

Permanent Secretary
Ministry of Water

INDIAN HIGH COMMISSIONER TO TANZANIA BISHWADIP DEY VISITS THE GUARDIAN LTD



Deputy General Manager of The Guardian Ltd (TGL), publishers of The Guardian and Nipashe newspapers, Jackson Paulo (R), welcomes Indian High Commissioner to Tanzania, Bishwadip Dey, during his visit to TGL offices at Mikocheni Light Industrial Area in Dar es Salaam yesterday. Photos: Correspondent Miraji Msala



The Guardian newspaper Managing Editor Wallace Mauggo (R), shows Dey a copy of The Guardian newspaper during his visit to TGL's newsroom.



High Commissioner Dey (C) listens a briefing from Mauggo at the newsroom.



TGL's Digital Unit Manager and Nipashe newspaper News Editor Salome Kitomari (C), explains on operations of the digital unit to Dey. Looking on (L) is Nipashe newspaper Managing Editor Beatrice Bandawe and (R) is the India High Commission's Head of Political Affairs, Lakshay Anand.



High Commissioner Dey listens to TGL Printing Plant Manager, Balasubramaniyan Venkadachalam (R). Looking on (2nd L) is TGL Deputy General Manager, Jackson Paulo.



High Commissioner Dey speaks with executives and senior editors of TGL shortly after completing his visit.



TGL Deputy General Manager Jackson Paulo (2nd L) and The Guardian newspaper Managing Editor Wallace Mauggo (L) receive gifts from High Commissioner Bishwadip Dey. Right is the High Commission's Head of Political Affairs, Lakshay Anand.



High Commissioner Bishwadip Dey (C) poses for a group photo with TGL senior staff shortly after completing his visit. On his (L) is TGL Deputy General Manager Jackson Paulo.



Chief Biringi Ali IV (L), Chairman of chiefs in Dodoma Region, puts traditional mgorore outfit on CCM Vice Chairman (Mainland) Stephen Wasira during a ceremony to welcome him at the party's headquarters in Dodoma yesterday following his recent elevation to the position. Photo: Correspondent Ibrahim Joseph

Chato DC pledges to strengthen partnerships with financial institutions to promote welfare

By Correspondent Daniel Limbe, Chato

AUTHORITIES in Chato District, Geita Region, have pledged to continue strengthening partnerships with financial institutions to promote welfare and development of residents. Chato District Commissioner, Louis Bura, made the pledge yesterday when receiving 40 desks worth 3,280,000/-, donated by one financial institution to Mkuyuni

Primary School. Bura explained that the donation was timely, given the large number of pupils enrolled in pre-primary and first grade this year, emphasizing that the desks would improve learning environment and urged other institutions to address shortage of desks in primary and secondary schools. Bura also encouraged stakeholders to collaborate with

other organisations, including the Tanzania Forest Services Agency (TFS) in Chato District, to help meet the demand for over 20,000 additional desks in the district. The school's head teacher, Verena Nicholas, shared that the school faces shortage of 213 desks, with some pupils having to sit on the floor, which negatively impacts their academic performance. Gerald Ndikumana, a representative of district council

director, congratulated the donor but highlighted that the district still faces a deficit of over 20,000 desks, stressing that efforts are needed to address this shortage challenge due to the increasing number of children enrolling each year in pre-primary and first grade. Ndikumana also mentioned that Mkuyuni Primary School has 1,683 pupils, with over 460 enrolled in pre-primary and first grade for 2025.

Over 100 diaspora members gather to remember Indian freedom fighter

By Beatrice Philemon

A TOTAL of 170 members of the Indian Diaspora and Tanzanians gathered at the High Commission of India in Dar es Salaam yesterday to remember the state of West Bengal and mark the 128th birth anniversary of Bengali leader and freedom fighter, Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose.

A statement issued by the Indian High Commission in Dar es Salaam noted that the event, organised in collaboration with Bango Sangho, aimed to strengthen bilateral

trade and investment between Tanzania and India while showcasing India's industrial offerings. The statement further highlighted that participants enjoyed a captivating journey through Bengal's landscapes, from snow-capped mountains to serene coastlines, and experienced the region's rich culinary arts and musical heritage. According to the High Commission, West Bengal is a hub for industries such as manufacturing, IT, cement, leather, iron and steel, and textiles. The event also showcased Bengal's art, culture, and

literature, underscoring the cultural bond between India and Tanzania through shared brotherhood, festivities, cuisine and arts. The state is home to the largest Leather Complex, Hosiery Park, Foundry Park, and Railway Manufacturing Companies, alongside industrial parks and estates ready for investment. West Bengal is also renowned for its premium Darjeeling tea, prized for its unique quality and flavour. The event was well-received, offering a platform for community members to connect and celebrate Bengal's beauty.

The event also showcased Bengal's art, culture, and literature, underscoring the cultural bond between India and Tanzania through shared brotherhood, festivities, cuisine and arts

UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA
MINISTRY OF ENERGY
ENERGY AND WATER UTILITIES
REGULATORY AUTHORITY
(EWURA)

**ENERGY AND WATER UTILITIES REGULATORY AUTHORITY
(EWURA)**

PUBLIC NOTICE

(Issued under Section 126 of the Petroleum Act, Cap. 392 and Rule 5(1) of the Petroleum (Compressed Natural Gas) (Supply and Marketing Services Rules, GN No. 220 of 2019)

NOTICE is hereby given to the public that, EWURA has received an application from TANZANIA PETROLEUM DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION (TPDC) seeking Construction Approval for constructing a 2.4km pipeline from Mwenge Mbezi beach pipeline valve located at GOIG BUS STOP, Bagamoyo road to BQ CONTRACTOR CNG STATION, Goba road, Kinondini Municipal. The constructed pipeline will supply natural gas to the BQ Contractor CNG Station.

Any person who wishes to make any representations should do so in writing and submit them to EWURA within fourteen (14) days from the date the notice is published. The Authority will consider the comments and representations in deciding on the application.

All representations or objections should be addressed to the address below.

Energy and Water Utilities Regulatory Authority (EWURA)
EWURA House, 3 EWURA Street, 41104 Tambukareli
P.O Box 2857, Dodoma.


Tel: +255-26 2329003-3; Fax: +255-26 2329005;
Toll-Free 0800110030
Email: info@ewura.go.tz Website: www.ewura.go.tz

Issued by:
Director General
EWURA

Jengo la EWURA, 3 Mtaa wa EWURA, 41104 Tambukareli, S.L.P. 2857, Dodoma, Tanzania
Simu: +255 26 2329002 - 4 • Nukushi: +255 26 2329005 • Barua Pepe: info@ewura.go.tz

THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA
MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS
IMMIGRATION DEPARTMENT

APPLICATION FOR TANZANIA CITIZENSHIP



Albert Mwendu Mwayombo

Notice is hereby given that ALBERT MWENDU MWAYOMBO whose photograph is attached above, is applying to the Minister of Home Affairs for Tanzanian Citizenship, his Nationality at present is CONGO, Occupation BUSINESS, Address P.O. Box 8602, He has been in the Country since 2007. Apart from Dar es Salaam Region he has also resided in: HE NEVER RESIDE OTHER REGION. Anyone who has knowledge of any reason why citizenship should not be granted to the applicant should send a written and signed statement of facts to the Commissioner of Immigration Services, Immigration Headquarters, 4 Barabara ya Mwanagosi, P.O. Box 181 DODOMA.

DISTRICT IMMIGRATION OFFICER

BRELA empowering university students with essential knowledge on business formalisation

By Correspondent Joseph Mwendapole

THE Business Registration and Licensing Agency (BRELA) has empowered 1,500 young university students with essential knowledge on business formalisation, focusing on starting a company, business and trademark registration.

The training, held in Morogoro yesterday also covered best practices for providing commercial services to ensure the businesses students establish meet legal requirements.

During the session, BRELA registration officer Gift Wazingwa highlighted the numerous benefits of formalising businesses, including securing and maintaining business or company name.

She also emphasised additional advantages such as gaining legal protection, enhancing opportunities to attract partners, increasing market access and qualifying for various tenders.

Wazingwa explained that business formalisation contributes to national income growth through the fees businesses pay annually.

The revenues enable the government to develop infrastructure, such as markets, and create supportive environment for businesses.

"It is through these revenues that the government can build infrastructure to support traders, such as markets and an enabling environment for business," Wazingwa said.

John Minja, Director of Piga Kitabu Unity Institute, the host of the conference, expressed gratitude to BRELA for providing the training. He noted that the session was designed to inspire youth to harness

their potential, take bold steps and improve their conditions.

"I believe every youth has unique potential. This training will motivate them to pursue their ambitions," Minja stated.


He also called for continued collaboration with BRELA to ensure the sustainability of educational initiatives, emphasising the importance of BRELA's services for businesses of all sizes.

Musa Maganza, a student at Morogoro Health College said: "Before this training, I wanted to start a business but lacked proper information on the procedures. This session has opened my eyes, and I now plan to start my business in the Geita Region. I encourage more youth to get this type of education as many are unaware of the process to register their businesses."

The session brought together 1,500 youth from universities and colleges across Morogoro Region, including Sokoine University of Agriculture (SUA), Jordan University College (JUCO), Morogoro College of Health and Allied Sciences, Morogoro Land College, and Saint Mark's College of Health.

Piga Kitabu Unity has been organising similar conferences, providing training on academic development, job preparation and self-employment opportunities for students.

I believe every youth has unique potential. This training will motivate them to pursue their ambitions



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INTERNATIONAL SMS	TSh/5ms 215.00		7 Days	2,000	950	ALL LOCAL NETWORKS					
			7 Days	2,100	1,024	Validity	Price (TSh)	All Net (Mins)	SMS	Data (MB's)	
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			7 Days	5,000	2,460	UNLIMITED	2,000	20		900	
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			REGION 2								
			AFRICA: Botswana (MTN), Congo (AirTel), Congo (DRC (AirTel), Egypt (Orange), Gabon (AirTel), Ghana (AirTel), Kenya (AirTel), Madagascar (AirTel), Malawi (Orange), Mauritius (Emtel), Mozambique (Vodafone), Niger (AirTel), Nigeria (AirTel), Rwanda (AirTel), South Africa (MTN, Vodafone), Swaziland (MTN), USA (T-Mobile) & CANADA: (Bell, Telus)								
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			REGION 3								
			AFRICA: Botswana (MTN), Cameroon (Orange), Egypt (Orange), Ghana (AirTel, TDC), Mali (Orange), Mozambique (Vodafone), Mauritius (Emtel), Senegal (Orange), Swaziland (MTN), South Africa (MTN, Vodafone)								
			USA (T-Mobile) & CANADA: (Bell, Telus)								
			EUROPE: Belgium (Basis, Orange), Switzerland (Swisscom), Denmark (Telenor, TDC), France (Orange, SFR), Germany (T-Mobile, Vodafone), Greece (Cosmote), Italy (Vodafone, Tim), Netherlands (Vodafone, KPN), Norway (Telenor), Romania (Vodafone, Orange), Russia (Vimpelcom), Spain (Vodafone, Telefonica), Sweden (Telenor), UK (Vodafone, Telefonica)								
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AU Commission candidate outlines ambitious vision for Africa's future

By Correspondent James Kandoya

DJIBOUTIAN diplomat and candidate for the chairperson of the African Union (AU) Commission, Mahmoud Ali Youssouf, has outlined an ambitious and comprehensive vision for Africa's future if elected to the role.

Currently serving as Djibouti's Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Youssouf has pledged to tackle the continent's most pressing challenges through targeted, practical initiatives.

Speaking at a press briefing in Dar es Salaam yesterday, Youssouf highlighted six key priorities: technology, agriculture, economy, health, infrastructure, and peace and security.

"Technology is the backbone of modern development. By ensuring widespread access to affordable internet, we can bridge the digital divide and empower rural communities to participate in the global economy," he emphasised.

He stressed the importance of investing in agricultural value chains to maximise the continent's raw material benefits.

"Agriculture has immense potential to transform our economies," he explained. "By focusing on value-added production, we can create jobs, boost local industries, and reduce dependence on imported goods."

In his first 100 days in office, Youssouf plans to prioritise initiatives that promote self-reliance and regional integration.

He highlighted challenges such as inadequate infrastructure, cumbersome border regulations, and limited air transport options that stifle intra-African trade.

"Trade in Africa is hampered by logistical bottlenecks and

insufficient connectivity," he noted. "A unified regional economy and improved infrastructure are essential to unlocking Africa's economic potential."

Youssouf also vowed to address conflicts in regions like Libya, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Sudan, and the Sahel. He emphasised the need for effective peacekeeping and conflict resolution strategies.

"Stability is the foundation of progress," he stated. "Africa must build a strong, unified military capable of responding swiftly to emergencies. Security will be central to achieving the vision of 'The Africa We Want' by 2063," he said.

With extensive diplomatic experience and a deep understanding of the continent's challenges, Youssouf presents himself as a strong contender for the AU's top position.

Competing against candidates from Kenya and Madagascar, he expressed confidence in his ability to lead Africa toward unity and progress.

Youssouf faces formidable competition from Kenya's Raila Odinga, whose candidacy has garnered significant support within the East African Community (EAC).

Last year, six EAC leaders from Burundi, Kenya, South Sudan, Uganda, Tanzania and Rwanda pledged their backing for Odinga's bid for the AU Commission chairmanship.

During the official launch of Odinga's campaign in Nairobi, Kenyan President William Ruto described him as a visionary leader with the professional capacity and experience to lead the AU Commission. "Kenya endorses Raila Odinga's candidacy unreservedly," he said.



Some residents of Senta Hamlet at Kwikuba Village in, Mara Region dig water well on Wednesday due to clean water shortage in the village. Photo: Correspondent

Njombe set to unveil new plan to address stunting in children

By Correspondent Elizabeth John,

Njombe

NJOMBE Region has been commended for its proactive efforts in addressing stunting in under-five children. The region is expected to launch 'fight plan' programme to heighten the fight.

Njombe Regional Medical Officer, Dr Juma Mfanga, said this here on Wednesday during a preparatory meeting for the launch of stunting acceleration response plan, attended by representatives from

the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

Dr Mfanga stressed that stunting is a significant challenge to children's growth, education and overall health.

He emphasised the importance of raising community awareness about proper nutrition and encouraging families to adopt nutrient-rich diets.

"This plan will introduce various interventions, including educating parents on proper nutrition for infants and pregnant mothers, providing nutrient-rich food to households with at-risk children

and strengthening maternal and child health services to ensure children receive proper nutrition from early stages of development," Dr Mfanga said.

He added that Njombe is committed to reducing stunting rates, creating an environment that promotes proper nutrition for the well-being of children and the nation as a whole.

Ruth Nkurlu, UNICEF nutrition specialist, expressed the organisation's commitment to supporting the plan with technical expertise and resource assistance

to ensure that children receive the adequate nutrition and essential health services needed for their development.

According to the 2022 Tanzania Health, Demographic, and Malaria Indicator Survey, Njombe Region has a high stunting rate of 50.4 percent among children under five.

The official launch of the Njombe Region Stunting Reduction Acceleration Response Plan is expected to involve government leaders, development stakeholders, international organisations and the general public.

DC asks stakeholders to strengthen efforts to protect natural attractions

By Correspondent Friday Simbaya,

Iringa

ENVIRONMENTAL and tourism stakeholders have been urged to become effective ambassadors by intensifying efforts to protect natural attractions to inspire surrounding communities to take the lead as well.

Speaking at the opening of a two-day workshop, Kilolo District Commissioner, Joachim Nyingo, representing Iringa District Commissioner, emphasised that protecting and conserving natural attractions, specifically the Udzungwa Mountains, is a collective responsibility.

Nyingo highlighted the importance of public education on environmental conservation, noting that such efforts not only benefit the nation but also ensure preservation of the Udzungwa Mountain reserve for future generation.

Arafat Mtui, project manager for the Udzungwa Landscape Strategy (ULS), explained that the initiative's primary goal is to strengthen conservation efforts across three reserves, including the Udzungwa National Park.

Additionally, the project aims to foster stronger relationships between local communities and conservation authorities.

Mtui further highlighted the potential of the Udzungwa reserve in providing renewable energy opportunities from waste, particularly through the production of alternative charcoal to help reduce deforestation caused by the cutting of trees for fuel.

Rose Mndembi, chief wildlife officer at the Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism, emphasised the government's

commitment to addressing human-wildlife conflicts as part of a broader conservation strategy.

"Most wildlife corridors are located within protected areas. The government continues to work closely with local communities to ensure the corridors remain safe for wildlife while allowing people to engage in activities without disruption," Mndembi said.

The workshop was organised by environmental stakeholders and various organisations, including the Southern Tanzania Elephant Programme (STEP), MAZINGIRA and REFOREST AFRICA. It aimed to promote conservation efforts surrounding national parks, with a particular focus on the Udzungwa Mountains.

STEP, an elephant conservation organisation, is committed to securing protected areas for elephants while supporting the well-being of communities living near park boundaries. The organisation collaborates with farmers and local communities to reduce human-wildlife conflicts and increase awareness about the importance of conservation.

The Udzungwa Mountains are part of East Africa's oldest mountain range, the Eastern Arc Mountains of Kenya and Tanzania. Spanning 1,673 km² of forest, the Udzungwa range is one of the world's most biodiverse hotspots, home to over 2,500 plant species, 400 bird species, 120 mammal species, and numerous yet-to-be-documented invertebrates.

In addition to being Tanzania's most significant biodiversity hotspot, the Udzungwa Mountains provide essential resources to more than 250,000 people whose livelihoods depend on the water and climate regulation provided by the forests.



A dried fish vendor negotiates way while looking for potential customers along Samora Avenue in Dar es Salaam yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Imani Nathaniel

By Correspondent Joseph

Mwendapole

EMPLOYEES of the Muhimbili Orthopaedic Institute (MOI) have been reminded to uphold ethical principles in public service to enhance service delivery and improve wellbeing of citizens.

Rocky Setembo, chief information officer from the President's Office (Public Service Management and Good Governance) made the call yesterday during staff training on ethical principles in public service.

Setembo emphasised the importance of adhering to ethical standards by understanding the policies, guidelines, principles, procedures, and laws that govern

MOI employees reminded to mind ethical principles

their institutions, ultimately ensuring better service delivery to the public.

"Every institution is established by specific laws and once created, it develops guidelines, policies, and procedures to follow. Adhering to them helps deliver high-quality services and ensure prosperity for the public health," Setembo said.

He outlined key principles of public service ethics, including providing quality services, abiding

by government regulations, working diligently, delivering services impartially, acting with honesty and integrity, being accountable to the public, respecting the laws, and using accurate information responsibly.

Setembo also urged employees to avoid excessive alcohol consumption and the use of substances such as marijuana.

Ally Ngowo, Assistant Director of the Department of Ethical

Management in Public Service at the President's Office (Public Service Management and Good Governance) said the office has been organising annual training sessions to remind employees about ethical standards in public service.

"The goal is to help employees understand their rights and responsibilities in performing their duties while adhering to the principles of public service ethics," Ngowo said.



Transport Minister Prof Makame Mbarawa (L) shares a light moment with Kigoma District Commissioner Dr Rashid Chuachua during their visit to inspect the expansion of passenger terminal at Kigoma Airport yesterday. Photo: Correspondent

NAIROBI

INVESTORS' wealth at Kenya's Nairobi Securities Exchange (NSE) has surged 48 percent in a year amid sustained rise in share prices of blue chip stocks.

Market data from the NSE released on Wednesday shows that market capitalization, a measure of investors' wealth, stood at 2.07 trillion Kenyan shillings (about \$15.98 billion), the highest level in two years. That marked an increase from \$10.8 billion in January 2024, according to the NSE.

Among the stocks whose prices have surged significantly, pushing

WASHINGTON

THE House of Representatives on Wednesday gave final approval to a bill that requires the detention of illegal immigrants who are accused of theft and violent crimes.

The measure was passed by a vote of 263 to 156 with 46 Democrats defying their party leadership and supporting the bill.

It marks the first legislation that President Donald Trump can sign

Kenya's bourse investors' wealth grow by 48pc, hits two-year high

up investors' wealth are those in the telecommunication, banking, insurance as well as energy and petroleum sectors.

All key indices of the market have, similarly, recorded massive gains.

The All Share index (NASI) on Wednesday closed at 131.73, according to the NSE. The rally of stocks has seen the NSE offer the best returns since 2010 as investor confidence returns.

Analysts noted that the NSE has benefitted from the Central Bank of

Kenya's reduction of its benchmark rate to 11.25 percent from a high of 14 percent, making investors flock to the stock market for higher returns.

In November 2024, NSE added three more of its listed firms to the Morgan Stanley Capital International (MSCI) Frontier Markets Small Cap Index, with the exchange's Chief Executive Officer Frank Mwititi noting this would help drive significant capital inflows to the NSE.

US Congress endorses bill to detain illegal immigrants accused of crimes

as Congress swiftly moved in line with his plans to crackdown on illegal immigration. The approval of the bill came a day after the Senate supported the new measure which will now be sent to President Donald Trump for signing into law.

Passage of the Laken Riley Act, named after a Georgia nursing

student who was murdered last year by a Venezuelan man, shows just how sharply the political debate over immigration has shifted to the right following Trump's election.

