



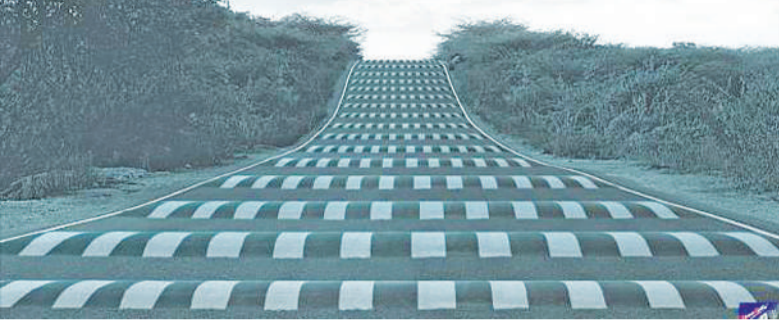
National Pg 2

Police revoke 64 bus drivers' licences over irregularities



National Pg 3

27 arrested as new wave of protests erupts in Kilosa



NEW **The Guardian**

SERIES

ADDICTION: KILLER MONSTER

PAGE 8 EVERY WEDNESDAY



Dr Rogers Sempinduna (R), a Muhimbili National Hospital ophthalmologist (eye care specialist), pictured on Monday performing cataract surgery at St. Joseph's Mission Hospital Peramiho on one of several people lined up for the operation. It was at an ongoing four-day medical camp organised jointly by the hospital and the Songea District Council. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

TRA and Dar archdiocese agree on tax compliance

TRA is committed to helping taxpayers meet their obligations without compulsion

By Guardian Reporter

THE Tanzania Revenue Authority (TRA) has commended Catholic Church institutions as significant contributors to tax collection.

Yusuph Mwenda, the TRA commissioner general, paid this homage when visiting Dar es Salaam Archbishop Yuda Thaddeus Ruwa'ichi, a courtesy call as December is a month dedicated to thanking taxpayers.

He praised the role of the church in revenue collection, citing education and health sector institutions, even as they at times benefit from tax exemptions as specified under extant regulations.

He described the archbishop as a strong advocate for tax compliance, acknowledging the good working relations between TRA and church institutions.

The revenue czar expressed optimism on church support in the coming year to help TRA further promote tax compliance, beef-

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Police, protestors in running battles amid anti-abduction protests

NAIROBI

POLICE in the Kenyan capital engaged protestors in running battles for most of the day on Monday following protests calling for an end to the abductions of people critical of President William Ruto's administration.

Protesters demanding an end to abductions occupied Aga Khan Walk, staging a sit-in as they call for the release of abducted youths.

Among those reported as missing are Bill Mwangi, Peter Muteti Njeru, Bernard Kavuli, Gideon Kibet (also known as Kibet Bull), and his brother Ronny Kiplagat.

The seven missing individuals were allegedly taken by unidentified persons.

Busia Senator Okiya Omtatah joined the protesters, contained along the stretch by a contingent of anti-riot police monitoring the situation in the Central Business District for most of the day.

Activists staged similar protests in Mombasa, where demonstrators called for urgent action to address the rising cases of forced disappearances.

Organisers in Mombasa however called off the protest after dialogue with police who persuaded them that no abductions have occurred in the coastal city.

Earlier, Omtatah filed a petition in the

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INEC gives seven days for four regions' voter updates

By Guardian Reporter

UPDATING the permanent voter register in Ruvuma, Njombe, Songwe and Rukwa regions will take place across seven days, from January 12 to 18. Justice Jacobs Mwambegele, the chairman of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), was quoted in an INEC statement setting out the schedule for the register update.

The schedule was presented at meetings with election stakeholders for the regions held yesterday, where commission members said it was the ninth round of electoral register updates.

The commission has already completed



There will be 3,785 registration centres, an increase of 233 from the 3,552 that were in place in 2020

updates in 19 regions, completing eight rounds out of the 13 planned for the nationwide exercise.