It is expected to be the first step of his administration to tighten border security and further slow the flow of migrants into the country.

By Guardian Reporter, Dodoma

THE ICT Commission (ICTC) has reviewed 21 syllabi in various colleges across the country to ensure that education aligns with modern standards.

Speaking here yesterday, ICTC Director General Dr Nkundwe Mwasaga emphasised that the review aimed at addressing gaps caused by shortage of experts in emerging technologies within the national labour market.

He presented the updates while delivering the commission's implementation report to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Infrastructure.

He explained that the syllabi review, along with other government initiatives, is designed to provide quality education for Tanzanians with a particular focus on empowering youth, the primary consumers of the rapidly expanding ICT sector.

Dr Mwasaga also highlighted the growing awareness among youth about the significance of ICT.

ICTC reviews 21 syllabi in colleges countrywide

Heshared that the commission has registered 1,600 ICT professionals in the national database of experts, creating opportunities to build their capacity in various ICT fields.

"This database enables us to enhance their skills in key areas of ICT," Dr Mwasaga said.

He also revealed that the commission is in discussions with Russian educational institutions specialising in ICT studies to promote skills development.

Moshi Kakoso, chairman of the parliamentary committee praised the commission's strategy and underscored the importance of maintaining high-quality standards in the ICT sector.

"The world has changed drastically. We need more experts. You have excellent ideas, but we encourage you to accelerate the government's vision of advancing technology," Kakoso said.

He stated: "Our youth still lack sufficient opportunities. With proper skills, they can significantly contribute to technological revolutions and the growth of the digital economy. We should take a lesson from China, which sent numerous youth abroad to acquire skills from the US Today, China has excelled in technology, and it's paying off because of their strategic investments."

The committee also commended the commission for its efforts in promoting Tanzania's ICT sector, particularly through initiatives designed to advance Kiswahili language globally.



This database enables us to enhance their skills in key areas of ICT

TANZANIA ELECTRIC SUPPLY COMPANY LTD



Tender No. TR212/2024/2025/W/24

For

ENGINEERING, PROCUREMENT AND CONSTRUCTION CONTRACT (EPC) INCLUDING THE ENGINEERING DESIGN, SUPPLY, INSTALLATION, TESTING AND COMMISSIONING OF 220kV TRANSMISSION LINE DOUBLE CIRCUIT FROM BENACO TO KYAKA AND ASSOCIATED BENACO SUBSTATION LOT 1 AND 2

Invitation for Tenders

Date: 24th January, 2025

- The Government of United Republic of Tanzania has received financing from OPEC Fund for International Development (OFID), Abu Dhabi Fund for Development (ADFD) and Saudi Fund for Development (SFD) toward the cost of the 220kV double circuit Transmission Line from Benaco to Kyaka and Associated Benaco substation project in Kagera region. It intends to apply that part of the proceeds of the financing to cover eligible payment under the contract for Engineering, Procurement and Construction Contract (EPC) Including the Engineering Design, Supply, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of 220kV Transmission Line double circuit from Benaco to Kyaka and associated Benaco substation project (Lot 1 and 2).
- The Tanzania Electric Supply Company Limited (TANESCO) being the Project Executing Agency (PEA) now invites Tenders from eligible contractors for Engineering, Procurement and Construction Contract (EPC) Including the Engineering Design, Supply, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of 220kV Transmission Line double circuit from Benaco to Kyaka and associated Benaco substation project (Lot 1 and 2) as follows: -
 - Lot 1:** Engineering Design, Supply, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of 220kV Transmission Line double circuit from Benaco to Kyaka; and
 - Lot 2:** Engineering Design, Supply, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of 2x40MVA, 220/33kV Benaco substation
- Tenderers are free to tender for any lot or combination of lot(s) of their choice. Tenderers are encouraged to offer cross discount when participating in the combination of the two lots. Tenderers are also encouraged to offer discount when participating in one lot. The Employer shall conduct the financial comparison based on the offered discounts. The bid or bids offering the lowest priced combination of all the lots shall be the best evaluated bid or bids.
- A complete set of Tendering Document(s) in English shall be purchased by interested Tenderers upon the submission of a written application to the address given under paragraph 8 below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of USD 200.00 or its equivalent in a freely convertible currency) - transaction charges exclusive payable by Applicant. The applicant himself or his agent shall collect the Tendering Documents at the Employer's office from 8:30Hours to 15:30Hours in normal working days. The Tender documents may also be delivered to Applicants by email in PDF format through Applicant's email address provided to the Client, upon submission of proof of payment of the application fee. (Note: Applicants must provide reliable address to avoid any communication difficulties).

Applicant shall transmit a copy of Bank Payment Slip and his e-mail address to the e-mails below. (Note: Applicants must make sure that, the payment for application fee covers all Bank charges).

The e-mail addresses are: -

sec.tenderboard@tanESCO.co.tz; and pmuprojects@tanESCO.co.tz.

Local Interested Applicant may buy Tendering Documents at TANESCO premises and pay locally through National Microfinance Bank (NMB) upon receipt of reference number from TANESCO.

Bank Accounts for Payment of Application Subscription Fees for Transactions from Abroad.

	Currency	Bank	Account	SWIFT Code
1	EURO	CRDB Bank	19J1043011100	CORUTZ
2	USD	CRDB Bank	02J1043011100	CORUTZ
3	USD	CITI Bank	0100235021	CITITZTZ

- All Tenders must be accompanied by an original tender security in an acceptable form of 4% of the Submitted Offer in form of bank guarantee or banker's cheque from reputable bank and confirmed by local Bank (For International Companies) and shall be valid up to twenty (28) days from expiration of tender validity period. The original tender security must be submitted physically to TANESCO Offices, Ubungo Umeme Park Building, 3rd Floor, Room No. 305, P.O. Box 9024, Ubungo Dar es salaam, on or before 26th March, 2025 at 10:30 hours East African Time.
- A pretender meeting shall take place on 17th February, 2025 at 10:30 hours East African Time at TANESCO Kagera Regional Office in Bukoba, Tanzania followed by an organized site visit starting the next day. The tenderer is encouraged to visit the site to be familiar with the areas and local conditions of the project. Details of the site visit will be arranged upon in the pretender meeting. The Tenderers are strongly advised to attend site visit and it will be conducted on 18th January 2025 at 10:30 hours East African Time, from the 220kV Benaco substation to Kyaka Substation and the cost of visiting the site will be borne by tenderers as stated in the Tender Data Sheet (TDS).
- Tendering will be conducted through International Tendering Procedures specified in the Public Procurement Regulations 149 - Government Notice No. 518 of 2024 and is open to all Tenderers as defined in the Regulations unless otherwise stated in the Tender Data Sheet (TDS) and also should conform to Financier' Procurement guidelines.
- All tenders in one (1) Original plus Three (3) hard copies and Three (3) Scanned soft copies from the original tender documents in flash discs, properly filled in, and enclosed in envelopes must be addressed to: -

**Secretary Tender Board
TANESCO Umeme Park Building,
3rd Floor, Room No. 305
435 Morogoro Road, Ubungo Area
P. O. Box 9024,
16103 DAR ES SALAAM**

- Tenders shall be delivered at TANESCO Umeme Park Building, 3rd Floor, Room No. 305 on or before 26th March, 2025 at 10:30 hours East African Time. Tenders will be opened promptly thereafter in public and in the presence of Tenderers' representatives who choose to attend in the opening at the same address provided above.

- Late tenders, portion of tenders, electronic tenders, tenders not received, tenders not opened and not read out in public at the tender opening ceremony shall not be accepted for evaluation irrespective of the circumstance.

**MANAGING DIRECTOR
TANZANIA ELECTRIC SUPPLY COMPANY LTD**



for a living planet®

WWF Tanzania Country Office
Plot 252, Kiko Street, Off Mwai Kibaki
Rd, Mikocheni
P O Box 63117
Dar es Salaam
Tanzania

Tel: 255 22 2700077
Fax: 255 22 2775535
procurement@wwf.tz.org
wwf.or.tz

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL - RFP

ENDLINE EVALUATION OF THE WWF TANZANIA MRC & MWC PROJECTS, 2022-2025

- WWF Tanzania Country Office (WWF TCO) is a Non- Government Organization dealing with environmental protection in Tanzania since 1990 and it has supported the Government of Tanzania in implementing various projects on Marine, Forest, Freshwater, Energy and Wildlife. WWF global mission is to stop the degradation of the planet's natural environment and to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature, by:

- conserving the world's biological diversity,
- ensuring that the use of renewable natural resources is sustainable and
- promoting the reduction of pollution and wasteful consumption

- The WWF Tanzania Country Office (WWF-TCO) has been implementing two key conservation initiatives:

- USAID Mara River Catchment (MRC) Project (2022-2025)** - This project addresses water security and climate resilience challenges in the Mara River Catchment. Covering six districts in Mara Region, benefiting communities through improved water resources management, capacity-building, and stakeholder collaboration. It also focuses on mitigating water resources degradation and fostering transboundary water management.
- Darwin Mara Wetlands Conservation (MWC) Project (2022-2025)** - This initiative is community led fishery management aims to restore habitats, protect biodiversity, and enhance livelihoods in the Mara Wetlands. It involves 27 villages around the wetlands covering five districts (of the Mara Region), tackling overfishing, promoting sustainable fishing practices, and providing alternative livelihoods especially for women.

- The primary goal of this assignment is to conduct an endline evaluation of the USAID - MRC and Darwin - MWC projects to assess their relevance, Coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability. Findings will inform future programming, policy advocacy, and long-term sustainability planning for WWF and its partners.

- The consultant will produce two comprehensive evaluation reports (i.e. for each project) covering: (1) Achievements against project objectives. (2) Insights to guide future programming and stakeholder collaboration. (3) Recommendations for sustainability and scaling up successful interventions. The consultant should also come up with a brief summary of the comparative advantage for the two WWF projects in the Mara river conservation area.

- The Consultant/s should meet the following minimum criteria:

- Advanced degrees in natural resource management, environmental sciences, or social sciences.
- At least 10 years of experience in project evaluation, with expertise in conservation, community engagement, and capacity-building initiatives.
- Proven experience in conducting endline or impact evaluations, especially for donor-funded projects.
- Proficiency in participatory approaches, qualitative and quantitative data collection, and data analytics.
- Excellent writing and communication skills, with a history of producing high-quality reports.

- The project estimated this assignment to last for approximately four (4) weeks (field and desk works). This is (an individual, firm, or team of experts) consultancy work, and therefore interested candidates can visit WWF website https://www.wwf.or.tz/jobs_and_opportunities/consultancies_and_tenders/ to download the TOR for more information, and should send your full proposal (both technical & financial) through procurement email at procurement@wwf.tz.org (only electronic application will be accepted) and please, also remember that, for uniformity reasons, the title of the assignment "ENDLINE EVALUATION OF THE WWF TANZANIA MRC & MWC PROJECTS, 2022-2025" and addressed to; The Secretary, Procurement Committee, and shall upload all the PDF Tender files in its corresponding field and submit the complete Tender online through procurement@wwf.tz.org within the specified date and time.

- The application should be submitted to the above email by or before 1700hrs local time, **Monday 10th February 2025.**

- WWF has a principle of zero tolerance for fraud and corruption, if you encounter such an incident, then report by sending an email to fcci@wwf.tz.org

The Guardian Limited Key Contacts

Managing Editor: WALLACE MAUGGO
Circulation Manager: DENNIS NTAITA
feedback@guardian.co.tz

Newsdesk

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

Advertising

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

Desire for change brought in Lissu, who can count on transparent polls

THERE are mixed signals on what has been identified by various observers as a desire for change within the leading opposition party that brought into office former Chadema Mainland vice chairman Tundu Lissu. The new leader needs to replicate in the wider context what he was given in Chadema, the willingness for transparent elections by veteran national chairman Freeman Mbowe. He has scolded reconciliation but he needs it to make any headway.

Paradoxically, the new top opposition leader has maintained a tough line within the party and as relates to the wider political environment, while success on his part hinges on his adversaries doing the opposite. Given the intensity of his onslaught on the former chairman, had the latter decided to play the same tune on the current chairman, the polling exercise would have been derailed. Opposition parties have been known to split on account of frontally opposed loyalties to incumbent chairman and a rival.

As the ruling party has a relatively new line up in top leadership, a number of things in its outlook could also change, but no one expects an altogether different orientation, just some fine tuning. Despite all he has said to the contrary, the new Chadema leader will quite soon be aware that what his followers need and the party cadre generally is an opening into elected functions, and notably in the legislature. What he has described as a historic election needs to be complemented by a historic general election where the party gets more MPs than earlier polls, not historic riots.

The late former president Benjamin Mkapa once told foreign diplomats in relation to accusations of corruption

in various dealings involving public agencies, that 'it takes two to tango.' This will be even more so when it comes to organising credible and transparent elections later this year as the Chadema leader will have to go half of the way to meeting the ruling party, or putting it differently, the poll supervision agencies. Sharp and hostile language risks derailing political will on the other side, if consensus in the ruling party is built to take 'major precautions.'

What is apparent is that the altered leadership in the ruling party is likely to give the opposition more breathing space than has been the case for years, even in the wake of pronouncing the reconciliation policy. Many in CCM were far from enthusiastic about being fair and just with the opposition, seeing it as needless risk to stability, but some correction is probably being considered, even by looking at altered intraparty nomination rules. Preference votes will be conducted by a bigger number of delegates to ward and district nomination meetings. The real test will be after the next parliament, as both Union and Isles top posts will be vacant.

At the moment, the clear wish for transparency in ward councilor and constituency nomination processes in CCM promises a more transparent conduct in the general election, contrary to 2019, 2020 and 2024 local government polls. There has not been a formal declaration in that regard but President Samia Suluhu Hassan, in her capacity as party chairperson, emphasized the need for observing high ethical standards during elections, and promised transparent polls in New Year sherry party remarks to foreign envoys. The whole country needs this promise to be upheld, and even the new Chadema leaders could count on it.

\$910m in humanitarian aid for Nigeria's northeast not enough

WHILE finding emergency funding for crises breaking out in this or that country is a major norm in multilateral relations set up after World War II, much of this is working with difficulty and now risks failing altogether. The reason is that economic dislocation, antiquated traditions like warrior attitudes among large portion of the population in numerous developing countries cripple global humanitarian efforts. Such aid is like an insurance mechanism, that it works if needy situations are sparse, isolated, not regularly.

An illustration of this situation is a report that the United Nations will this week appeal for \$910m to help tackle a humanitarian crisis in northeastern Nigeria. The area has been in the grip of insurgency since 2009 and was hit by flooding last year, on the basis of UN documents made public at midweek in Abuja. This situation largely compared with what is happening in Sudan, while a number of Sahel states (now under military rule, mostly) have comparable emergency situations. The reason is persistent inability for credible and stable governance in most of Africa.

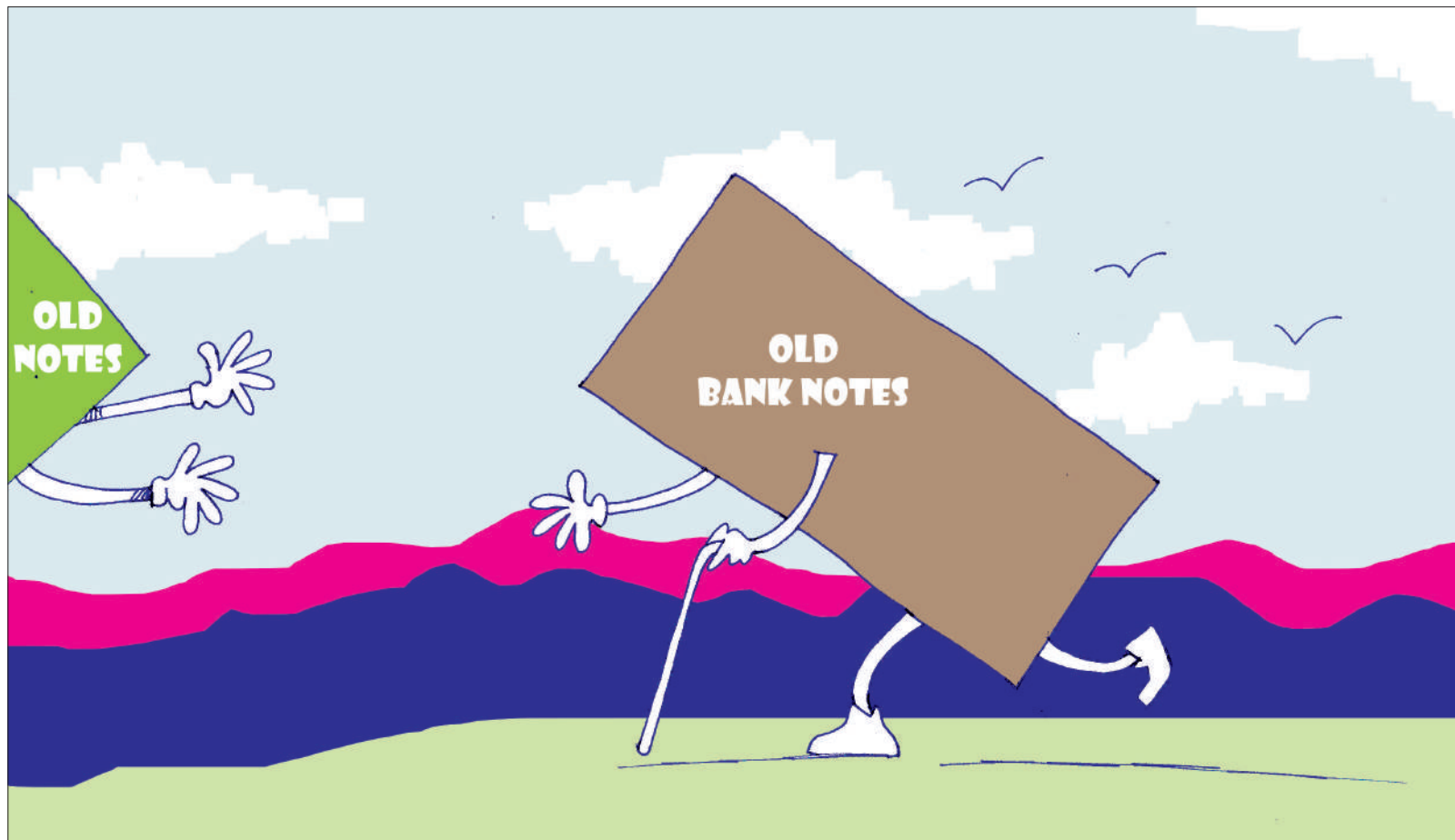
What is a bit surprising is that in most of these situations, there is some sort of traditional wisdom underlying the complex waves of violence. The UN on its own can do little to change glaring structural deficiencies of each nation-state, and merely documents the needs arising from misdeeds of their own people in civil wars. Upwards of 7.8m people need help in three northeastern states of Nigeria, while UN agencies talk of seeking to help 3.6m of them.

Even more sobering is the fact that the \$910m the UN says it needs has not taken into account needs of Chad, Mali, Burkina Faso or Niger in

the same hemisphere of nomadic militant attacks. There is still the massive internal displacement in the Sudan where millions are facing starvation as an armed militia, earlier used by the government to suppress marginal tribes to the west of the country, moved against the state. The bell was ringing on its autonomy from the proper army, more amenable to civic morality.

While the civil war bites in the north or northeast, the rest of Nigeria grappling with a cost of living crisis ignited by removing fuel subsidies, used by a minority to buy cheap and sell at market prices across the border. As the savings from removed subsidies aren't rapidly reinvested into business and new jobs, the population reels from the loss of fuel subsidy despite its poor economic rationality. What plagues the rest of Nigeria, like the north and north east, as well as much of Africa, is that land is unable to offer a living and cities can't absorb enough people. Warlords with money to purchase guns, uniforms and pay some allowances recruit youth and tell them whom to fight; chaos.

There is hence no surprise when reports say that the UN has previously said Nigeria's northeast risks becoming a forgotten crisis as the humanitarian focus has shifted to crises elsewhere. The cases being cited are usually Ukraine, Gaza and Sudan but they also have parallels with the northeast crisis in Nigeria, as Ukraine is a case of military invasion by a brotherly people with whom they share plenty in culture, thus it is in a sense a civil war. Gaza is nearly a self-imposed crisis for its unforgivable attack on southern Israel with marks of genocide intent. Sudan is a full blown civil war with hallmarks of the American Revolution, as a war to stamp out the slavery culture that still underpins the Sahel.



Food systems worsen diets, health

KUALA LUMPUR

CORPORATE-DOMINATED food systems are responsible for widespread but still spreading malnutrition and ill health. Poor diets worsen non-communicable diseases (NCDs), now costing over eight trillion dollars yearly!

Unhealthy food systems

A recent UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) study of 156 countries found that such food systems account for unsafe food and diet-related NCDs.

FAO estimates related 'hidden costs' at about \$12 trillion annually, with 70 percent (\$8.1 trillion) due to NCDs such as heart disease, strokes and diabetes. Such costs significantly exceed these food systems' environmental and social costs.

FAO's annual State of Food and Agriculture 2024 (SOFA) investigated hidden costs worldwide. These were primarily health-related, followed by environmental degradation, mainly in more 'industrialised' agri-food systems in upper-middle and high-income countries.

SOFA 2024 builds on the 2023 SOFA. The two-year study uses true cost accounting to estimate significant costs and benefits of food production, distribution and consumption.

The study estimates "hidden costs and benefits", including those not reflected by market prices. The latest SOFA updates cost estimates, classifies them by agrifood system, and proposes solutions.

The report identifies 13 dietary risks with health implications, with significant differences among various food systems. Inadequate consumption of whole grains (the

leading dietary risk in most food systems), fruits, and vegetables is the worst, while excessive sodium and meat consumption cause significant health risks.

Hidden costs

SOFA 2024 identifies historical transitions from traditional to industrial agrifood systems, their outcomes, and hidden costs. It distinguishes six food systems worldwide - traditional, expanding, diversifying, formalising, industrial, and protracted crisis - and links each to hidden costs.

This approach enables a better understanding of each system's unique features and the design of more appropriate policies and interventions.

However, inadequate fruit and vegetable intake is the main concern during protracted crises - e.g., prolonged conflicts, instability, and widespread food insecurity - and in traditional systems with low productivity, limited technology adoption, and shorter value chains.

Excessive sodium consumption is another significant health concern, rising as food "systems evolve from traditional to formalising, peaking in the latter and then decreasing in industrial systems".

Meanwhile, processed and red meat intake rises with the shift from traditional to industrial systems. Meat is one of industrial food systems' top three dietary risk factors. Adverse environmental impacts of unsustainable agronomic practices contribute significantly to hidden costs.

Such costs - due to greenhouse gas emissions, nitrogen runoffs, land-use changes, and water pollution - rise with diversifying food systems. Rapid growth typically involves changing food production and consumption, costing \$720 billion

more yearly.

Formalising and industrial food systems also incur significant environmental costs. However, countries facing protracted crises face the highest environmental costs, equivalent to a fifth of their output.

Social costs, including poverty and undernourishment, are most significant in traditional food systems and more vulnerable to protracted crises, incurring around 8 percent and 18 percent of GDP, respectively.

Such high social costs emphasise the urgent need for integrated efforts to improve livelihoods and well-being, reflecting stakeholder priorities and sensitivity to local circumstances.

Collective action

SOFA 2024 seeks to promote "more sustainable, resilient, inclusive, and efficient" food systems. It uses true cost accounting to identify hidden costs, going well beyond traditional economic measures such as the gross domestic product (GDP).

Using realistic and pragmatic approaches, policymakers make better-informed decisions to enhance food systems' social contributions. More comprehensive approaches should acknowledge the crucial contributions of food systems to food security, nutrition, biodiversity, and culture.

Such transformations require transcending conceptual divides, ensuring health, agricultural, and environmental policy coherence, and fairly sharing costs and benefits among all stakeholders.

The report stresses that this requires collective action involving diverse stakeholders, which is difficult to achieve. Such stakeholders include consumers,

primary producers, agribusinesses, governments, financial institutions, and international organisations.

Addressing hidden costs affects various stakeholders differently. Appropriate frameworks, supportive policies, and regulations ease implementation and minimise disruption by adopting sustainable practices early and protecting the vulnerable.

Recognising food systems' adverse consequences for diets and health, the report makes several key recommendations quite different from those of the Davos World Economic Forum-compromised 2021 UN Food Systems Summit. It urges: incentivising the promotion of advancing sustainable food supply chain practices and balancing among food system stakeholders, promoting healthy diets by making nutritious food more affordable and accessible, reducing adverse health consequences and costs, using labelling, certification, standards, and due diligence to reduce greenhouse gas and nitrogen emissions, harmful land-use changes, and biodiversity loss.

Others are empowering society with comprehensive, clear, accessible, and actionable food and nutrition education and information about food choices' health, environmental, and social impacts, using collective procurement's significant purchasing power and influence to improve food supplies and the environment, ensuring inclusive rural transformations while reducing hidden health, environmental and social costs, strengthening civil society and governance to enable and accelerate sustainable and fair food system innovations and enhance social well-being, especially for vulnerable households.



Africa records 'highest' workforce exposure to extreme heat

By Telesphor Magobe

CLIMATE change has disastrous effects on humanity and biodiversity. Yet, the main cause of climate change is humanity through the disruption of the usual balance of nature. To show that the disruption of the usual balance of nature can lead to, we may recall the words of Pope Francis he said during a press conference while he was flying from Sri Lanka to the Philippines in 2015.

Referring to a Spanish expression, the Pope: "God always forgives, we forgive sometimes, but nature never forgives." What he meant was that the disastrous effects we bear in our communities and countries caused by our activities never choose people. For instance, a cyclone doesn't choose the direction, intensity or the number of people to affect or property to damage. Neither does the surging heat. Any person, animal, bird, insect or organism can be dehydrated in the extreme heat.

A paper titled "United Nations Secretary-General's Call to Action on Extreme Heat" published by the UN Secretary-General's Climate Action Team, with inputs from the UN system, in 2024, says "The climate crisis is driving crippling heat everywhere."

The paper considered 2024 probably "the hottest year in recorded human history." It says "Billions of people around the world are wilting under increasingly severe heat-waves driven largely by a fossil-fuel charged, human-induced climate crisis. This is a taste of the future and impels us to take bold decisions to change the way we live to avoid an even more scorched earth in the future."

While people with the wherewithal may in some way mitigate the scorching heat, most vulnerable and disadvantaged communities in society are hit hardest. These include young, elderly, persons with disabilities, pregnant women, people with multiple chronic conditions, and outdoor workers.

"Climate change is delivering a hotter and more dangerous world for all of us, and we are not prepared," the paper



says. It suggests that the world needs a strategy to mitigate the scorching heat. Therefore, it calls on governments, policy makers and all stakeholders to act, prevent and reduce heat risks, increase resilience to heat, manage extreme heat crises, and mitigate its worst impacts.

In cities, for instance, the paper says at 1.5°Celsius of warming, 67 cities will experience 150 or more days a year of temperatures exceeding 35°Celsius. Under 3°Celsius of warming, it rises to 197 cit-

ies. "Between 1.5°Celsius and 2°Celsius of global warming, the most appreciable temperature rises will occur in the tropics, which house a disproportionate amount of people living below poverty lines."

UNICEF findings suggest that if the scorching heat continues by 2050 almost every child under 18 in the world - about 2.2 billion - will be exposed to high heatwave frequency, up from only 24 per cent of children in 2020. "Heat-related mortality for people over 65 years of age in-

creased by approximately 85 per cent between 2000-2004 and 2018-2022," says UNICEF.

International Labour Organisation (ILO) 2024 report shows regions with 1) the highest workforce exposure to extreme heat, 2) the highest proportion of occupational injuries attributable to extreme heat, 3) region with the most rapidly increasing workforce exposure to extreme heat since 2000, and 4) regions with the most rapidly increasing heat-related occupational injuries since 2000.

In relation to No 1, ILO shows that Africa Region has 92.9 per cent of workforce exposure to extreme heat, Arab States Region has 83.6 per cent of workforce exposure to extreme heat, and Asia and the Pacific Region has 77.7 per cent of the workforce exposure to extreme heat. In relation to No 2, Africa Region has 7.2 per cent of all occupational injuries attributable to extreme heat and the Americas Region has 6.7 per cent of all occupational injuries attributable to extreme heat.

In relation to No 3, Europe and Central Asia Region has 17.3 per cent most rapidly increasing exposure to extreme heat since 2000. In relation to No 4, the Americas Region has 33.3 per cent most rapidly increasing heat-related occupational injuries since 2000, and Europe and Central Asia Region has 16.4 per cent of most rapidly increasing heat-related occupational injuries since 2000.

The paper says June 2024 was the 13th month in a row of record global temperatures and probably even after five years it will still be "the warmest on record, beating 2023". The paper warns that the extent to which current and future generations will experience a hotter and different world "depends on the choices we make today and in the coming years".

According to ILO, over 70 per cent of the global workforce - that is, 2.4 billion people - are at high risk of extreme heat, resulting in 22.85 million worker injuries and 18,970 deaths annually. "As daily temperatures rise above 34°Celsius, labour productivity begins to drop by 50 per cent," says ILO.

As is often said "think globally, and act locally, it is upon each one of us to take action to mitigate the climate change risk. We can plant and keep trees in our neighbourhood, protect water sources and prevent environmental degradation, air and water pollution, and cut down carbon emissions. If we do something about climate change and the scorching heat for sure we will reduce climate change effects.

By Evans Rubara

AS African Heads of State prepare to gather in Dar es Salaam from January 27th to 28th, 2025, for the Mission 300 Africa Energy Summit, there is a need to critically assess the direction of Africa's energy future. This summit risks becoming yet another platform for empty rhetoric rather than a catalyst for meaningful change.

At the forefront of this discussion, there should be the concept of AI-driven power systems, a modern transformative approach to energy management that optimizes the generation, distribution, and consumption of energy.

These systems leverage artificial intelligence but require robust infrastructure, comprehensive data analytics, and advanced regulatory frameworks to function effectively.

In the context of Africa, where energy poverty affects over 600 million people, AI can enhance the efficiency of renewable energy sources, such as solar and wind, by predicting demand and managing supply fluctuations. However, significant challenges remain, including limited technological infrastructure, regulatory uncertainty, and the urgent need for skilled workforce development.

According to the International Energy Agency (IEA, 2021), nearly 46% of the continent lacks access to reliable electricity. This scenario is not just an inconvenience; it is a barrier to economic growth, educational opportunities, and health improvements.

The 2020 World Bank estimates shows that energy poverty costs African nations approximately \$5 billion annually in lost productivity. Thus, proposed solutions, such as power-to-energy systems, must be scrutinized not only for their potential but also for their feasibility and inclusivity.

The idea of converting surplus renewable energy into storable forms like hydrogen has been touted as transformative. However, the implementation of these technologies is fraught with challenges. Initial investments are substantial, and many African countries operate under financial constraints.

This raises a critical question: who will fund these ambitious projects? Without robust financial backing, these systems

Mission 300: Transforming Africa's energy future



risk becoming another aspirational goal relegated to the realm of policy papers and conferences.

Equally concerning is the potential for these technologies to exacerbate existing inequalities. If power-to-energy solutions are primarily deployed in urban areas, rural populations - who often suffer the most from energy poverty - may find themselves further marginalized.

The promise of energy equity must not only be a talking point

but a tangible outcome. Policymakers must prioritize inclusive energy strategies that ensure all communities, particularly the underserved, have access to these innovations.

The integration of AI into energy systems poses ethical risks that must not be overlooked. The African Continental AI Strategy aims to harness AI for socio-economic development (African Union, 2019), yet we must consider whether AI-driven energy management systems will prioritize

profit over people.

Without stringent regulatory frameworks, these technologies could lead to data exploitation and privacy violations, further alienating the very communities they intend to uplift.

The regulatory landscape itself remains a significant barrier. Many African nations grapple with evolving energy policies that often lack clarity and coherence, creating uncertainty for investors and practitioners alike.

If the summit does not address these regulatory challenges directly, it risks entrenching the status quo rather than catalysing meaningful progress.

Cyber security is another critical issue. As energy systems become increasingly interconnected, they are more vulnerable to cyber-attacks. The threat of cybercrime poses a significant risk to the stability and reliability of energy infrastructure (Cyber security Africa, 2021).

Many African nations are still developing their cyber security frameworks, leaving critical systems exposed. The summit must prioritize the establishment of robust cyber security measures to protect these emerging technologies.

As we approach the Mission 300 Africa Energy Summit, it is crucial to recognize that addressing energy poverty is not merely a moral obligation; it is essential for sustainable development. Collaborative efforts among regional economic communities, governments, and international organizations are vital to navigating the complexities of energy poverty (World Bank, 2020).

Without a clear commitment to inclusivity and accountability the summit risks being another exercise in political posturing.

The upcoming summit in Dar es Salaam must serve as a platform for rigorous debate and critical engagement. We must demand that our leaders prioritize not just the technological solutions of power-to-energy systems, if any, but also the ethical, financial, and regulatory frameworks necessary for their successful implementation.

Only by embracing a holistic and inclusive approach can Africa hope to transform its energy landscape and pave the way for a sustainable and equitable future for all its citizens. The stakes are too high for anything less.

Evans Rubara is an experienced natural resource management specialist with a deep focus on extractive geopolitics, environmental politics and sustainability. He can be reached at erubara@outlook.com.

By Special Correspondents

Transforming industries with AI: Lessons from China's journey



China balances safety and innovation when it comes to AI

ARTIFICIAL intelligence (AI) is rapidly reshaping industries worldwide, with China emerging as a key player in demonstrating how AI can drive industrial transformation at scale.

With a growing AI industry valued at over \$70 billion and a dynamic ecosystem of over 4,300 companies, China provides insights into how nations can align strategy, innovation, and ecosystem development to harness AI's transformative potential.

The newly released whitepaper *Industries in the Intelligent Age - Blueprint to Action: China's Path to AI-powered Industry Transformation* from the World Economic Forum's AI Governance Alliance highlights how the country uses AI to address industry-specific challenges while illustrating the complexities of responsibly scaling AI innovations.

While China's model may not be universally applicable, it offers valuable lessons on fostering industry-specific innovation and integrating AI into complex ecosystems.

Strategic foundations for AI growth

China's trajectory in AI is underpinned by a structured and phased approach. The Next Generation AI Development Plan, launched in 2017, sets ambitious goals, aiming to position AI as a core driver of economic transformation by 2025 and establish the country as a global hub for AI innovation by 2030.

This plan reflects an emphasis on long-term planning, which includes balancing innovation with safety through adaptive regulations.

For example, initiatives such as the Interim Measures for the Management of Generative AI Services (2023) and the AI Safety Governance Framework address emerging risks while fostering techno-

logical advancement.

These frameworks enable experimentation with AI applications while ensuring alignment with ethical principles - a balance many nations seek to achieve.

The role of ecosystem enablers

China's progress in AI is facilitated by a robust ecosystem that integrates infrastructure, data, talent, and innovation. Investments in advanced technologies, such as its expansive 5G networks and energy-efficient green data centres, provide a solid foundation for AI applications.

These infrastructural advances support the deployment of high-capacity computing power, which is essential for training large-scale AI models.

Data also plays a pivotal role. With one of the fastest-growing data ecosystems globally, China has developed strategies to improve data interoperability and accessibility across sectors.

Efforts to establish the National Data Administration demonstrate a commitment to ensuring that data becomes a cornerstone of technological innovation.

In parallel, China's educa-

tion and research institutions have significantly scaled AI-related programmes, reflecting the country's recognition of the need for a skilled workforce.

AI's industry-specific impact

China's approach to AI emphasizes practical applications tailored to the unique needs of various industries.

By integrating AI technologies such as digital twins, predictive maintenance and generative AI, industries such as manufacturing, healthcare, transportation, retail and energy are witnessing transform-

ative advancements.

These include optimizing production processes, enhancing diagnostics and patient care, enabling autonomous transport systems, personalizing consumer experiences and improving renewable energy management.

This sector-focused innovation exemplifies how AI can be applied at scale to drive efficiency, sustainability, and new business and operational models. The emphasis on tailoring AI solutions to specific needs showcases an approach other regions could adopt to maximize impact and overcome barriers to adoption.

Challenges and opportunities

Despite its successes, China's AI development is not without obstacles. Issues such as fragmented data flows, uneven regional capabilities and a significant talent gap present ongoing challenges.

Addressing these will require collaborative efforts across sectors and borders. China's experience also highlights the importance of maintaining interoperability and fostering partnerships to enable scalable AI adoption.

For global stakeholders, the lessons from China are not prescriptive but illustrative. They demonstrate how aligning strategy, ecosystem enablers and industry-specific innovation can help unlock AI's potential.

However, the journey also emphasizes the need for responsible development and international collaboration to navigate the complex interplay between technology, society and governance.

The AI Governance Alliance continues to explore how AI can catalyze sustainable, inclusive growth. Through such platforms, stakeholders can collaborate to ensure that AI development adheres to high ethical standards while addressing global challenges effectively.

The path forward will require balancing innovation with responsibility - an endeavour that benefits from shared insights and collective action.

By Grace Moore

How the literature of fire can help readers find hope among the ashes

“WE are living apocalyptically.”

The philosopher Bruno Latour uttered those words in an interview discussing the 2018 California wildfires.

His comments ring all the more true in 2025, as residents of the Los Angeles area grapple with the horror and despair of the deadly wildfires that have razed thousands of homes and businesses and have left at least 25 people dead.

From coast to coast, from hemisphere to hemisphere, once-in-a-lifetime environmental catastrophes are now regular occurrences. Large-scale burning occurs out of season, and fires burn hotter and spread farther than ever before.

Latour has called it “living in the end times”; he points to a need to find different ways to live, as extreme events that were once just the subject of dystopian films simply become a part of everyday life.

My work on how writers emotionally respond to fires shows that literature and reading have a vital role to play.

Works about fire often emphasize recovery and resolution, while also offering a space to work through complex emotions. If these are, as Latour fears, “end times,” literature can help readers learn how to survive, cope and keep hope alive.

A common enemy

With the pace and tone of a thriller, George R. Stewart's 1948 novel, “Fire,” follows a California forest fire from the moment it ignites until it is Stewart's biographer, Donald M. Scott, described “Fire” as “the first novel about fire ecology,” and the environmental impact of fires is certainly an important part of the work. But “Fire” is also a novel that is deeply interested in how people come together in the face of disaster.

Stewart was so committed to creating a realistic representation of a burning forest that he visited fires with a forest ranger as part of his research for the book. His burning scenes are graphic and engage with the practicalities of firefighting, as well as its human cost.

But the novel also celebrates kinship, with characters forming deep bonds as they work together to beat back the blaze. This sense



A single page from a book lies on the charred remains of a home that burned down in the 2025 Palisades fire in Los Angeles.

of a shared experience is vital.

One of the story's central figures, the veteran forest ranger Bart Bartley, imagines the fire as an enemy, “Evil, malignant, and scheming.” Fire historians Tom Griffiths and Christine Hansen, who have worked with fire-affected communities, affirm Bartley's depiction, noting how fire “makes its victims feel hunted down and its survivors toyed with.”

Yet in grappling with this “evil” force, Bartley feels “great human love” for those working alongside him.

Renewal and regrowth
Stewart's work is also strik-

ing for its focus on renewal.

After the flames are conquered, the novel's narrator surveys the damage. At first he sees a landscape that's “fatally scorched.” But his despondency gives way to a more optimistic interpretation: “In the next few years the still-standing older trees might re-seed the ground beneath them.”

The novel, which also examines events from the perspective of animals, ends with an extraordinary vision of hope:

“Smoke and cloud had vanished. Through the rain-washed air the sun shone brightly, and along the crest

of the range the highest peaks were dazzling-white with snow. Moist and clean, the north-west wind from the ocean blew steadily across the long ridges, and from high-swinging cones, opened by the fiery heat, the winged seeds drifted downward to the earth.”

Emphasizing that fire is a natural phenomenon, Stewart focuses on regrowth. He reminds readers that burning has an ecologically important role and that what seems like an apocalyptic present can soon transform into a regenerative future.

Living in the Pyrocene
The historian Stephen

J. Pyne has called our fire-prone age the Pyrocene. So it's no surprise that more writers are weaving wildfires into their stories.

Amitav Ghosh's novel “Gun Island” features a wildfire in its early chapters. But Ghosh isn't content to let his fiction speak for itself; his 2016 non-fiction work “The Great Derangement” is an exhortation for contemporary writers to incorporate representations of natural disasters into their work to reflect the way that disaster now impinges upon everyday life.

The Australian writer and Booker Prize winner Richard Flanagan's 2020 novel, “The

Living Sea of Waking Dreams,” responds to this challenge.

Unlike Stewart's novel, fire is not front and center of the work, which Flanagan has described as a “rising scream.” When the story, which is set in Australia, begins, bushfires rage, and it seems as if they'll be central to the plot. However, they simply smoulder away in the background - just as they do in real life for many of those who aren't directly affected by fire.

The novel's true focus, it turns out, is on the overwhelming experience of living in a world where natural disaster succeeds natural disaster. It follows the protagonist, Anna, who seeks relief from her mother's terminal illness by scrolling through social media feeds. She finds herself inundated with endless images of climate emergencies. Her doom scrolling leaves her depressed: “She no longer knew if the fires were already over even though they hadn't yet really begun.”

Through the glow of her smartphone, Anna sees “Photos of ember blizzards. Smoke so thick you couldn't see across a road. Four thousand people ... gathered on a beach with the fire-fighters forming a cordon around to protect them.”

In other scenes, she views image after image of animals injured in wildfires. For Anna, “Summer was frightening. Smoke was frightening ... Choking was frightening. Today was frightening. Tomorrow was terrifying, if we made it that far.”

However, like Stewart, Flanagan points to hope: Anna eventually connects with another character, Lisa, whose interest in environmental history and Indigenous fire practices offers an alternative to the isolating terror evoked by social media.

Flanagan ends the novel by rejecting both individualism and apocalyptic sensationalism.

The discovery of an endangered chick transforms the story from one of misery to one of hope. Lisa, who finds the tiny bird, suddenly sees the world not as hopelessly burning but as “extraordinarily alive.” When the novel ends, she is “not downcast nor defeated,” but inspired to connect more closely with the land and its inhabitants.