INEC officials were in Songwe, while their colleagues held meetings in Njombe, Rukwa and Ruvuma regions to finalise preparations for updating the register in those regions.

Filing in voter information will take place in all districts, with registration centres opening eight in the morning and closing at six in the evening each day, the statement indicated.

Kigoma, Tabora, Katavi, Geita, Kagera, Mwanza, Shinyanga, Mara, Simiyu, Man- yara, Dodoma and Singida regions have

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Minister halts Zila river bank mining

The residents' request was focused on the preservation of the Zila River environment as a vital water source for the district

By Guardian Reporter, Chunya

GOLD mining activities along Zila River have been suspended until environmental experts confirm whether the activities are safe for water users relying on that river in Chunya District, Mbeya Region.

Anthony Mavunde, the Minerals minister, issued this order lately, halting operations conducted by G & I Tech Mining Co. applicable during the ongoing rainy season.

Earlier, the minister visited the mining license area around Ifumbo Village, encroached upon by local residents thus leading to a conflict. This resulted in the destruction of the company's property, he said in his remarks.

Having visited the village and the mining site and taking note of the actual environmental situation, the minister demanded time to look at the situation to see how economic activities, including mining, are

carried out peacefully without causing conflicts.

Such activities should not cause harm to the environment within its location, he stated, affirming that he had listened to the concerns of the residents regarding the environmental damage.

The government would form a team of experts to conduct a comprehensive environmental assessment on the potential impacts of the mining activities, he said.

All mining activities should be halted during the rainy season, as directed by the National Environment Management Council (NEMC), he specified.

The regional environmental unit, local authorities and the community were consulting to form a joint team to conduct an evaluation of the situation.

The team is expected to provide an assessment on whether mining activities could be pursued in ways that do not cause harm to the Zila River environment, he said.

"I would like to take this opportunity to urge all residents to refrain from acts of vio-

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SPORTS

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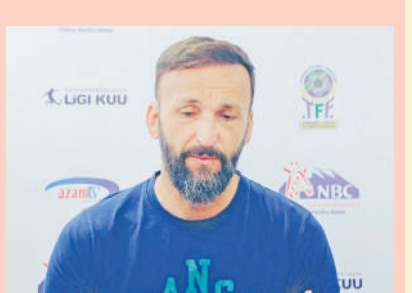
Ahmed Ally confident as Simba head to Tunisia for CAF Confederation Cup clash

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Amorim says Manchester United could be in relegation battle

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Ramovic's early days at Yanga: A promising start amid high expectations



TRA and Dar archdiocese agree on tax compliance

FROM PAGE 1

ing up his remarks by pointing at the huge public needs for appropriate revenue collection.

Observers noted that this visit comes 15 years after differences surfaced between then Finance minister Mustafa Mkulo and some professional organisations linked with the church during the mid-2008 budget session of the legislature.

The minister had raised caution in remarks during parliamentary debate, objecting to tax evasion by importing luxury vehicles using parishes, to benefit from tax exemption.

“Paying taxes for the country’s benefit is a matter of faith, as the taxes collected are directed towards national development activities, including education, healthcare and infrastructure,” the CEO declared, underlining that TRA holds religious institutions in high regard, “as behind you are many people.”

TRA thus expects to work with the church to “ensure taxes are collected fairly and no one is exploit-

ed. Our goal is to maintain a level playing field in the market,” he explained.

TRA is committed to helping taxpayers meet their obligations without compulsion, he said, while the archbishop vowed to enhance collaboration with the tax authorities to encourage tax compliance.

He was affirmative on the critical role taxes play in the country’s development, acknowledging that paying and collecting taxes is crucial for national development and constitutes a civic duty.

He also expressed satisfaction with the current tax collection system and the strong relationship between the TRA and the public.

He said that TRA was doing excellent work and church leaders would seek to encourage people to recognise, value their responsibility to pay taxes for collective needs.