Human stories don't have to end with disaster and death. Instead, catastrophes can signal the beginning of something new, and reading about them can highlight regrowth and recovery in the midst of despair.

By Special Correspondent

AKU-ACER gets funds to study Africa's medium-scale farmers

Dr Emmanuel Sulle and his team at AKU's Arusha Climate and Environmental Research Centre (AKU-ACER) have been awarded an academic grant by the Volkswagen Foundation, to study the impact of medium-scale farmers on rural economies in Namibia, Ghana, and Tanzania.

The project will explore the socio-economic implications of this growing agricultural trend, focusing on wealth, kinship, and power dynamics in African communities.

This award, given through the foundation's funding line "Perspectives on Wealth: Repercussions of Wealth," will support critical research that seeks to shed light on a rapidly evolving yet often misunderstood phenomenon in rural Africa: the rise of medium-scale commercial farms. The Volkswagen Foundation is the largest German private nonprofit organization involved in the promotion and support of academic research.

Over the past two decades, rural Africa has witnessed the rise of a new class of economic actors: medium-scale farmers. These individuals—typically men—have moved into commercial agriculture, often using capital acquired through other ventures. Their emergence marks a significant shift from traditional smallholder farming, and the effects of this transformation are still being debated among scholars. While some argue that these medium-scale farmers drive economic growth and inclusion,



others worry that they may exacerbate inequality, exclusion, and conflict.

Dr Sulle's team aims to explore these tensions by examining

the repercussions of medium-scale farming on wealth accumulation, rural economies, and the livelihoods of smallholder farmers. Their research will focus on key variables such as

the interplay between urban and rural economic life, agri-food value chains, kinship and gender relations, intergenerational inheritance practices, and the role of local politics in

mediating access to resources.

"This grant marks an exciting beginning at AKU-ACER. It aligns well with our vision of building strong partnerships with world class uni-

versities across the globe," says Dr Sulle. "We believe that meaningful collaborative academic partnership is critical if we are to address major agricultural and food value chain challenges facing our planet."

The project's approach is distinctive in its combination of anthropological and political economy perspectives, which will allow the research team to explore the complexities of medium-scale farming from multiple angles. By focusing on factors like translocality—the movement of people, goods, and capital across rural and urban spaces—the team hopes to uncover the ways in which medium-scale farmers navigate social and economic change.

Dr Sulle's project is not only a significant achievement for ACER, but also a testament to the power of international collaboration. The project brings together a diverse group of scholars from renowned institutions including: Professor Kojo Amanor from the University of Ghana, Professor Ruth Hall from the University of the Western Cape in South Africa, and Professor Michael Bollig and Professor Clemens Greiner from the Global South Studies Center at the University of Cologne.

The collaboration reflects the global nature of the research, which will address issues that are not only relevant to individual countries but also to broader debates about the future of African agriculture and development. Their work not only promises to illuminate a crucial aspect of African economic life but also has the potential to influence policies that shape the future of agriculture, food security and development in the region.

By Busani Bafana, Bulawayo

A dream deferred: why is traveling across Africa so hard for Africans?

ALIKO Dangote, Africa's richest man, carries his frustration as visibly as he carries his passport.

To travel across the continent he calls home, he needs 35 visas—each a bureaucratic hurdle and a reminder of the barriers to free movement and trade in Africa.

"As someone who wants to make Africa great, I have to apply for 35 different visas," Dangote lamented at a recent Africa CEO Forum in Kigali, Rwanda. His words echo the larger frustration of a continent grappling with the paradox of cementing regional integration while battling closed borders.

The 2024 Africa Visa Openness Index, launched recently in Botswana, is revealing: only four countries—Benin, The Gambia, Rwanda, and Seychelles—offer visa-free access to all Africans. Ghana has joined the list after it announced visa-free travel to all Africans in January this year.

Published by the African Development Bank and the African Union, the visa-openness index measures how open African countries are to citizens of other African countries based on whether or not a visa is required before travel and if it can be issued on arrival. There has been some progress since the first edition of the report, with several African countries instituting reforms to simplify the free movement of people across the continent.

About 17 African countries have improved on their visa openness, while 29 are instituting reforms on the issuance of visas for Africans, the Index shows. In 28 percent of country-to-country travel scenarios within Africa, African citizens do not need a visa to cross the border, a marked improvement over 20 percent in 2016.

However, the cost of inaction is clear. Intra-Africa trade is at a low 15 percent of total trade, compared to 60 percent in Asia and 70 percent in Europe, according to research by the Economic Commission for Africa. Visa openness could boost intra-Africa trade and tourism while facilitating labour mobility and skills transfer and propel Africa to economic growth. For now, closed borders remain Africa's stop sign to free movement.

Zodwa Mabuza, Principal Regional Integration Officer at the AfDB, noted during the launch of the 2024 Index on the sidelines of the 2024 Africa Economic Conference that visa openness was not about permanent migration but the facilitation of tourism, trade and investments.

"This is the sort of movement that we are promoting, in particular because we are promoting the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA)," Mabuza said.



Travelling across Africa is hard for Africans owing to restrictive visas.

Stop in the name of crime

Fears of illegal migration, terrorism, and economic disruption keep borders closed, despite evidence that such fears are often overblown, said Francis Ikome, Chief Regional Integration and Trade at the Economic Commission for Africa.

Ikome warned that without free movement of African people across the continent, AfCFTA is 'dead on arrival'.

"We cannot discuss the concerns of security again, even though I think there is over-securitization of migration. When we talk about migration, we see security," said Ikome. "When you are a foreigner and an African moves to the immigration officer, they see problems even before they look at your passport. Mi-

grants are job creators; there are a lot of university dons, accountants and other skills that migrants bring to the table."

Free passage paradox

Since the launch of the AfCFTA, a majority of African countries have not ratified the Free Movement of Persons Protocol launched in 2018 by the African Union and signed by 33 member states. Only four countries have ratified the Protocol.

Migration researcher Alan Hirsch highlighted that some richer African countries are more protective of their borders and several of the most open countries are island states or poor countries that do not expect immigration or can control it more easily. He said trust is needed between countries, which takes time

and effort.

"The reluctance of some countries is related to their concerns about the quality of documentation and systems in some countries, fears relating to security issues as there are terrorist organisations in some parts of Africa, and fears that the visitors are economic migrants in disguise and will not leave," Hirsch told IPS.

"There is a lot of progress in the regional communities in Africa. Borders are opening frequently on a bilateral or multilateral basis, as the visa openness index shows," said Hirsch, an Emeritus Professor at The Nelson Mandela School of Public Governance at the University of Cape Town.

Sabelo Mbokazi, Head of Employment, Labour and Migration at the African Union Com-

mission, suggests that countries that promote free movement must be incentivised to do better.

"Who are we serving with all these visa restrictions? Are we serving the people or the politics of the day? Are we serving populations or our popularity? Are we serving the people around the continent or for profit? These are the paradoxes we see in Africa," he said, citing that intra-African migration was at 80 percent, with 20 percent going to Europe or America but Europeans who came to Africa moved more easily than Africans.

That some Africans do not have passports and some are nomads, visa-free travel could be a logistical nightmare that many countries would do without. Africa has toyed with the concept of an African passport, which was launched in 2016. The passport has been issued only to African heads of state, foreign ministers and diplomats accredited by the AU.

"Regional passports, such as the ECOWAS passport for the large West African community and the EAC passport for the growing East African community, were developed in recent times and are doing very well. It was probably too soon for an all-African passport," Hirsch said.

In analysis, stopping African travellers in their tracks is counter to regional integration aspirations, argues Joy Kategekwa, Director, Regional Integration Coordination Office, at the AfDB.

"The paradox of integration in Africa is we talk about pan-Africanism; we have a passion for it but we keep Africans closed out of it behind the visa."

Tied to the free movement of persons has been the poor implementation of the Yamoussoukro Decision to liberalize air transport. Air connectivity in Africa is a nightmare.

Hirsch is optimistic that Africa can boost its development through trade and migration, admitting that opening African skies takes time.

"In addition to the African 'free skies' initiative and the free movement of persons protocol, there is the AfCFTA," he said. "All three initiatives were agreed to in 2018. The AfCFTA is making some progress and could help pave the way for the other two initiatives."

The stakes are high. The AfCFTA, meant to unite 1.3 billion people under a single market, risks failure. With closed borders and skies, a visa-free Africa is a dream deferred.

Mozambique's cycles of violence won't end until Frelimo's grip on power is fragmented

By Manuel Francisco Sambo

MOZAMBIQUE'S political history has been marred by violence, disputed elections and authoritarian control. The pattern continues. As the 2024 elections have shown, Mozambique remains trapped in a cycle of violence and instability.

Mass protests due to widespread allegations of electoral fraud and police violence led to the deaths of dozens of people and wide scale destruction.

My research on peace and security in east and southern Africa has focused on Mozambique's post-independence political history. Based on my work, I argue that Mozambique is at an impasse. It is unable to fully embrace authoritarianism - or to build a functioning democracy.

One obstacle to full authoritarian rule is social media. It has reduced the state's grip on what information is shared, who shares it and what voices are heard. The government has lost the ability to silence critics and dictate what it wants the country to believe.

To appease the international community Mozambique has maintained a democratic posture. But the country hasn't been able to build a strong democratic state. It's prevented by the entrenched power of the political, economic and military elites through Frelimo (Mozambique Liberation Front), the ruling party. Frelimo has dominated since the country's independence in 1975.

The result is cycles of violence and political instability.

These cycles will continue unless Mozambique undertakes sweeping economic and political reforms. These would need to include the decentralisation of power, dismantling the Frelimo-linked patronage networks that control the economy, establishment of an independent judiciary, and fairer political competition.

It is unclear whether the newly in-



Anti-government protesters at the monument of liberation struggle hero Eduardo Mondlane

augurated President Daniel Chapo will dare to ignite these reforms.

Why authoritarianism hasn't worked

For much of its post-independence history, Mozambique was governed by an authoritarian regime under the single rule of Frelimo. Frelimo came to power in 1975 after leading the struggle for independence from Portuguese colonial rule.

In the 1990s, the country adopted multiparty democracy and a new constitution. The constitution established universal suffrage and periodic elections for the presidency and legislature. It also guaranteed fundamental rights and freedoms, including the right to life and protection from torture.

But Frelimo maintained its hold on power. The party did this through political repression, manipulation of electoral processes and patronage systems.

The political landscape has changed in the last decade, however. It's more difficult for the state to maintain - or expand - its authoritarian grip.

Authoritarian regimes control opposition and dissent, but the state's capacity to do this is diminishing.

Social media and digital communication tools have made it difficult to suppress ideas. Historically the government relied on state-controlled media to control the narrative and censor opposing views.

Smartphones and social media platforms have revolutionised the way information circulates. For instance, news about election irregularities, corruption and violence spreads fast. It often outpaces state censorship.

The on-going protests after the 2024 elections are a testament to this. While the government has deployed forces to quell dissent, the scale of the protests and the speed at which they spread demonstrate the power of social media. Mozambicans have a platform to build alternative narratives, mobilise and resist.

Retaining international support
Another factor constraining the state has been the need to retain international support. This means maintaining

the outward appearance of a democratic system. Mozambique's economy is highly dependent on external assistance, particularly from western countries and international financial institutions.

Government officials are aware that they could lose foreign aid and investment if the democratic process is abandoned. This would deepen the country's economic crisis and Frelimo's challenges.

The withdrawal of aid in 2016 following the hidden debt scandal is evidence of donors' leverage over Mozambique. Three Mozambican state-owned companies took loans from western donors for national projects that never materialised. As a result of aid suspension, Mozambique was forced to arrest prominent individuals. They included the former head of the secret services and the son of former president Armando Guebuza.

Democracy still a pipe dream

Frelimo's widespread control has made it resistant to meaningful politi-

cal change. A genuine democracy would require dismantling these entrenched structures of power.

Frelimo has protected the political and economic elites who benefit from its dominance. The party has kept its grip on power through a combination of patronage networks, corruption and control over key sectors of the economy. These elites include business people, military leaders and government officials. All are deeply invested in maintaining the status quo.

A genuine democracy, in which opposition parties could freely compete and challenge Frelimo's monopoly on power, would threaten their interests.

The party has shown time and again that it is willing to manipulate the electoral process, use violence and stifle opposition to maintain its hold on power.

Elections are held regularly. Seven general elections have been held since the inception of multiparty democracy constitution. But they often lack transparency and fairness.

What needs to be done

Reforms are needed to break up patronage networks and redistribute power and resources. Frelimo's leadership has shown little interest in doing this. It would jeopardise their control over state resources and the wealth they've accumulated over decades.

Mozambique's political economy further complicates the prospects for democracy. Frelimo-linked elites dominate key sectors, such as natural gas, mining and agriculture, and benefit from favourable policies, state contracts and access to state-owned enterprises.

These economic interests are deeply intertwined with the party's political power. It's unlikely, therefore, that the elite will willingly relinquish control.

By Joshua Korber Hoffman

WHEN Innocent James completed his chores after school, he would light a kerosene lamp and lay down to read his books. There was no electricity in James' part of Arusha, a region in northern Tanzania, and so his family was forced to burn expensive oil for him to learn after dark.

Today, James is 33, and many parents in rural Tanzania - where all year round the sun sets at around 7pm - must still choose between saving money and allowing their children to read at night. But now, James' company, Soma Bags, is providing a solution: backpacks equipped with solar panels that charge a reading light.

What started as a small-scale project with some discarded cement bags, a sewing machine, and a solar panel, has become a business attracting charities and fashion brands from around the world. Last year, Soma Bags ("Reading Bags" in Swahili) sold 36,000 solar backpacks to people across Africa, providing an invaluable energy source for when the sun goes down.

Affordable light for rural households

James was brought up by his mother and grandmother, both schoolteachers, to love reading.

At university in Mwanza, James was shocked at the number of schoolchildren he noticed on the street skipping class to ask for money, largely to spend in local video game cafés. He wanted to help them find the taste for learning that he remembered from his childhood.

"I was frustrated," James said. "I could see that the problem was much, much bigger than I thought."

Before his last semester, James dropped out of university and used the last of his tuition money to buy a mobile library cart. He began visiting schools, attracting hundreds of children to his reading clubs.

Innocent James started making solar backpacks when he realized that children in his reading clubs could not read after dark.

But for all his hard work, there was

Solar-charging backpacks are helping children to read after dark



After dark, children can continue to read using clean solar energy, rather than expensive and polluting kerosene lamps

a problem: children would borrow books from him and then return them unread. James soon realized that while they were eager to read, they could not afford to do so.

Fewer than half of households in mainland Tanzania are connected to electricity. This falls to just over a third in rural areas. Consequently, many families rely on kerosene lamps to provide light after dark.

These lamps produce dim light and are expensive to fill. They also pollute the air and carry the risk of burns. Parents often opt to send their children to bed, James explained, rather than allowing them to use the lamp to read.

James' solution - flexible

solar panels sewn onto the outside of bags to power a reading light - was inspired by a university professor who carried around a solar charger for his phone, sewn into a fabric pouch. "It gave me the confidence that what I want is going to work," said James.

He started in 2016 by hand-making 80 backpacks per month, sewing on a solar panel sourced from China that charged during the children's walk to and from school. By the time they returned home, they would have enough power for a reading light. A fully charged bag can power a light for six to eight hours, meaning that one day of bright weather can allow for multiple nights of reading, even if cloudy

weather arrives.

James says the solar backpacks are more affordable than using an oil lamp. A solar bag costs between 12,000 and 22,500 Tanzanian shillings (approximately \$4-8), with the reading light included - the same price as 12-22.5 days of using a kerosene lamp, according to an average cost estimated in a survey of Soma Bags customers.

Building the business

Sold mainly from his growing franchise of mobile library carts, the bags became popular, and James increased production. He founded Soma Bags in 2019 and oversaw the construction of his own factory in the village of Bulale, in the Mwanza region, in 2020. The company now

employs 65 staff.

Made from repurposed cement bags found on the streets of Mwanza, where James lives, the backpack material is durable, lightweight, zero waste, and comes at no cost. The backpacks look good, too - in the middle of the bags, the white silhouette of a giraffe appears within bright yellow or green stripes.

"It's innovative," said Joseph Manirakiza, of the UN Development Programme (UNDP), which has supported Soma Bags since 2023. "I never thought someone would think of turning waste cement bags into something useful."

Soma Bags manufactures its products in a purpose-built factory in the village of Bulale, in the Mwanza region.

James' customers are, in the main, families and schools in rural Tanzania - people and institutions with whom he is familiar from his library cart days. But the company is expanding; over 200 charities have bought bags from James to distribute amongst children in need, and Soma Bags is becoming increasingly popular in urban areas.

While inside Soma's smaller backpacks are battery-powered reading lights, its bigger bags now have in-built charging systems with a greater capacity, enabling them to power other electronic devices, like phone chargers.

The company has also branched out into travel, sports, and cosmetic bags that aren't solar-powered. James has sold backpacks to charities in Nigeria, Rwanda, Madagascar, and the Democratic Republic of Congo, and to fashion brands in Poland, Germany, the Netherlands and Kenya.

A growing industry

Around 600 million Africans do not have access to electricity. Companies that produce solar-powered lamps are abundant on the continent, and the UN's Solar Light Distribution Programme is part of a global effort to light up rural areas with affordable and sustainable energy.

The hybrid social enterprise Smart Girls Uganda has produced and distributed over 12,000 of its own solar bags to children in Africa. "It is important for multiple companies to produce solar-powered bags across the continent," said its CEO, Jamila Mayanja. "It's more than just lighting; it's about giving them control over their education, their future, and ultimately helping to break the cycle of poverty in their communities."

After dark, children can continue to read using clean solar energy, rather than expensive and polluting kerosene lamps.

Soma Bags has been recognized by numerous awards and institutions, including the UNDP and the British government.

"There is a crop of young people [in Tanzania] who are coming up, and they have realized that they have to take the future into their own hands," said Manirakiza. "Innocent represents a group of young people using their talent to do something meaningful."

As his company continues to expand, James is becoming increasingly busy, but he still finds time to run reading groups for children from his mobile cart twice a week. Now, kids arrive for his readings with his bags on their backs.

"Sometimes I see a kid with the bag, and I'm like, wow," said James, smiling, "I can't really believe it."

PETRA'S ENTIRE INTEREST IN WILLIAMSON HEADED FOR TANZANIA'S PINK DIAMONDS

JOHANNESBURG

An agreement has been entered into for the outright sale of Williamson Diamonds Limited, Petra Diamonds announced on Wednesday.

The London-listed and South Africa-active Petra is taking steps to sell its entire shareholding in the Tanzanian entity to Pink Diamonds Investments for a headline consideration of up to \$16-million.

This follows Petra's sale in May of just under half of the asset, in which the Tanzanian government has a stake, for \$15-million via long-term technical services contractor Taifa Mining.

Since then, Williamson's coming under consolidated ownership has emerged increasingly as the preferred way forward.

As a Taifa affiliate, Pink Diamonds is viewed by Petra CEO Richard Duffy as possessing the technical and financial capability to conduct operations in a responsible manner for all stakeholders.

As a wholly Tanzanian-owned company with more than three decades of mining-related experience, Taifa's working relationships extend to mining majors such as De Beers, Barrick and AngloGold Ashanti. It is now entering a phase of exclusive ownership of the asset where about 1100 people are employed, most of them Tanzanian.

The mine's reserves and resources as of



June 30 were reported as 37.17-million carats. With liquidity challenges continuing, further capital investment will be required.

"We look forward to working closely with the Mining Commission, the Fair Competition Commission, employees, community representatives and other key stakeholders in completing the sale as soon as possible," Duffy stated in a stock exchange announcement accessed by Mining Weekly.

In South Africa, Petra operates the Cul-

linan diamond mine in Gauteng and the Finsch diamond mine in the Northern Cape.

"We're committed to adopting and adhering to the latest internationally recognised standards throughout all aspects of our business," said Pink Diamonds chairperson Rostam Azizi, whose family are from the area around Mwadui, the other name for the Williamson mine, which is situated 23 km north-east of Shinyanga in northern Tanzania.

Mining Weekly can report that the discovery of the kimberlite pipe by Canadian geologist John Williamson in 1940 led to ongoing operation since then, making it one of the world's oldest continuous operating diamond mines. Its yield of 19-million-plus diamond carats includes the 54.5 ct Williamson pink diamond presented to British royalty in 1947.

Even as far back as 2017, Williamson was shut amid a dispute with the Tanzanian government, then led by John Magufuli, which accused Petra of underreporting the value of some export diamonds.

The transaction is set to close in the first quarter of this year pending approval by Tanzanian regulatory authorities.

Petra is under big pressure as the diamond market remains down at heel. The company said on Tuesday in an interim production report that diamond output fell 2% to 1.4 million carats.

This adds further pressure to its ability to generate cash and which has precipitated a second round of cost cutting, although the company added that it would not "silly decisions" around its latest restructuring plans.

"We consider risk in the [restructuring] process and so we won't be silly about decisions we make. We need to ensure we make the business sustainable not just in the context of the current market but going forward," said Duffy.

As part of its cost cuts, Petra also said it would unveil a restructure of its debt repayment plan on February 18 at its interim financial results announcement. Of critical importance is some \$273m in loan notes that are due to mature in March 2026.

Net debt increased to \$225m as of December 31 compared to \$201m at June 30. This was "mainly due to the continued weak diamond market and timing of tender sales," said Petra.

In 2021, Petra reached a multi-million-pound settlement, following a claim filed in the UK High Court, with 96 alleged Tanzanian victims of beatings, torture, illegal detention, indiscriminate shootings, sexual violence and killings. Petra committed to compensation for victims, community development projects and the establishment of a grievance mechanism to remedy additional harms. Petra has since relinquished its majority stake in Williamson Diamonds - held since 2009 - though still maintains a notable shareholding.

IPIS undertook extensive field research, over 120 interviews with local residents, civil society and local authority actors, and engagements with key stakeholders, including Petra. This served to assess how this settlement is perceived by and impacts upon residents of villages adjacent to the Williamson mine.

DRC to create world's largest tropical forest reserve

By Guardian Correspondent,

Davos

President of the Democratic Republic of Congo Félix-Antoine Tshisekedi Tshilombo has announced the creation of the world's largest tropical forest reserve.

Speaking during the ongoing World Economic Forum Annual Meeting 2025, Tshisekedi said the Kivu to Kinshasa Green Corridor Reserve will protect over 550,000 square kilometres of forest throughout the Congo River Basin.

This historic, unprecedented initiative will transform not only our natural landscapes, but also the livelihoods of millions of our citizens," he said, adding that the initiative goes far beyond environmental preservation and includes economic development.

As he prepares to assume the ASEAN chairmanship,

Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim expressed optimism about the 10-nation union's future and Malaysia's role in it.

"The spirit of collaboration and esprit de corps between [ASEAN] leaders is unique," he said, pointing to the contributions that closer regional integration in green energy has made to Malaysia's emergence as a high-tech manufacturing powerhouse.

Anwar noted that while the US remained the largest single investor in Malaysia, the nation's "closeness, investment and trade with China" are growing.

Stressing the importance of dialogue over conflict, he remarked: "We don't go to war or threaten - we discuss, get a little angry, but focus on economic fundamentals and move on."

In a special address, Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez called for a reform of social media governance



across the European Union to curb misinformation and cyber harassment. He urged for stronger enforcement of the Digital Services Act and expanded powers for the European Centre for Algorithmic Transparency.

He emphasized that "the values of the European Union are not for sale" and called for increased funding for research into social media algorithms to ensure Eu-

rope's brightest minds address this critical challenge.

United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres issued a stark warning about two escalating global threats: the unchecked expansion of artificial intelligence and the climate crisis. These challenges, he warned, pose unprecedented risks to humanity and demand immediate, unified action from governments

and the private sector. On artificial intelligence, Guterres acknowledged its immense potential but cautioned against the risks of leaving AI unregulated.

He emphasized the need for international collaboration, pointing to the Global Digital Compact adopted at the United Nations as a roadmap for harnessing digital technology responsibly.

"We must collaborate so

that all countries and people benefit from AI's promise and potential to support development and social and economic progress for all," he said. He also called on the private sector not to backtrack on their climate commitments, and for governments to "keep their promise to produce new, economy-wide national climate action plans this year."

Palestinian Authority Foreign Affairs Minister Varsen Aghabekian expressed cautious optimism following the ceasefire between Israel and Hamas. "Optimism is not a choice; it is a must," adding that she hopes the ceasefire brings something more sustainable in the future.

Addressing the humanitarian crisis in Gaza, Aghabekian underscored the need for immediate relief efforts and long-term planning. "We have to ensure that the aid is reaching the people," she said.

Weeks after the sudden collapse of the Bashar al-Assad regime, Syrian Foreign Minister Asaad Hasan AlShaibani outlined the new government's plans. "We will not look to the past. We will look to the future. And we promise to our people that this misery will not be repeated," adding that the government will respect the rights of women and reject the sectarian division that has long plagued the country.

He also urged the removal of remaining sanctions, assuring the world Syria would no longer be a source of threats. "Thousands are returning to Syria and they need to help rebuild the country. Now we open a new page...We need Syria to be a country of peace."

In a conversation with CNN's Fareed Zakaria, Iranian Vice-President for Strategic Affairs Javad Zarif expressed hope that a second Trump presidency would reconsider his withdrawal from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA or the Iran nuclear deal) in 2018, during his first administration, and would be "more serious, more focused, more realistic" about the cost of his withdrawal from the agreement.

"In terms of being able to dissuade Iran, [the withdrawal from JCPOA] has failed," he said. "It has imposed heavy economic costs on the Iranian people. Of course, the Iranian government is suffering, but the Iranian people and the most vulnerable groups in Iran are suffering the most," Zarif said.

Pressures mount within global housing market

LONDON

Property prices around the world are rising faster than inflation for the third consecutive quarter according to a new International Housing Observatory report, suggesting pressures are mounting within the global housing market.

Experts say this increasing pressure, along with stagnating affordability, means housing is becoming increasingly out of reach for many households in major economies across the world.

The Netherlands topped the chart with the highest increase

in property prices between July-September 2024 with a 3.2 percent increase in house prices, followed by Spain (1.7 percent) and the UK (1.3 percent).

Property prices in the United States grew by 0.5 percent while Canada's housing market bucked the global trend, with property prices decreasing by 2.3 percent.

And it's not just homeowners that are affected. The latest report reveals the cost of rents also increased across almost all of the countries studied during the same period, with the UK recording the highest rental increase of 1.7 percent across the quarter.

The latest report, published by

the International Housing Observatory at Lancaster University Management School focuses on the latest data available—the third quarter of 2024.

First launched in 2019, the International Housing Observatory sees leading economists from Lancaster University Management School, the University of Alicante and the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas undertake in-depth analysis of data from the Globalization Institute of the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas in order to provide real-time monitoring of real estate markets and house price forecasts across the world.



Its latest quarterly report is the second the team have produced in a bid to help homeowners, central banks, housing experts and policymakers from across the world gain a better understanding of the overall health of the global and local economies.

Lancaster University's Professor Eftymios Pavlidis, Co-Director of the International Housing

Observatory, said, "While rising house prices can indicate a strong economy, sustained or excessive growth can be worrying and have negative consequences for both global and local economies as well as individual households—which is why close monitoring of these markets on a global scale is so important.

"Our latest report shows that house prices have been consist-

ently increasing in some of the countries in our sample. This can put pressure on the economy in several ways. If house prices rise too quickly and become detached from 'fundamentals' such as incomes or rents, it can lead to what we call 'speculative bubbles'—and when these bubbles burst, economic recessions can be triggered, as seen during the 2008 financial crisis.

THE COST OF CATASTROPHE: REBUILDING FROM DISASTER

BY SARAH MOLONEY

In 2024, climate catastrophes cost the global economy \$320bn. This was 30% higher than the year before, making it the most expensive year on record for natural disasters. As devastating wildfires burn in Los Angeles, 2025 could prove to be even dearer.

Climate change has intensified the dangers of wildfires, meaning disaster events are more likely to occur outside of the typical wildfire season. With global temperatures exceeding an increase of 1.5 degrees Celsius in 2024, this is only going to become more difficult to mitigate and adapt to.

JP Morgan estimates that the economic cost of the LA wildfires will total around \$50bn. However, only \$20bn of this will be insured, meaning there is a significant protection gap. In recent years, as wildfires have become bigger and harder to control, many insurers have decided against offering protection in high-risk areas, which has exacerbated the economic burden for many Americans.

What will Trump do?

US President Donald Trump has been vocal about his scepticism of the threat climate change poses, labelling it a 'hoax' and 'one of the great scams of all time'

during his campaign in 2024. In his first term, he withdrew the US from the 2015 Paris agreement in a major setback to efforts to curb the country's emissions.

He has vowed in his second term to repeal environmental rules introduced by the Joe Biden administration, end public spending on clean energy, scrap incentives for Americans to buy electric vehicles and embark on a 'drill, baby, drill' drive for new fossil fuel energy. On his first day in office, he once again withdrew the US from the Paris agreement and halted more than \$300bn in green infrastructure funding as part of his plan to undo the progress made by Biden's team.

This will have drastic implications for transition finance. A move towards greater de-regulation will override much of the Biden administration's important work to hold industries to account for their emissions and counter the risk of greenwashing through disclosure requirements. There has already been a widespread retreat of banks and asset managers from many of the frameworks and alliances that were established following COP26 in 2021.

Since the 5 November election, all six of the largest US banks - Bank of America, Citigroup, Gold-



man Sachs, JP Morgan, Morgan Stanley and Wells Fargo - have withdrawn from the Net-Zero Banking Alliance. BlackRock, the world's largest asset manager, has left Net Zero Asset Managers, the equivalent organisation for money managers. And just a few days after Trump took office, the Federal Reserve left the Network for Greening the Financial System in a blow to central bank net-zero efforts.

In OMFIF's Global Public Funds 2024, not a single survey respondent chose climate change when asked to identify the top three economic factors affecting their investment approach over the next five to 10 years. In 2023, it was chosen by 50 percent of respondents, which shows a clear shift in public pension and sovereign funds' concerns over the medium term.

It is disappointing, but not sur-

prising, that the political climate of the US is able to exert such influence over a crucial part of the fight to meet net zero. Just four years after these banks and asset managers declared 'climate risk is investment risk', these alliances are beginning to crumble and pledges are being sidelined.

US will fall behind

Despite the progress made by the Biden administration in attempting to regulate and standardise frameworks and disclosure requirements, the US still trailed Europe in action on climate change. A report by OMFIF and Luxembourg for Finance in 2022 found that 'the US still looks to Europe for guidance on ESG regulation and lags in green equity development'. With transition finance set to be bumped down the list of priorities, it stands to reason that the gap between the two jurisdictions will soon become a gulf.

Elsewhere, China is looking to assume a leading role in the clean energy transition, hoping to dominate the market in the next phase of green innovation. It is already the world's largest producer of solar energy and it has set its sights on the EV industry.

Trump has spoken of his plans to slap up to 100 percent tariffs on Chinese goods, in addition to

the 100 percent tariff that already exists on Chinese-made EVs. Given Trump's hostility towards both climate change and China, it may be safe to assume that Chinese green technology won't be making its way into the US any time soon.

However, China's dominance in this field, and the business it will do with the rest of the world, may make some US business leaders rethink a reluctance to engage with the transition. Could a healthy dose of competition be enough to pull the US back into the net-zero game?

Regardless of the cause of the wildfires, Trump will be unable to ignore the economic devastation wrought across LA. In a fraught political environment, Democrats and Republicans will have to reach across the divide to help those who have lost everything. Even more importantly, they will have to work together to prevent a catastrophe on this scale from happening again.

Sarah Moloney (pictured) is Chief Subeditor at OMFIF, an independent think tank for central banking, economic policy and public investment, providing a neutral platform for public and private sector engagement worldwide.

BY LEE ARTHUR

In a sector often overshadowed by labyrinthine supply chains and erratic profit margins, Sage—known primarily for its financial management software—has quietly been transforming itself into a modern, cloud-powered juggernaut.

At the recent World of Concrete conference, Sage's commitment to embedding intelligent technology and robust integrations into its accounting backbone was on full display.

Against the backdrop of an industry clamouring for solutions to labour shortages and project inefficiencies, Sage's leadership demonstrated that far from being a staid accounting provider, the company is shaping the future of AI in construction.

To truly grasp how Sage has arrived at this watershed moment, it helps to recall the insights of Rob Reid. As founder of Intacct (acquired by Sage), Reid championed a philosophy that any software's "unique value proposition" should be identified and funded first.

In his earlier interviews, Reid outlined a methodical approach: conduct open-ended conversations with dozens of potential customers, uncover the critical challenges, then develop hyper-focused solutions. This roadmap was always underpinned by what Reid called "absolute focus on

How AI, cloud-centric strategy are redefining construction technology

the unique value proposition that is hugely meaningful to the customer."

Today, Sage is living out those tenets. Instead of scrambling to handle every operational need internally, the company emphasizes its role as the premier accounting platform that deftly integrates with best-in-class, highly specialized partners. It is precisely the kind of strategic clarity that Reid once espoused: "focus on the core and excel there".

AI at the Heart of Accounting—and Beyond

Sage's approach to artificial intelligence reflects the notion of "stick to your core strengths." Rather than offering a broad-brush AI platform, the company has embedded AI features to solve specific pain points in its native cloud accounting system. This includes anomaly detection to catch outliers in transactions before month-end crunch time and workflow automation that dramatically reduces manual



data entry.

Meanwhile, Sage's operational partners tackle the field-level challenges, such as determining the right part to repair a broken machine or deploying AI for real-time translation and imagery-based fault detection. By embracing an open API philosophy from day one, Sage has positioned itself as the financial nucleus to which trucking, concrete, or aggregate management solutions can con-

nect seamlessly.

Preconstruction: A Natural AI Playground

One of the most compelling illustrations of Sage's new-era impact is in preconstruction. Historically, the construction industry has been marked by cumbersome paper plans, frequent rework, and cascading change orders. Modern AI techniques—spanning 3D design, clash detection, and dynamic cost estimation—are now weaving their

way into standard workflows.

As Glen West, a Sage Strategy Director in Construction, explains, "We have what we think a project costs, and then we have what it actually costs. AI completes that loop by surfacing conflicts or discrepancies in advance, which can reduce change orders by up to 20%." That closed feedback loop, which feeds actual results back into future estimates, also alleviates the dreaded budget overruns plaguing construction.

Confronting the Labour Challenge

Beyond pure technological efficiencies, the construction market faces a dire labour shortage. AI—and the cloud-based tools that support it—are increasingly a magnet for a younger, tech-savvy workforce. Higher wages, modern equipment, and digitally driven site coordination are recasting the once-maligned image of construction work into something akin to advanced manufacturing. Sage's push to streamline accounting and

link it seamlessly with operational software augments a workforce that can now deliver more with fewer hands.

West notes, "Most of the younger generation is accustomed to user-friendly digital interfaces—getting them up to speed quickly is essential. Our goal is to make them productive sooner, bolstering the talent pipeline in an industry badly in need of fresh skills."

A Forward-Looking Outlook

As Sage fully embraces cloud solutions and integrates with industry-specific platforms at scale, it is arguably following Rob Reid's blueprint of prioritizing the customer's most vital concerns. While other financial tech players chase the allure of an "all-in-one" system, Sage refines its accounting foundation and leverages AI to amplify that foundation's reach.

For a company once seen primarily as an accounting stalwart, Sage's trajectory now hints at an era of unprecedented growth and innovation—one in which the spirit of Rob Reid's original game plan thrives. By coupling AI's potential with an unwavering emphasis on customer-centric value, Sage appears well placed to shape not only the future of construction technology but also the broader horizons of cloud-based business management.

Taking 3D printed construction to the next low-carbon level

BY JOHN BLEASBY

As interest in 3D printing for construction (3DPC) grows, it comes with a precondition. Concrete is used; a material associated with high CO2 and GHG emissions.

With so much recent focus on the development of low-carbon and even zero-carbon concrete, the blending of these developments could add to 3DPC's many advantages that include reduced material waste, speedier in-situ construction, improved work safety and potentially lower costs.

It's beginning to happen. In late December 2024, scientists at Nanyang Technological University, Singapore (NTU Singapore) announced the development of a 3D concrete printing method that captures carbon.

"The newly developed 3D con-

crete printing process involves injecting steam and CO2, captured as the byproducts of industrial processes, into the mixing concrete," the university said in a media release.

The pumping of CO2 and steam into the concrete mix as the structure is printed allows the CO2 to react with the components in the concrete, turning into a solid form that sequesters and stores the carbon.

Lab researchers determined the new process absorbed and trapped 38 per cent more carbon than traditional 3D printed concrete methods.

What is also exciting is that this new process does more than just reduce the carbon footprint of the concrete used.

"Results have shown that the CO2 and steam injection method improved the mechanical properties of the concrete, offering

increased strength compared to conventional 3D printed concrete," the university says.

In terms of measured results, compression strength was improved by 36.8 per cent with up to 45.3 per cent higher bending strength.

Lab testing also indicated a 50 per cent improvement in printability, meaning the mixture can be shaped and printed more efficiently.

Co-author Dr. Daniel Tay, research fellow from NTU School of MAE, said, "Our proposed system shows how capturing carbon dioxide and using it in 3D concrete printing could lead to stronger, more eco-friendly buildings, advancing construction technology."

A US patent application has been filed jointly by NTU and study collaborators. However, the researchers are not resting



there. They hope to further optimize the process by using waste gases instead of pure carbon dioxide.

There's more 3D printing research and announcements coming from other parts of the world.

Researchers at the University of Virginia (UVA), in collaboration with researchers at Virginia Transportation Research Council, have combined graphene with limestone and calcined clay cement (LC2), to develop a more

sustainable, printable cementitious composite. They say their new material offers enhanced strength and durability while significantly reducing carbon emissions.

"The addition of graphene to LC2 cement offers a unique opportunity to lower carbon emissions while maintaining the strength and flexibility required for 3D printed construction," said Osman Ozbulut, a professor at UVA's department of civil and environmental engineering.

According to the researchers, a life cycle assessment revealed this graphene-enhanced LC2 concrete could reduce greenhouse gas emissions by approximately 31 per cent compared to traditional printable concrete mixtures.

Another study conducted in Ozbulut's resilient and advanced infrastructure lab at UVA witnessed encouraging results when exploring the use of the emerging plant-based material Cellulose Nanofibrils in 3D concrete printing.

Cellulose Nanofibrils are made from wood pulp, the university explained.

"This creates a material that's renewable and low impact. Like other plant-fibre derivatives, CNF, as the material is known in industry, shows strong potential as an additive to improve the rheology—the scientific term for flow properties—and mechanical strength of these composites."

Analysis of tests using varying amounts of CNF additive found adding at least 0.3 per cent CNF significantly improved flow performance. Microscopic analysis of the hardened samples revealed better material bonding and structural integrity.

CONSTRUCTION

HEATHROW EXPANSION COULD ADD £40 TO AIRLINE TICKET

LONDON

Chancellor of the Exchequer Rachel Reeves's bid to expand Heathrow airport could add £40 to the cost of an airline ticket, according to the Treasury's own analysis.

The chancellor's proposal to minimise the carbon emissions of a bigger Heathrow include the use of sustainable aviation fuels, which experts say are expensive and unlikely to reach the scale needed for aviation expansion.

A Treasury cost-benefit analysis seen by the Guardian shows that sustainable fuels could increase the cost of a single economy airline fare by £37.80 by 2040. There are no plans to ensure frequent flyers, or those in first or business class, shoulder more of the cost, with ticket prices expected to go up across the board.

The chancellor drew up the climate plans in response to criticism from the energy secretary, Ed Miliband. He is understood to have warned cabinet colleagues that airport expansion is likely to put the UK in breach of its legally binding carbon budget, which keeps the government on track to meet its 2050 net zero emissions target. One senior source said Reeves had been "gung ho" about Heathrow since the summer and had been putting pressure on Miliband and the former transport secretary Louise Haigh.

An airplane flies over a street sign saying Heathrow Close as it comes into land at Heathrow air-



port on Wednesday.

Reeves says growth eclipses net zero as Heathrow runway decision looms

Read more

A number of cabinet ministers have been reassured by the proposal from the chancellor to include plans to use sustainable fuels. However, others fear it is prioritising short-term economic growth over tackling the climate crisis, which has been shown to be likely to tank economies, with more frequent natural disasters that destroy infrastructure, homes and the food supply.

Reeves told journalists at the World Economic Forum in Davos on Wednesday that she views economic growth in this parliament as more important than net zero. Asked to choose between the two, she said: "Well if [growth is] the number one mission it's obviously the most important thing."

There is some scepticism in Whitehall and beyond about the degree to which airport expansion would make a contribution to economic growth. The Department for Transport under Haigh commissioned a study on the growth impact on a third runway at Heathrow, which indicated that

any increase in economic growth would not be immediate as the airport would not see any additional planes until 2040. The biggest rise in passengers would also come from transit - where there is no air passenger duty paid.

Rachel Reeves

View image in fullscreen

Reeves is understood to have told cabinet colleagues that boosting the amount of sustainable fuels airlines are mandated to use will offset any emissions. Photograph: Isabel Infantes/Reuters
 Reeves is understood to have told cabinet colleagues that boosting the amount of sustain-

able fuels airlines are mandated to use will offset any emissions. But Alethea Warrington, the head of aviation at the climate charity Possible, said: "For the government to try to claim that so-called 'sustainable aviation fuels' can undo the climate harm caused by new runways is a fantasy. The supply of genuinely sustainable fuels for aviation will be extremely small, and nowhere close to sufficient to supply even aviation's current demand, let alone new runways. Any higher costs should fall on frequent flyers and those who can afford to fly in first class, rather than on the majority of people, who already fly rarely, if at all."

The Treasury's analysis states that 75% of the costs of using more sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) will be passed to the consumer. The officials drawing up the document accepted this, writing that plane tickets are not expensive enough: "Ticket prices do not reflect the full social cost of flying and are not sufficiently incentivising the uptake of decarbonisation solutions such as SAF."

At the moment, planes use highly polluting kerosene for their jet fuel. They can reduce their emissions by up to 80% using biofuels made from feedstocks, cooking oils or crops. However, this takes up huge amounts of land and uses crops for fuel that could be used for food instead. Recent research from the Royal Society has found the UK would have to devote half

its farmland or more than double its total renewable electricity supply to make enough aviation fuel to meet its ambitions for net zero flying. Last year, Air New Zealand scrapped its 2030 decarbonisation target, blaming difficulties in securing sustainable jet fuel.

Various cars on display for sale Rachel Reeves denies Labour hindering consumer interests in car loans scandal

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Alex Chapman, a senior economist at the New Economics Foundation, said: "We need emission reductions across the economy now and aviation cannot be given a get-out-of-jail-free card on the basis of unsustainable fuels and shaky arguments of growth. Instead of unsustainable aviation fuels, the government should look to managing the demand for flying through ideas such as a frequent flyer levy."

Most cabinet ministers who previously voted against airport expansion are understood to be prepared to accept the growth of the four London airports. Seven cabinet ministers, including the prime minister, Keir Starmer, have voted against expansion in the past as well as others including the environment secretary, Steve Reed, and Darren Jones, the chief secretary to the Treasury.

The Treasury declined to comment.

Cement demand sets to decrease over next 25 years

BY AMY PEACOCK

The World Cement Association has predicted that global demand for cement and clinker will decrease more than previously expected by 2050 due to changing market trends and sustainable material advancements.

In its white paper, Long-Term Forecast for Cement and Clinker Demand, the association predicted that global cement use would decrease from 4.2 billion tonnes per year to three billion per year between now and 2050.

The World Cement Association also predicted that demand for clinker, which is the main ingredient in Portland cement and produces large amounts of CO₂, will also decrease from 2.8 billion tonnes per year to less than 1.9 billion per year.

According to the association, its predictions were based on regional cement and clinker demand trends, particularly a decrease in use in China, and the adoption of low-carbon practices in the construction industry.

World Cement Association CEO Ian Riley explained that cement



demand has been influenced by a decrease in new city developments in some countries as population growth has plateaued.

"The decrease in cement and clinker demand is driven by several factors," he told Dezeen. "Slowing infrastructure and construction activity in markets like China has significantly reduced consumption, where demand has already fallen from 2.4 billion tonnes per annum in 2020 to an estimated 1.8 billion tonnes per annum in 2024."

"Declining or stabilising populations in developed regions have lessened the need for large-

scale new developments, further contributing to the reduction in demand." Riley also said that advancements in clinker alternatives and supplementary cementitious materials (SCMs) have helped reduce the reliance on carbon-intensive clinker.

"The growing emphasis on reducing carbon emissions is encouraging the adoption of alternative materials, optimised designs, and strategies to minimise waste," he said. "The development of clinker-free cements and low-carbon alternatives is also playing a key role in this transition."

"Clinker demand is projected

to fall from 2.8 billion tonnes per annum in 2024 to less than 1.9 billion by 2050, possibly as low as one billion, depending on the rate of adoption of SCMs and alternative binders," Riley continued.

"The analysis assumes a steady reduction in clinker due to increased SCM availability and technological advancements." "Cement industry is undergoing an unprecedented transformation"

The World Cement Association published its white paper to provide an accurate overview of global cement and clinker use and inform built environment professionals about planning for lower-carbon building practices.

"The cement industry is undergoing an unprecedented transformation," said Riley. "As we move towards a decarbonised future, understanding the true demand for cement and clinker is critical to ensuring that policies, technologies, and investments align with reality."

"This white paper aims to provide industry leaders and policymakers with the clarity needed to plan effectively and sustainably."

Riley hopes the report's find-

ings will encourage the architecture and construction professions to continue lowering their projects' carbon footprints by designing with minimal concrete and adopting more low-carbon building materials, such as mass timber and geopolymers.

"The decline in cement demand signals a shift towards more sustainable architectural practices, including innovative materials, optimised designs and carbon reduction," he said.

"Lower cement and clinker demand directly contribute to reducing the carbon footprint of construction projects, aligning with global sustainability goals," Riley continued.

"This transition offers an opportunity to create more environmentally friendly buildings and reduce the long-term environmental impact of construction."

Last month, the Global Cement and Concrete Association announced definitions for low-carbon concrete and cement at COP29. Earlier this year, researchers devised a way to recycle waste cement to make low-carbon concrete.

Likoni Lane construction site shut down over public health concerns

NAIROBI

The National Environment Management Authority (Nema) has ordered the closure of a construction site on Likoni Lane, off Dennis Pritt Road in Nairobi County, following complaints from the public about activities at the site.

In a notice on Wednesday, Nema Director-General Mamo Boru Mamo attributed the directive to environmental and public health concerns raised by residents.

"In response to the public complaints received on the Alina Valley Company Ltd undertaking construction activities on Likoni Lane, off Dennis Pritt Road, the director-general (of) Nema has today directed the closure of the said site with immediate effect until further notice," Mamo said.

He further indicated that the agency would undertake an immediate assessment of the site to determine necessary corrective measures.

"Meanwhile, the authority will undertake an immediate assessment of the said site for appropriate corrective action to protect our environment and public health," he said.

The directive comes amid ongoing efforts by Nema to regulate construction activities and curb environmental pollution in Nairobi.

On 24 October 2024, the authority issued strict guidelines to construction firms, barring any work beyond 6 pm and prohibiting construction on weekends.

"Surveillance on night constructions was also undertaken to ensure that developments adhere to their license conditions. Any construction is supposed to stop at 6 pm and is not to be done on weekends," the authority said.

Egypt launches first phase of housing units for expats

CAIRO

The Ministry of Housing, Utilities, and Urban Communities has launched the first phase of premium residential units across 13 projects in various cities, according to an emailed press release.

The launch aligns with the government's strategy to enhance investment opportunities for Egyptian expatriates.

Minister of Housing Sherif Shurbini highlighted that the development scheme offers luxury residential alternatives, with 5,055 units over 13 projects in nine locations.

Meanwhile, the first phase of housing units will begin in February 2025.

Through its affiliated bodies, including the New Urban Communities Authority, the ministry finalized an agreement with Banque Misr to implement remote electronic payment methods that secure financial transactions.

Shurbini indicated that payment for the housing units and booking deposits can be made in US dollars for all Egyptians abroad.

The ministry is currently working with



the New Urban Communities Authority to establish a high-tech, interactive website that will enable Egyptians abroad to explore projects, view available units, and take a virtual tour before making a purchasing decision.

The website will be launched in preparation for the opening of units for reservation and allocation starting on February 15th,

2025.

Egypt's real estate market is one of the most dynamic in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, driven by rapid urbanization, a growing population, and government-led mega-projects.

With a population exceeding 105 million, demand for housing, especially in urban areas, is consistently high.

High demand exists for affordable housing, but luxury properties in areas like Fifth Settlement, Sheikh Zayed, and the North Coast (Sahel) also see strong interest.

Cairo remains the hub for commercial real estate, but the New Administrative Capital is emerging as a business destination. Technology is playing a bigger role in real estate transactions, with online platforms facilitating property sales and rentals.

Chairperson of the Real Estate Development Chamber, said earlier this week that the chamber is currently collaborating with the Central Bank of Egypt to study this proposal.

He noted that despite the challenges, the real estate market in Egypt achieved significant sales last year, although mortgage financing accounted for less than 3 percent of total sales.

Shoukry highlighted that the recent sharp rise in interest rates represents the biggest obstacle to activating the mortgage system, limiting both real estate companies and customers' ability to take advantage of this financing mechanism.

WORLD

Trump re-designates Houthis as 'terrorist organisation'

WASHINGTON/SANAA/ADEN

US President Donald Trump signed an executive order Wednesday to re-designate the Houthis, a Yemen-based militant group, as a "Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO)".

According to a fact sheet released by the White House, Trump's executive order reversed the one issued by Joe Biden four years ago that removed the Houthis from the FTO list, undoing a Trump order issued in the final days of his first presidential term.

"As a result of the Biden administration's weak policy, the Houthis have fired at US Navy warships dozens of times, launched numerous attacks on civilian infrastructure in partner nations, and attacked commercial vessels transiting Bab al-Mandeb more than 100 times," the White House said in the fact sheet.

Wednesday's executive order directed Secretary of State Marco Rubio to recommend that the designation take effect within 30 days.

Following the designation, Trump will direct the United States Agency for International Development, after it completes a review, "to end its relationship with entities that have made payments to the Houthis, or which have opposed international efforts to counter the Houthis while turning a blind eye towards the Houthis' terrorism and abuses".

Meanwhile, Yemen's Houthi group on Wednesday said it had released the crew of Galaxy Leader vessel to support the Gaza ceasefire agreement reached between Hamas and Israel, Houthi-run al-Masirah TV reported.

"Based on the directives of leader Abdulmalik al-Houthi, the crew of the vessel, Galaxy Leader, was released today (Wednesday) in coordination with the Hamas movement and the mediation of the Sultanate of Oman," said the Houthi television. "The crew of the Galaxy Leader vessel was handed over to our brothers in the Sultanate of Oman in coordination with Hamas as part of the ceasefire arrangements," it added.

The Houthi Supreme Political Council said in a statement that the seizure of the vessel on Nov 19, 2023, and the arrest of its crew were "part of the battle to support Hamas in its fighting against Israel in Gaza".

While the crew has been freed, the vessel remains in Houthi custody at Hodeidah port. Neither the Houthi statement nor the Houthi television mentioned when the commercial vessel would be freed.

UN Special Envoy for Yemen Hans Grundberg on Wednesday welcomed the release of the Galaxy Leader vessel's crew.

"The release of the Galaxy Leader crew is heartwarming news that puts an end to the arbitrary detention and separation that they and their families endured for more



Houthi fighters march during a rally of support for the Palestinians in the Gaza Strip and against the US strikes on Yemen outside Sanaa on Jan 22, 2024. (PHOTO / AP)

than a year," Grundberg stated, urging the Houthis to "continue these positive steps on all fronts, including ending all maritime attacks".

The envoy specifically commended Oman for its "determined and tireless efforts" in securing the crew's release.

On Nov 19, 2023, the Houthi fighters, flying on a military helicopter, landed on the deck of the Galaxy Leader while it was sailing in the international waters off Yemen's Houthi-held Red Sea port city of Hodeidah.

The Houthi fighters broke the doors of the vessel's control room, took the vessel's 25 crew members hostages, and forced the vessel to Hodeidah.

The Houthi rebel group has been controlling much of northern Yemen, including Hodeidah, since late 2014 after the civil war broke out in Yemen, forcing the internationally-recognized Yemeni government out of the capital Sanaa.

Since mid-November 2023, the Houthi group has been launching rocket and drone attacks against Israel and disrupting "Israeli-linked" shipping in the Red Sea to show solidarity with Palestinians amid their war with Israel in Gaza.

The Houthi group stopped its at-

tacks against Israeli cities on Jan 19, when the Israel-Hamas ceasefire agreement went into effect.

However, the Houthi group reportedly said in an email to shipping companies on Jan 19 that it "will continue to launch rocket attacks" against any ship linked to Israel, carrying goods to Israel, or raising the flag of Israel, in the Red Sea.

In the message, the Houthi group also threatened the Western shipping companies that any air strike by the United States, Britain, or any European countries against the group in northern Yemen, would be responded to by targeting that country's commercial ships in the Red Sea.

According to a recent televised report by the group's al-Masirah TV, the Houthi group has launched attacks against more than 100 commercial ships in the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden since November 2023, including two vessels sunk in the Red Sea, off Hodeidah.

The Houthi attacks forced international shipping companies to change routes to the southern tip of Africa to escape rocket and drone strikes, leading to a significant drop in revenues for the Egypt-run Suez Canal.

Syria promotes investment drive at Davos; UN calls for sanctions relief

DAMASCUS



SYRIA'S interim Foreign Minister Asaad Hassan al-Shibani told the World Economic Forum in Davos on Wednesday that his country offered "tremendous investment opportunities" despite the devastation of over a decade of war, while a UN envoy in Damascus called for sanctions relief.

Speaking in a public discussion with former British Prime Minister Tony Blair, al-Shibani (pictured) said Syria's priorities included rebuilding infrastructure such as telecommunications, roads, ports, education, healthcare, and energy, according to Syria's state news agency SANA.

"We don't want to rely solely on humanitarian aid. We aim to rebuild Syria with our own hands," al-Shibani said, citing partnerships with Gulf nations to revitalize the electrical grid. He also highlighted the potential contribution of Syrian expatriates.

Al-Shibani urged the international community to lift sanctions, describing them as "the main obstacle" for ordinary Syrians. He said Syria had a "diverse economy" and a "strategically important geography" and was eager for foreign investment "on fair and transparent terms".

Separately, in Damascus, UN Special Envoy Geir Pedersen stressed the urgency of addressing Syria's economic crisis and advocated for sanctions relief as part of a broader stabilization process.

Pedersen outlined seven key challenges facing Syria: unifying armed factions, addressing issues in the northeast, ensuring citizen protection, advancing a political transition, delivering transitional justice, promoting economic recovery and reconstruction, and addressing Israel's presence in the Golan Heights.

He reiterated that any credible political solution must be "Syrian-led and Syrian-owned," calling for an inclusive transition, including a new constitution and free elections.

Al-Shibani told the Davos forum that Syria was "ready to open its doors" to global investors, citing development models like Singapore and Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030.

While acknowledging the challenges posed by sanctions, the need for international partnerships and ongoing security risks, particularly in the northeast, al-Shibani emphasized that "Syria will not be divided" and that a united and stable nation was essential for attracting investment and meeting citizens' needs.

Agencies

Senior diplomat predicts ambiguity ahead for Russia-US ties after Trump's inauguration

MOSCOW

A period of uncertainty may await the relationship between Russia and the United States after the coming into power of US President Donald Trump, Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergey Ryabkov warned.

"I think the next period will be characterized by not just a substantial number of challenges, but also the increased pace of changes and a high level of uncertainty, including in broader international relations and specifically on the platform of our dialogue with Washington," the senior Russian diplomat said in a speech at the Institute of US and Canadian Studies, a think tank of the Russian Academy of Sciences.

In light of the second coming of Trump who ushered in "a revolution of common sense" in his inaugural speech, Ryabkov noted, "the role of this Institute as a major think tank that gives the most detailed analysis of the unfriendly state that is central to us increases significantly."

On January 20, Trump assumed office as the 47th president of the United States. His first term as US president was in 2017-2021.



Bloomberg philanthropy to cover US climate dues after Paris withdrawal

WASHINGTON

FORMER New York mayor Michael Bloomberg's philanthropy and other US funders said on Thursday they will cover US financial obligations to the UN climate framework after President Donald Trump called for the US to withdraw - for a second time - from the Paris climate agreement.

Bloomberg, a media billionaire who also serves as a UN special envoy on climate change, announced Bloomberg Philanthropies will once again cover the amount of money the US owes each year to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and ensure the US meets its emissions reporting obligations to the body despite the pullback from global climate diplomacy under Trump.

Key quote

"From 2017 to 2020, during a period of federal inaction, cities, states, businesses, and the public rose to the challenge to uphold our nation's commitments—and now, we are ready to do it again," said Bloomberg, who added that his organization also invests in support-



Michael R. Bloomberg speaks at the Global Renewables Summit, co-hosted by Bloomberg Philanthropies and the Global Renewables Alliance in New York City on Sept 24, 2024. AFP

ing local leaders, bolstering data to track emissions and building coalitions across public and private sectors to carry on US climate action.

Why it matters

Trump said he would move to withdraw the US from the Paris climate agreement and end all of the

country's international climate financial commitments in one of his first executive orders on Monday. To fill the void, a number of US states, cities and businesses committed to continue to achieve Paris climate goals.

Key numbers

The US paid its 7.2 million euro (\$7.4 million) required contribution to the UNFCCC secretariat that for 2024, and also paid off a 3.4 million euro arrears for 2010-2023.

The secretariat, set up under the 1992 UNFCCC treaty, is the world's key body for coordinating international efforts to reduce climate-warming emissions and staging summits where countries can hold one another accountable. It is experiencing a severe budget shortfall, according to a Reuters analysis of documents from the world body.

Prosecutors asked to indict Yoon for abuse of power, insurrection

SEOUL

SOUTH Korea's anti-corruption agency requested yesterday that prosecutors indict President Yoon Suk-yeol for committing insurrection and abuse of power over his short-lived declaration of martial law after transferring his case to the prosecutors' office.

The Corruption Investigation Office for High-ranking Officials (CIO) said it would ask prosecutors to indict Yoon over allegations he was the ringleader of an insurrection, for abuse of his authority and obstructing others from exercising their rights. Under the law, the CIO only has the authority to investigate and must hand cases over to prosecutors for prosecution.

Yoon has been incarcerated since last week as the investigators examined his attempt to impose martial law on Dec 3, a move that shocked the nation and beyond even though it was overturned within hours by parliament.

The CIO was launched in 2021 as an independent anti-graft agency to investigate high-ranking officials including the president and their family members and has led a joint team involving police and the defense ministry, while prosecutors carry out their own probe.

But with limited investigating and prosecuting rights, the CIO does not have the authority to prosecute the president and must refer any case to the prosecutors' office for further action.



A TV screen shows footage of impeached South Korean President Yoon Suk-yeol during a news program at the Seoul Railway Station in Seoul, South Korea, Jan 21, 2025. AP

The CIO has said Yoon's detention is due to end around Jan 28, but they expect prosecutors to ask the court to extend it for another 10 days before they formally charge Yoon.

The Supreme Prosecutors' Office declined to comment.

Since his arrest on Jan 15 - the first-ever for a sitting South Korean president - Yoon has refused to speak to CIO investigators and de-

fied their summons.

Lee Jae-seung, deputy chief of the CIO, said it would be more "efficient" for the prosecutors to take over the investigation before indicting Yoon, citing the president's refusal to cooperate.

"Despite the fact that the suspect is under serious allegations that he was ringleader of an insurrection, he continues to be uncooperative to this day, not responding to the criminal justice proceedings and refusing our questioning itself," Lee told a briefing.

Yoon, a top prosecutor before becoming president, now finds his criminal case in the hands of prosecutors from that same world, though how close their current ties are is unclear.

Yoon's lawyers have repeatedly said the CIO has no authority to handle his case as the law stipulates a wide-ranging list of high-ranking officials and violations it can investigate, but has no mention of insurrection.

They also said any criminal investigation should be conducted after the Constitutional Court decides whether to remove Yoon from office in its separate trial on his impeachment.

The lawyers reiterated the position on Thursday to say they will hold the CIO accountable for what they called its illegal investigation, while asking prosecutors taking over the case to comply with the law.

Agencies

US cannot or doesn't want to stop illegal arms trafficking to Haiti – Russian diplomat

UNITED NATIONS

THE United States either is unable or unwilling to put an end to illegal arms trafficking to Haiti, Russian Permanent Representative to the United Nations Vasily Nebenzya said.

"The international community needs to focus attention on another apparent problem in the Haitian context, which directly affects the situation in that country. I mean the unimpeded weapons trafficking to Haiti, despite the existing territorial embargo.

And we understand that a solution to this problem is in the hands of one state, which is either unwilling or unable to halt these illegal arms flows feeding criminal groups operating in the country," he said at a United Nations Security Council meeting on the situation in Haiti.

According to the Russian diplomat, the United States refuses to share any information about what it is doing to stop arms trafficking to Haiti with experts from the UN Security Council's sanctions committee, "this way complicating the actions by the international community." "However, such an approach is of no surprise for us, bearing in mind Washington's manipulations of the situation in Haiti with the use



of unilateral sanctions and political engineering technologies," Nebenzya noted.

Haiti has been in the grip of a serious security crisis since the assassination of President Jovenel Moïse in 2021 and a devastating earthquake. Criminals are controlling a larger part of the country, in particular, up to 80% of the capital city. At least 8,000 people have died amid the orgy of crime.

In March 2024, Kenya sent 1,000 policemen to Haiti to fight crime. Two more peacekeeping contingents from Guatemala and Salvador, some 83,000 troops in all, were sent to the Haitian capital Port-au-Prince in early January 2025 to back the Kenya-led international mission.

Agencies

Chinese envoy calls for 'icebreaking' spirit on Sino-British ties

LONDON

CHINESE Ambassador to Britain Zheng Zeguang on Wednesday called for "icebreaking" spirit while dealing with China-Britain ties.

"In this new age of changes and turbulence, China-UK relations have become even more important both for the two countries and the world at large. And more than ever, we need to draw inspiration from the 'icebreaking' spirit," Zheng said in a keynote speech at the annual "Icebreakers" Chinese New Year Dinner.

Over recent months, there has been some progress in China-Britain relations, Zheng noted. "We need to build upon that and keep up the momentum."

China and Britain should work together to earnestly follow through on the common understandings reached between leaders of the two countries and faithfully implement the productive outcomes of the 11th Economic and Financial Dialogue which was held recently in Beijing, China, Zheng said.

Zheng also called for restarting dialogue and collaboration in other areas, including new energy, Artificial Intelligence (AI), sci-tech, trade, education, and international and regional issues.

"And most importantly, we should han-

dle bilateral relations in the spirit of mutual respect, non-interference in each other's internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit. We do have differences and sensitive issues between us, and they have to be dealt with properly," he added.

The ambassador said China has made solid gains in advancing Chinese modernization despite all the headwinds in the past year.

Steady progress was recorded in the economy with China's gross domestic product (GDP) exceeding 134 trillion yuan (\$18.43 trillion) and the annual growth rate was 5 percent, he said.

In the new year, Year of the Snake, China will continue to show confidence and resolve, stay on the course of high-quality development and advance Chinese modernization, he added.

In 1954, Jack Perry, the founder of the London Export Corporation, led a group of 48 British businessmen on a historic trade mission to Beijing and helped deliver one of the first modern-day trade links with China.

The 48 businessmen were the precursors of the 48 Group Club. The trip became known as the "Icebreaking Mission", and the club members were called "Icebreakers".

Xinhua

How Ben-Gvir repeated a 'Netanyahu' with his resignation from cabinet: Report

TEL AVIV

JUST as the ceasefire deal with Hamas in Gaza was about to take effect, Israel's National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir, pulled the plug on his government position Sunday morning, but there is a strong, similar and calculative parallel with what Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu did around two decades back.

A report in The Jerusalem Post by Herb Keiron cited a reminiscent move of Netanyahu's resignation in 2005 over a similar Gaza-related issue.

"By resigning on principle, Ben-Gvir follows Netanyahu's playbook to build power," he said.

Israel's National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir's far-right Otzma Yehudit party quit the coalition on Sunday morning, just as the ceasefire agreement with Hamas in the Gaza Strip came into effect.

In a statement, the party said that its three cabinet members -- Ben-Gvir, Heritage Minister Amichai Eliyahu, and Negev, Galilee and National Resilience Minister Yitzhak Wasserlauf -- submitted resignation letters to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, Times of Israel reported.

Netanyahu served in Ariel Sharon's government as finance minister in 2005 and quit Sharon's government on August 7, just days before the IDF began its withdrawal from the coastal strip.

"Gaza is becoming a base for Islamic terror. Everyone sees this. Hamas is getting stronger and taking credit for what looks like our running away under fire," Netanyahu had then told a press conference.

On similar lines, Ben-Gvir has argued this time that the current deal is a "sur-

render" to Hamas.

Notably, both resignations were driven by opposition to Gaza-related decisions. Netanyahu resigned over Sharon's Disengagement plan from Gaza, warning this would create a "base of terror" within easy rocket range of Ashkelon.

Similarly, Ben-Gvir resigned his ministerial post, along with two other Otzma Yehudit ministers on Sunday, and pulled his faction out of the Knesset in protest of the hostage deal and ceasefire, saying this would unravel all the gains made so far in the Gaza war.

Both resignations occurred just before or immediately after the policies were ratified - Netanyahu's just before a cabinet vote on Disengagement, and Ben-Gvir's after the cabinet voted to endorse the hostage agreement, as per The Jerusalem Post.

Moreover, both moves aligned the resigning minister with right-wing opposition to the policies in question, strengthening their position among right-wing voters.

Netanyahu used this vote to position himself as the leader of the right-wing base that viewed the withdrawal as a betrayal of Israeli security and the settlers who were being uprooted.

This resonated with the Likud rank-and-file, something that helped pave his way back to the prime minister's office in 2009.

Although Netanyahu had previously voted in favour of the Disengagement plan on several occasions, his resignation allowed him to portray his stance as principled, casting himself as a leader willing to act decisively on what he believed.

ANI

Macron, Scholz call for stronger Europe to face new Trump presidency

PARIS/BERLIN

FRENCH President Emmanuel Macron and visiting German Chancellor Olaf Scholz have stressed the need for a stronger and more united Europe to address emerging global challenges, including Donald Trump's return to the US presidency.

"It's up to the Europeans, and to our two countries, to consolidate a united, strong and sovereign Europe," Macron said during a joint press conference on Wednesday following their meeting.

Macron highlighted the importance of a Europe that maintains its transatlantic relations while asserting its own interests and defending its values through European mechanisms. Facing the emerging challenges and concerns, the Franco-German partnership remains solid, he said, urging Europe to respond with greater unity, ambition, boldness, and independence.

German Chancellor Scholz described Trump's new presidency as a "challenge" for Europe, stating that the continent must remain a constructive and reliable partner while refusing to give in or hide. Europe needs the Franco-German partnership in this difficult time, Scholz said. "We both agree that Europe must grow stronger and more resilient in this changing world."

With Germany set to hold legislative elections in February, Scholz's trip to France is seen as a farewell visit to its closest European partner.

Separately, German Vice-Chancellor and Minister of Economics Robert Habeck has warned that Germany is prepared to impose retaliatory tariffs if the United States proceeds with new import duties on German products.

Speaking at the Handelsblatt Energy Summit in Berlin on Tuesday, Habeck emphasized the need for an independent approach to US trade relations under President Donald Trump.

Habeck said Germany should approach the new US government with "an outstretched hand" but not allow the hand "slapped away without limits." "We should not crawl in submission," he added.

Trump, in his second term, has intensified pressure on key trading partners, reassessing global trade relationships. While threats of new tariffs have been issued, no formal mea-



German Chancellor Olaf Scholz (left) gives a joint statement with French President Emmanuel Macron, at the Elysee Palace in Paris on Wednesday. AP

sures have yet been introduced.

Habeck, also the minister in charge of Germany's climate action, took the opportunity to address the broader implications of Trump's climate policies, urging Germany and Europe to continue the leadership in developing low-carbon energy technologies, despite challenges posed by the US administration.

Marcel Fratzscher, president of the German Institute for Economic Research (DIW Berlin), highlighted that Trump's trade policies could deliver a "triple hit" to Germany: falling exports, a further slowdown in industry, and job losses.

"The German economy has already contracted for two consecutive years, and trade tensions would exacerbate the challenges of recovery," Fratzscher said. "Trade conflicts will also push up prices and intensify inflation, particularly hurting low- and middle-income households."

Germany's automotive industry faces

new challenges as Trump's tax policies could encourage more automakers to shift production to the US, said Hildegard Mueller, president of the German Association of the Automotive Industry (VDA).

Mueller urged Germany and Europe to strengthen their independence and competitiveness.

She also cautioned that Trump's tariff policies could raise car prices in the US and hurt global automakers, leading to declining stock prices and worsening inflation.

"While Trump pledged to reduce inflation during his campaign, these tariffs could have the opposite effect, placing additional strain on the US economy and consumers," she added.

Moritz Schularick, president of the Kiel Institute for the World Economy, said that companies might relocate investments to the US to avoid tariffs, but this would lead to higher prices for US consumers and further inflationary pressure.

WASHINGTON

THE course of China-US relations will be watched closely now that US President Donald Trump is back in the White House, with the past week showing some grounds for optimism.

One issue that has drawn global attention is Trump's executive order to delay Congress' ban on TikTok, the popular social media plat-

Positive signs emerge for Sino-US relations

form owned by China's Byte-Dance.

In an executive order posted on the White House website on Monday, Trump said he had instructed the attorney general not to take any action to enforce the ban effective from Jan 19 for 75 days so that the new administration has ample time "to determine the appropriate course forward in an orderly

way that protects national security while avoiding an abrupt shutdown of a communications platform used by millions of Americans".

US Senator Rand Paul, a Kentucky Republican, and US Representative Ro Khanna, a California Democrat, went a step further on Monday. They introduced the bipartisan, bicameral "Repeal the TikTok Ban

Act".

The bill would annul the law requiring the sale of TikTok "as well as ensure that any existing designation has no force or effect".

In a news release on his Senate website, Paul wrote: "They tell you this is about China. About security. About safety. That's a lie. This is about control. About fear. About silencing you."

Xinhua

A glimpse into AI-enabled archaeology

ARCHAEOLOGY and artificial intelligence (AI) may seem like two different worlds, but they are coming together in a fascinating way.

Archaeologists dig through the dust to uncover the past, while AI has the computational power to process vast amounts of data. This powerful combination is revolutionizing archaeological research, as AI technologies, with deep learning at its core, are increasingly used to explore and understand human history.

Imagine having a "perspective eye" that can penetrate dense forests and unveil ancient ruins hidden underground - that's the wonder created by airborne laser scanning technology. Acting as the "X-ray" in archaeology, it can emit lasers from aircraft to scan the ground, even exposing ancient cities nestled deep within jungles with remarkable clarity.

This technology can produce an extensive amount of data, just like capturing an entire city in high-definition imagery. Archaeologists and AI experts leverage deep learning methods like convolutional neural networks to train AI "assistants" so that they can automatically identify ancient ruins from the airborne laser scanning data, significantly boosting the efficiency of archaeological discovery.

Take oracle bone fragments as an example. Chinese oracle bones are pieces of ox scapula or turtle plastron, which were used for divination during the late Shang



A researcher shows how oracle bone inscriptions are pieced together with the help of AI technology. (Photo from the Key Laboratory of China's Ministry of Education for Oracle Information Processing at Anyang Normal University.)

Dynasty (1600 BC-1046 BC). They bear the earliest significant corpus of ancient Chinese writing and contain important historical information about the Shang. Over 100,000 pieces of oracle bone have been found so far.

Recently, Chinese archaeologists and AI scientists have developed a novel "puzzle-solving tool" - a network model based on internal similarity, which can solve puzzles in three steps.

Finding edges - The model adopts the "edge equidistant matching" algorithm to carefully search along the edges of oracle bone fragments and identify shape-similar parts that might interlock, which is much like finding edge pieces in a jigsaw puzzle.

Piecing together - In the second

step, the model will piece together two fragment images to see if they can align perfectly.

Verifying patterns - This is the most critical step, which involves analyzing the consistency of textures at the joints. When there are inscriptions at the joints, it is also important to examine whether these inscriptions are properly aligned. If the two fragments were originally a whole, the texture at the joint should naturally continue.

The model employs a unique technique to accurately measure the similarity of these textures. Experimental results have shown that the model has an accuracy rate of over 90 percent. The magical "puzzle-solving tool" has already helped archaeologists

identify 37 pairs of oracle bone fragments that can be correctly assembled.

The Nasca lines in southern Peru, a UNESCO world heritage site, are enigmatic legacies left by ancient civilizations. These massive ground drawings, also known as geoglyphs stretching hundreds of meters, are difficult to discern from the ground and can only be fully appreciated from high above, posing a significant challenge to archaeologists. For years, researchers have relied on laborious manual searches and low-altitude flights for observation and photography, which was inefficient and may lead to missed details.

Over the past century, archaeologists have discovered 430 geoglyphs. Today, the AI-enabled archaeological research has contributed to the discovery efforts, with an additional 303 geoglyphs identified in just six months. The algorithm functions like an experienced "detective," analyzing high-resolution aerial photographs to outline the shapes of candidate pictures, which are then confirmed by archaeologists. This has greatly enhanced the discovery and research efficiency.

AI is rapidly transforming many fields of study at an unprecedented pace, driving scientific research into a new era. It is reshaping how we conduct scientific research, endowing us with greater insight and predictive power, and helping us better understand the past, navigate the present, and address future challenges. **People's Daily**



Boston Celtics forward Jayson Tatum (0) dunks against LA Clippers center Mo Bamba (4) during the second quarter at Intuit Dome in Inglewood, California, USA on Wednesday. Agencies

Celtics need overtime to slip past Clippers

By Field Level Media

JAYLEN Brown scored 25 points and Jayson Tatum added 24 as the visiting Boston Celtics pulled out a 117-113 overtime victory over the Los Angeles Clippers on Wednesday at Inglewood, Calif., on a night when key players were missing from both sides.

While the Celtics won without Jrue Holiday (shoulder), Al Horford (toe) and Kristaps Porzingis (illness), the Clippers were without four starters: Kawhi Leonard (rest), James Harden (groin), Norman Powell (back) and Ivica Zubac (eye). Nicolas Batum (finger) and Kris Dunn (knee) also were out for Los Angeles.

Derrick White delivered 20 points and Sam Hauser had 15 for Boston, which improved to 2-0 to begin a four-game road trip following a 3-4 stretch. The Celtics will remain in Los Angeles and face the Lakers on Thursday.

Derrick Jones Jr. produced 29 points and Kevin Porter Jr. added 26 for the Clippers, who lost their second consecutive game following a four-game winning streak. Leonard and Zubac did not play in either defeat.

Amir Coffey put up 24 points, Terance Mann had 11 and Kobe Brown grabbed 11 rebounds for the Clippers, who are 1-2 in a stretch of four games in five days that ends Thursday at home against the Washington Wizards.

The Clippers sent the game into overtime by scoring the last six points of regulation in the final minute. A basket by Mann and a dunk from Coffey preceded a steal and length-of-the-court drive and layup from Jones that tied the score 103-103 with 4.2 seconds remaining.

Boston scored the first six points of the extra period on 3-pointers from White and Tatum but didn't seal the victory until Neemias Queta sank a layup in the closing seconds.

Using a makeshift lineup that included Mo Bamba and Porter making their second starts of the season, the Clippers stayed competitive by speeding up their offense.

The Clippers led 34-33 after one quarter and trailed 60-59 at halftime. Los Angeles led by as many as five points in the third quarter and went into the final period with an 84-81 lead. Boston was unable to preserve a seven-point lead in the fourth quarter.

Los Angeles shot 52.2 percent for the game and 32.1 percent (9 of 28) from 3-point range, while Boston shot 45.6 percent and 38 percent (19 of 50), respectively.

REUTERS

Meanwhile, De'Aaron Fox saved eight of his 14 points for a game-ending flurry, DeMar DeRozan scored 32 points and the Sacramento Kings overcame a big deficit to beat the visiting Golden State Warriors 123-117 on Wednesday night.

Seeking to rebound from a 40-point home loss to Boston on Monday, the Warriors used a 41-point second quarter to build as much as an 18-point lead. Golden State was still up 113-109 after an Andrew Wiggins 3-pointer before Sacramento dominated the final 4:03.

While Golden State was missing six straight shots and going scoreless for more than three minutes, the Kings rattled off 10 consecutive points to take a lead that turned into the 10th win in their past 11 games.

The Kings got a 14-footer from DeRozan and two Fox free throws to draw even at 113-113 with 2:15 remaining, then two foul shots from Malik Monk and two free throws and a layup from Fox in the 10-point run that put the hosts up 119-113 with 1:07 left.

Stephen Curry, who had been scoreless in the second half, got Golden State within four on a 5-footer that ended Golden State's drought with 40.3 seconds left, but Monk connected from short range 15 seconds later and the Kings held on from there.

Domantas Sabonis had 26 points, going 8-for-8 at the foul line, as the Kings took advantage of a 32-13 disparity in foul-shot attempts to overcome a huge disadvantage in 3-point shooting.

Fox went 10-for-10 at the line, helping the Kings outscore the visitors 30-9 from the stripe.

Sabonis also found time for a game-high 18 rebounds while Monk compiled 20 points and a team-high nine assists. Keegan Murray made it five Kings in double figures with 13 points.

Wiggins logged a team-high 25 points for the Warriors, making five of his 11 3-point attempts. Buddy Hield added five threes on a 17-point night and Gui Santos made four threes among 16 points off the bench as Golden State shot 22-for-48 (45.8 percent) from deep.

The Kings went just 11-for-30 (36.7 percent) from beyond the arc.

Curry made just one 3-pointer on four attempts, finishing with 14 points to complement a game-high 12 assists.

Trayce Jackson-Davis chipped in with 11 points and a team-high eight rebounds for the Warriors, who fell to 0-2 against Sacramento this season. Moses Moody added 11 points.

Dodoma Jiji brace for gruelling February in Premier League

By Correspondent Nassir Nchimbi

FEW days after schedule adjustments were made, Dodoma Jiji's head coach, Mecky Mexime, has acknowledged that next month, when the Premier League returns, it will be very challenging due to the congested fixture schedule.

However, he made it clear that they will continue from where they left off after bouncing back from a 4-0 defeat to Young Africans with a win against Mashujaa.

Dodoma Jiji's last match before the league went on hiatus for the Mapinduzi Cup 2025 and the CHAN 2024 finals (postponed until August) saw them win 3-1 against Mashujaa at the Jamhuri Stadium on December 28.

They will now begin the final stretch of the season at home against Pamba Jiji on February 5, followed by two away games against Namungo FC and Simba SC, before returning home to face Tanzania Prisons.

Speaking ahead of the league's return, Mexime (pictured) said they have six tough matches within one month, as every team is fighting to avoid dropping points in this crucial final stretch of the season.

He therefore said he has a difficult task to ensure his team collects all possible points to keep them in the Premier League.

"February will be a very tough month, considering the players were on holiday. I am working to build their competitive spirit, including building their physical fitness," he stated.

"There is no easy game, whether at home or away. We need to prepare ourselves competitively and respect our opponents, regardless of our perceived superiority.

"I expect good progress, and



the players we have added to the squad will be a catalyst due to their experience."

Mexime said that the signings made for his team were in line with their needs, and he also expects to face new additions from his opponents.

Therefore, good preparation is what will bring good results and secure their place in the

league next season, emphasizing that every team has a chance depending on how well they play their cards.

Dodoma Jiji's six matches in February are against Pamba Jiji, then away against Namungo and Simba, followed by home matches against Tanzania Prisons and Fountain Gate, before finishing the month

away against Tabora United in a match that will be played on February 28 at Ali Hassan Mwinyi Stadium.

After 16 matches in the Premier League, Dodoma Jiji have accumulated 19 points with a record of five wins, four draws, and seven losses. They have scored 16 goals and conceded 21.

Zverev the next hurdle in Djokovic's Grand Slam record chase, Sinner meets Shelton

MELBOURNE

NOVAK Djokovic faces Alexander Zverev in the semi-finals of the Australian Open today with the Serb's bid for a record 25th Grand Slam title picking up steam at just the right time.

Djokovic (pictured), who is looking for an 11th title at Melbourne Park, showed all his battling qualities in an intense quarter-final win over Carlos Alcaraz and the 37-year-old faces another huge task to overcome second seed Zverev.

World number one Jannik Sinner will also be in action when he continues his title defence against American 21st seed Ben Shelton in the night session on Rod Laver Arena.

Djokovic and Zverev have met 12 times before, with the Serb winning on eight occasions including their latest encounter at the 2023 Cincinnati Open.

Zverev, who struggled to hit top form during two seasons disrupted by serious injury, looked back to his best last year, winning the Masters 1000 titles in Rome and Paris as well finishing runner-up at the French



Open.

The German knocked out American 12th seed Tommy Paul in the last round to reach a third Australian Open semi-final and he believes he has what it takes to get the better of Djokovic.

"I'm going to prepare myself for a very intense and high-level match," Zverev told reporters. "I know I have the level. Hopefully I can do that again (beat him)."

At 27, the second seed is still seeking his first

Grand Slam title and hopes to become the first German man to win the Australian Open since Boris Becker in 1996.

Djokovic, the last member of the 'Big Three' still standing following the retirements of Roger Federer and Rafa Nadal, appeared hampered by an injury early in his thrilling win over Alcaraz but hopes to be fighting fit to face Zverev.

"It is definitely going

to be challenging from every aspect I mean, I am playing Zverev, who is in a great form, and he is going for his first Grand Slam," Djokovic said.

"I think he loves the conditions. He's got big serve. He's super dangerous opponent on this surface against anyone. The extra day with no match comes at a good time. I will try to do as much as I possibly can with my recovery team..."

"But if I manage some-

how to ... be physically good enough, I think mentally, emotionally I'm as motivated as I can be."

Sinner easily dispensed with home favourite and eighth seed Alex de Minaur in the quarter-finals and looks to have shrugged off the medical issue that left him dizzy and shaking against Holger Rune in the last 16.

While Sinner is into his fifth Grand Slam semi-final, Shelton, who turned pro in 2022, is set to play just his second after reaching the last four at the 2023 U.S. Open.

Sinner holds a 4-1 head-to-head record against Shelton but the 23-year-old Italian remains cautious ahead of their clash.

"One of the biggest serves we have on tour," Sinner said. "He's a very aggressive player, an all-around player. He can go to the net. He can stay back."

"It's a difficult match for both of us. We know each other a little bit better now. We had some tough matches in the last year, so let's see what's coming."

REUTERS

Real a work in progress despite goals galore, says Ancelotti

MADRID

REAL Madrid manager Carlo Ancelotti was delighted with the form of his attackers after his side thrashed RB Salzburg 5-1 in the Champions League on Wednesday, but said that fixing his team's problems in defence was still a work in progress.

Ancelotti heaped praise on his forwards, with Brazilians Vinicius Jr and Rodrygo scoring twice either side of a goal by Kylian Mbappe as last year's winners secured a spot in the knockout stage.

"We have fulfilled our objective. Winning and trying to play a good game. A bit soft in the beginning, but then we fixed that and played really well," Ancelotti told Movistar Plus.

"Obviously, there is no doubt about the quality of our players up-front. We are trying to fix the rest. Because the efficiency we have up top is unbelievable. We have to fix the other issues we have at the back.

"Sometimes we do well and sometimes we do less well, but we're on a good run. I'm not angry about conceding a goal, we did well at the back today.

"(Antonio) Ruediger was very good today, (David) Alaba is finally back, (Raul) Asencio is good... It's a collective problem we have. That's the key this year. If we can have collective commitment we will be successful and we will be able to take full advantage of the quality we have up-front."

Ancelotti lamented the slow start Real made to their Champions League title defence, after they lost three of their first five matches, which left them facing a difficult task to secure a top-eight finish and earn direct qualification for the round of 16.

Real Madrid are 16th in the standings on 12 points and have secured qualification for at least the playoffs, but would need to win their last game at Brest and rely on other results going their way to finish in the top eight.

"You never know what could happen... Only one thing is clear: we have to win the last game and that's nothing new at this club. We have to win all the games if you are at Real Madrid," Ancelotti said.

REUTERS

Arsenal's Rice gives new Champions League format thumbs up

LONDON

THE mathematics was still causing a few heads to be scratched after Arsenal's 3-0 victory over Dinamo Zagreb on Wednesday, but Declan Rice gave the new Champions League format a thumbs up.

"It's been really, really good. It's the first time trying it out and I think everyone was a little bit confused how it would work when it first got announced, but playing in this format has been really interesting," the midfielder said.

"Playing big teams, coming up against different opposition, I've really liked it."

Rice scored the opener as Arsenal made it a virtual mathematical certainty that they will finish in the top eight of the 36-team group stage which this season replaced the established format of eight groups of four.

They are in third place with 16 points and in reality can already start planning for the knockout phase, even if manager Mikel Arteta could not bring himself to say it.

"We haven't been told. I know we're in a really strong position," the Spaniard said after Arsenal extended their unbeaten home run in Europe to 15 games.

Kai Havertz took his season's tally to 14 with Arsenal's second goal and Martin Odegaard poached his first goal since November in stoppage time to wrap up a comfortable win.

"Overall, we got the job done and well done. We didn't concede a shot on target which is really positive again. It shows that the team is really well-rounded," Arteta said.

"Overall, scoring three goals, winning in the Champions League at home, another clean sheet at home -- four in a row -- and having made some changes as well.

"We rotated players that didn't play that many minutes and they responded really well."

Avoiding a Champions League playoff will also guarantee the Arsenal squad some winter sunshine as Arteta said a break is now likely to recharge batteries seeing as they are already out of the FA Cup which continues on Feb. 7-11.

"It was very helpful (last season) and with the schedule that we've had for the last three months, you can have a break, reset a little bit and work on things and rest some people, while some people are back, that would be great," he said.

REUTERS

Real Madrid first club to generate 1 billion euros revenue in a season, Deloitte says

LONDON

REAL Madrid became the first soccer team to register one billion euros (\$1.04 billion) in revenue in a single season in 2023-24, with the Spanish side topping the Deloitte Football Money League as the world's highest revenue-generating club once again.

Real Madrid had overtaken Manchester City to return to the summit after they generated total revenue of 831 million euros in the 2022-23 season.

Three trophies in the 2023-24 campaign -- including LaLiga and the Champions League -- plus increased matchday revenue following the completion of renovation works at the Bernabeu Stadium ensured they stayed top of the list.

Deloitte said Real's matchday revenue doubled to 248 million euros while a new sleeve sponsorship and increased merchandise sales produced commercial revenue of 482 million euros -- a 19% increase.

The report also said that the top 20 revenue generating clubs in the world made a record 11.2 billion euros in the 2023-24 season thanks to record matchday, broadcast and commercial revenues.

Paris St Germain (806 million euros), Manchester United (771 million) and Bayern Munich (765 million) round out the top five.



General view inside the Santiago Bernabeu stadium before the LaLiga match Real Madrid v Girona in Madrid, Spain on February 10, 2024. REUTERS

Real's revenue dwarfs that of even City, who remain in second place in the Money League with 838 million euros in revenue.

Although City beat their own revenue record and remain the highest revenue-generating club in the lucrative English Premier League, the gap between first and second (208 million euros) has never been bigger.

Paris St Germain (806 million euros), Manchester United (771 million) and Bayern Munich (765 million) round out the top five.

EUROPEAN SOCCER

The need for European soccer was highlighted by Juventus' fall from 11th to 16th after

the Serie A side were excluded from European competition in 2023-24 over breaches of UEFA's Club Licensing and Financial Fair Play rules. On the other hand, clubs like Arsenal (717 million euros), Borussia Dortmund (514 million), Newcastle United (372 million) and Aston Villa (310 million) grew revenues by playing in various European competitions.

"While commercial revenue dominates the income of the top 10 Money League clubs, broadcast income remains crucial for teams in the second half of the rankings," Tim Bridge, lead partner in the Deloitte Sports Business Group, said.

"As competitions expand and create more broadcast and

matchday opportunities, these can further increase the earning potential for clubs."

Thanks to their commercial revenue streams, Liverpool (715 million euros), Tottenham Hotspur (615 million) and Chelsea (546 million) still managed to stay in the top 10 despite reduced broadcast income after missing out on the Champions League.

Barcelona also saw a 63 million euros fall in matchday revenue after they were forced to play at the smaller Estadi Olimpic Lluis Companys while the Camp Nou was being redeveloped.

But the Spanish club remain top of the list of women's sides for a third straight year with

17.9 million euros in revenue, a 26% increase from the 2022-23 season.

Arsenal Women (17.9 million euros) are second, followed by Chelsea (13.4 million), Manchester United (10.7 million) and Real Madrid (10.5 million).

The world's highest revenue-generating clubs:

- 1: Real Madrid - 1,045.5
- 2: Manchester City - 837.8
- 3: Paris St Germain - 805.9
- 4: Manchester United - 770.6
- 5: Bayern Munich - 765.4
- 6: Barcelona - 760.3
- 7: Arsenal - 716.5
- 8: Liverpool - 714.7
- 9: Tottenham Hotspur - 615.0
- 10: Chelsea - 545.5 (\$1 = 0.9654 euros)

REUTERS

Guardiola accepts PSG were better after Man City's collapse

PARIS

MANCHESTER City boss Pep Guardiola appeared resigned to the fact that his side were resoundingly outplayed by Paris St Germain in a 4-2 loss that leaves their Champions League knockout hopes in doubt -- a prospect that would have seemed unthinkable in recent campaigns.

Guardiola's men squandered a two-goal lead on Wednesday as PSG struck four times in the second half. The result dropped City to 25th in the standings, one spot outside the playoff qualifying positions.

They now need to win when they host Club Brugge in a nerve-jangling finale of the league phase on Jan. 29.

"We had our moments and they had their moments, but they were better," he told TNT Sports. "They were quicker, faster, they won the duels, we could not cope. They were fast. The best team won. The game was never like we wanted.

"To play you have to play. To defend the result you have to keep the ball -- we didn't have it. They had it more, they attacked better, that's why it was more difficult."

The loss was reminiscent of City's shocking collapse against Feyenoord in November, when they surrendered a three-goal lead late in the game to draw 3-3.

When asked about the possibility of City --



Manchester City's Ederson makes a save from Paris St Germain's Goncalo Ramos during their Champions League match at Parc des Princes, in Paris, France on Wednesday. REUTERS

Champions League victors in 2023 -- not going through, Guardiola said: "It could happen. We will see.

"If we don't win (v Brugge) we don't deserve it. All the away games we have are difficult, but it's the reality. We didn't get enough points."

Former Manchester United defender turned pundit Rio Ferdinand said it would be an embarrassment for the Premier League titans to fail to advance.

"I think Manchester City, with all the success they've had in recent years, have put them into a position where people expect them to get minimum into the knockout stages," Ferdinand said on the TNT broadcast.

"I think (City) will take it as an embarrassment, because they see themselves as a team that should get into the latter stages and they've demanded that of their team for the last few years."

Guardiola, who spent much of the match wildly waving his arms in frustration, said the game was lost in the midfield, where his squad is sorely missing Ballon d'Or winner Rodri to a season-ending knee injury.

"In football, everything happens in the middle," he said. "We have a last chance at home, we'll do everything there."

A thrilled PSG manager Luis Enrique, Guardiola's good friend and former teammate at Barcelona, said the result was a huge boost to his team.

"Take the ball to one of the best teams in the world was our objective and we achieved it," he told reporters. "That was our idea, to be dangerous, to attack the spaces when they opened up and I think we got what

we wanted.

"If we can do that at Manchester City, we can do it against a lot of teams."

Meanwhile, AC Milan coach Sergio Conceicao was pleased with his side's performance after they defeated Girona 1-0 in the Champions League on Wednesday, thanks to a stunning first-half strike from Rafael Leao.

Conceicao praised the efforts of his players, but stressed the need for continued hard work.

"Seeing the classification, the work of the boys is rewarded. It's not over yet, we have to keep working hard. There are things that are going well and others to improve," Conceicao told Prime Video.

The coach was pleased with Milan's dominance and ability to create chances, praising the team's spirit and Leao's contributions.

"We won and built chances to score goals.

I think we were superior as a team, although in the second half there was a bit of fear in conceding."

"This is the Milan I want in terms of spirit. Leao scored and is working day after day: the team must work together, act in the same way," he added.

Midfielder Yunus Musah said the team's confidence had been boosted by their victory over Inter Milan in the Italian Super Cup final earlier this month.

"(Conceicao) is different. We adapted to him immediately. The victory in the Super Cup made us realise that we can do something great," the player said.

Milan, the seven-times European champions who last lifted the trophy in 2007, are sixth on 15 points, with the top eight automatically qualifying for the Round of 16.

REUTERS

Gwiji by David Chikoko



SPORT

Real Madrid first club to generate 1 billion euros revenue in a season, Deloitte says

PAGE 19

Simba prepare for busy February, eye key clash with Tabora United

for their upcoming FA Cup fixture, as well as their Premier League match against Tabora United, scheduled for February 2 at the Ali Hassan Mwinyi Stadium in Tabora.

Before the league encounter, Simba will face TRA Kilimanjaro FC on Sunday in the second round of the Federation Cup. Following that, they will travel to Tabora for their Premier League clash.

Simba's Media and Communications Manager, Ahmed Ally (pictured), emphasized the team's focus and commitment to the February 2 match against Tabora United, highlighting its significance in their pursuit of the league title.

"Our focus is on the Tabora United match. We are taking it very seriously and will approach it with full



caution," Ally stated.

He noted the challenges posed by Tabora United, acknowledging their ability to perform well against tough opponents.

"Facing Tabora United will not be an easy task. However, we are determined to secure positive results. I may not be fully aware of their current form, but I know they can thrive in challenging matches. For

that reason, we must remain vigilant to avoid giving them any chance of success against us," Ally added.

Tabora United have proven to be a formidable opponent in the league this season, delivering impressive results against top teams.

On November 7, they secured a 3-1 victory over defending champions Young Africans (Yanga SC). Later, on November 25, they held Singida Black Stars to a thrilling 2-2 draw before defeating Azam FC 2-1 on December 13, 2024.

Acknowledging Tabora United's recent performances, Ally stressed that Simba cannot afford to drop any points at this stage of the league.

"Where we are in the league right now, even dropping a single point can allow our rivals to catch up

or overtake us. Therefore, we must win against Tabora United. This is one of the most challenging matches we have this February," he emphasized.

Simba's determination to maintain their position in the title race is evident as they juggle multiple competitions, including the FA Cup and CAF Confederation Cup.

With their sights set on continuing their dominant form, the squad will aim to build on their recent successes while remaining cautious against any potential upsets.

The February 2 clash against Tabora United will be a test of Simba's resolve and consistency as they push to secure crucial points in their quest for the Premier League title.

By Correspondent Seth Mapoli

AFTER achieving their goal of leading Group A in the CAF Confederation Cup, Simba SC head coach Fadlu Davids granted his players a four-day break for recovery. The squad resumed training yesterday in preparation

Aga Khan SC notches thumping victory over Patel Brotherhood A

By Correspondent Japheth Kazenga

AGA Khan SC showcased a dominant performance to bounce back from recent inconsistent outings in domestic competitions, garnering a resounding 10-wicket victory over Patel Brotherhood A in a 2024 Tanzania Cricket Association (TCA) DC Super League tie in Dar es Salaam early this week.

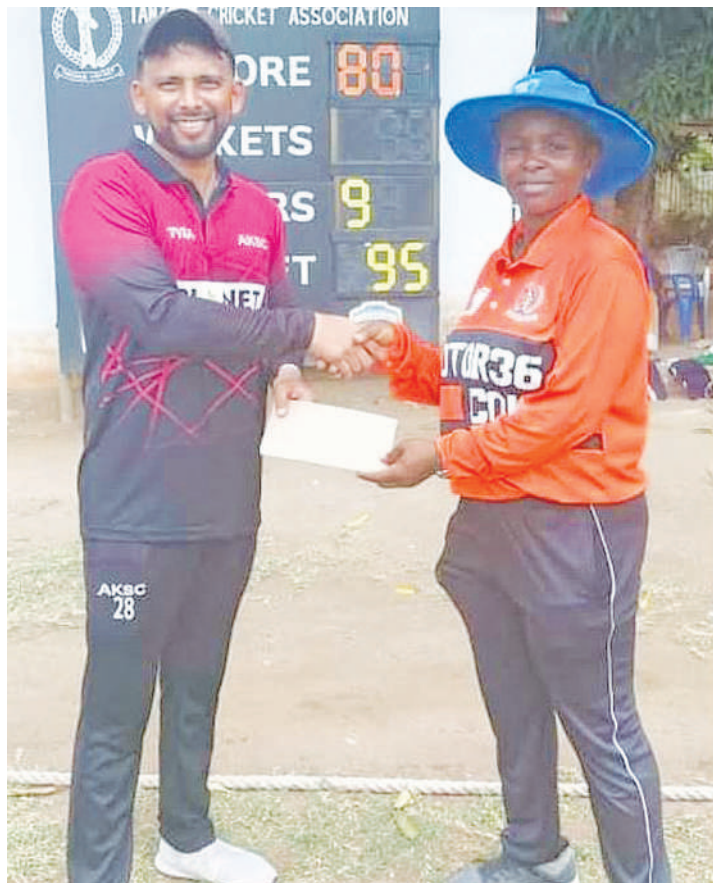
In the Group A encounter held at Leaders Club venue, the Vishal Patel-led Patel Brotherhood A were skittled for 94 runs after garnering the opportunity to bat first.

In what was arguably a less impressive performance with the bat, captain Patel and promising cricketer Acrey Pascal were by far the performers who fought to prove their worth for the club.

The opener, Pascal, scored 18 runs, helping Patel Brotherhood A reach 24-2 once the promising batsman was dismissed after four overs.

Pascal hammered four boundaries in his time with the bat, whereas his fellow opening batsman, Harsh Khidkikar, exited the crease much earlier with two runs to his name.

Early exits of youthful batsmen had Patel Brotherhood A struggling to amass runs,



Aga Khan SC's Abhik Patwa (L) gets the Player of the Match prize from match umpire Monica Iddi after the club's 2024 Tanzania Cricket Association (TCA) DC Super League clash against Patel Brotherhood A in Dar es Salaam recently. PHOTO: COURTESY OF TANZANIA CRICKET ASSOCIATION

and it was down to seasoned cricketer Patel to help steady the ship.

Patel took the crease and his experience witnessed Patel Brotherhood A reach 94-9 once the cricketer was dismissed in the 33rd over.

Patel Brotherhood A's remaining performers could hardly find a better way to foil the opponents' bowling unit onslaught, leaving the crease in quick succession.

Trushant Patel made his way back with the bat in

hand, posting unbeaten four runs, which though hardly helped his team improve the total.

Patel Brotherhood A were, to some extent, buoyed by 10 extras conceded by their opponents.

Talented, youthful performer Laksh Snehal led Aga Khan SC's bowling attack and successfully prevented Patel Brotherhood A from setting up a challenging target.

Snehal solidly ended his turn with the ball, having taken 3-21 and posted a 2.38 economy rate.

Sivaraj Selvaraj was equally merciless, notching 3-20 in nine overs.

There were further impressive figures notched by team captain Harsheed Chohan, as the cricketer posted 2-20 in five overs.

Needing a mere 95 runs from 50 overs to garner a victory, Aga Khan SC got down to a successful chase with ease, having not lost a wicket in 10 overs.

Openers Abhik Patwa and Dhruvit Mehta forged a scintillating opening-wicket partnership to successfully guide the club to the thumping win.

Patwa, who looked to have slowly rediscovered his batting prowess, hammered 68 runs not out to end as the

batsman with the most runs.

The youthful Mehta was equally impressive, ruthlessly hitting balls and ending with 23 runs not out.

It turned out to be a morale-boosting victory for Aga Khan SC, considering the team has been enduring inconsistent outcomes.

The club opened its campaign in the showdown gallantly, commanding a 10-wicket thrashing of Dar Indian Titans early this month.

Aga Khan SC's second game, unfortunately, concluded with the outfit suffering a three-wicket loss to Delaware Upanga SC- A.

Hosting the showdown is a continuation of TCA's efforts to develop the sport domestically.

The league, a TCA officer stated, features the top cricket teams in Tanzania, put into two groups.

Group A teams are Aga Khan SC, Delaware Upanga SC- A, Patel Brotherhood A, Dar Indian Titans, and Pak Stars A.

Caravans, Strikers, Aces A, Gymkhana, and Lions A have been placed in Group B.

The showdown began on January 4, 2025, marking an exciting start to Tanzania's premier cricket competition.

TONIGHT @ 9:00

EATV MONDAY

11:00 DADAZ
12:00 KIPENGA XTRA
13:00 Zote Kuntu
13:30 Kall Za Wana
13:55 Dondoo Za Michzo
14:00 SKONGA (r)
14:30 Planet Bongo (r)
15:00 Funguka
15:30 Akili & Me
15:55 Dondoo Za Michzo
16:00 Zote Kuntu
16:55 Dondoo Za Michzo
17:00 SSELEKT
17:55 Kurasa
18:00 Kall Za Wana
18:30 #HASHTAG
19:00 EATV SAA 1
20:00 DADAZ (r)
21:00 SPORTS
22:00 Zote Kuntu
23:00 Kurasa
23:05 EATV SAA1 (r)

88.1FM DAR ES SALAAM

05:00 Supa Breakfast
09:00 MAMAMIA
12:00 Kipenga Xtra
13:00 Planet Bongo
16:00 EA Drive
19:00 Kipenga
21:00 The Cruise

KenGold's new coach Heric optimistic ahead of Yanga clash

By Correspondent Nassir Nchimbi

KENGOLD's new head coach, Vladislav Heric, has hit the ground running as he prepares the team for their Premier League clash against defending champions Young Africans (Yanga) on February 1 at KMC Complex.

Appointed last Sunday, the Serbian tactician began training with the players on Monday, focusing on building cohesion, improving physical fitness, and capitalizing on scoring opportunities.

These priorities reflect Heric's mission to revitalize KenGold and steer the team clear of relegation, as they currently sit last in the league standings.

Heric, who brings extensive coaching experience from South Africa, has implemented a rigorous training schedule with morning and evening sessions.

He is also rebuilding the squad to integrate the newly signed players from the recent transfer window. Among the technical staff is former Simba and Mwadui player Uhuru Seleman, now serving as the fitness coach.

However, Bernard Morison, one of the recent signings, was notably absent from training due to injury.

Speaking after the sessions, Heric expressed optimism despite the challenges.

"My focus is on creating cohesion across all areas - attack, defense, and the team as a whole. Although it's early days, I see great potential in the players' efforts and their ability to create and convert chances," he said.

He assured fans of progress, urging patience. "With the time we have before the next match, we'll be ready. Fans should remain calm; good results will come."

Team captain Mishamo Daud echoed the coach's sentiments, emphasizing that the squad's morale has been rejuvenated by the new management and signings.

"The technical bench and management have identified our past mistakes and are addressing them. The arrival of the new coach and fresh players has brought renewed energy and determination to the team," Daud stated.

He urged his teammates to stay motivated, stressing the importance of ensuring KenGold retain their Premier League status.

KenGold, participating in the Premier League for the first time this season, have struggled to adapt, collecting just six points from 16 matches.

As the team gears up for the second half of the season, they hope Heric's strategies and leadership will spark a much-needed turnaround.

Morocco ready to set bar high as host for 2025 African Cup of Nations

RABAT

THE Confederation of African Football (CAF) has expressed its full trust in Morocco's ability to host the Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON) in 2025.

In a statement made on Tuesday, the organization pointed to Morocco's strong track record in hosting some of the continent's major football events.

CAF said Morocco was not a surprise choice as host, referring to their past hosting of the 2018 African Nations Championship, the 2022 Women's Africa Cup of Nations, and the 2023 FIFA Club World Cup.

Morocco hosted its first AFCON in 1988, a tournament in which only eight countries participated.

With 24 nations participating in 2025, the event reflects the strides African football has

made over three decades.

Morocco will have several world-class facilities to host the tournament. The soon-to-be-announced official venues may include the Mohammed V Sports Complex in Casablanca, the Prince Moulay Abdellah Complex in Rabat, and major stadiums in Tangier, Agadir, Marrakech, and Fez.

Many of these venues are being renovated to meet and exceed competition standards.

CAF commends Morocco's modern infrastructure, enthusiastic football fans, and proven experience in hosting major sporting events. This is what CAF believes will make Morocco a good candidate for organizing an AFCON that sets a new standard.

The competition is to be held from December 21, 2025 to January 18, 2026. The tournament's group stage draw is scheduled for next Monday

at 7 p.m. at Mohammed V Theatre.

Morocco, as the host nation, qualified automatically, while 23 other teams earned their places through qualifying rounds held between September and November 2024.

The lineup includes strong teams such as Côte d'Ivoire, Senegal, Nigeria, Egypt, and Algeria. Other nations, like Ghana and Guinea, failed to qualify.

Flexibles by David Chikoko