He agreed with the TRA CEO that there should be no discrimination in tax collection, where all citizens are treated equally, seeing it as a viable focus in moving forward.

INEC gives seven days for four regions’ voter updates

FROM PAGE 1

completed the update exercises, it said.

The process has also been completed in all Zanzibar regions as well as Arusha and Kilimanjaro, while Mbeya and Iringa regions are slated to complete the updating early this month, it elaborated.

Kailima Ramadhani, the director of elections, said in remarks attributed to him in the meetings that a total of 475,743 new voters are expected to be registered.

Upon completion of update exercises, regions now completing the exercise are expected to have 3,091,485 registered voters, from 2,615,742 registered for polls 2020.

“This number may increase, as there may be Tanzanians who were eligible to register as voters during the 2019/20 update but were unable to do so for various reasons,” the presentation indicated.

There will be 3,785 registration centres, an increase of 233 centres from the 3,552 centres that were in place in 2020, it added.

Minister halts Zila river bank mining

FROM PAGE 1

lence and taking the law into their own hands,” he said, objecting to invading and destroying the investor’s property.

Mbarak Batenga, the district commissioner, had earlier expressed satisfaction for the minister’s visit, in expectation that it would provide a lasting solution to the conflict between the investor and the village residents.

The district authorities would see to it that the directive is complied with, to ensure the safety of

the area at all times, he said, while .Chunya MP Masache Kasaka hailed the government for addressing the challenges.

The residents’ request was focused on the preservation of the Zila River environment as a vital water source for the district, he stated.

Juma Homera, the regional commissioner, appreciated the minister’s efforts to sort out the problem in the area, pledging to oversee the implementation of the directive, thus mining activities near the banks of the river would remain suspended during the rainy season.

Police, protestors in running battles amidst processions over abductions

FROM PAGE 1

High Court seeking to compel the Inspector General of Police, Douglas Kanja; the Directorate of Criminal Investigations (DCI) boss, Mohamed Amin; as well as the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP), Renson Ingonga, to produce the seven missing individuals before the court.

He sought an order of habeas corpus directing the Respondents to produce the bodies of Gideon Kibet, Ronny Kiplagat, Steve Kavingo Mbisi, Billy Mwangi, Peter Muteti, Bernard Kavuli, and Kelvin Muthoni in the petition filed at Kibera High Court.

Further, Omtatah asked the court to compel security agencies to produce any warrant or order for detention. He demanded: “That the said Gideon Kibet, Ronny Kiplagat, Steve Kavingo Mbisi, Billy Mwangi, Peter Muteti, Bernard Kavuli, and Kelvin Muthoni be forthwith released and set at liberty.”

Meanwhile, pressure continued to mount on the government to provide more clarity on the abductions, with Chief Justice Emeritus David Maraga, adding his voice on calls for an end to the abductions.

Maraga called on the state to uphold the sanctity of life and the dignity of every citizen.

Meanwhile, the ministry of health has called for continued vigilance

following the confirmation of two additional mpox cases.

The two cases, reported in Mombasa and Nakuru counties, bring the total number of cases in the country to 31 since the outbreak began.

The Ministry noted that the new cases are part of a broader trend affecting twelve counties nationwide.

Nakuru with ten cases, Mombasa with eight, and Nairobi with two so far account for most of the cases.

As a result, public health efforts are focused on these hotspot areas to contain the spread of the disease.

To date, the Ministry has identified 217 contacts of confirmed Mpox cases, with 204 individuals being monitored for twenty-one days from their date of exposure.

Among the 217 contacts, 9 have tested positive for Mpox.

The government has also been actively screening travelers at Points of Entry, with over 2.6 million individuals screened. Cumulatively, 351 samples have been tested at the National Public Health Laboratory and partner laboratories, yielding a positivity rate of 8.8 per cent.

In response to the increasing case load, the Ministry has deployed a multidisciplinary rapid response team to hotspot areas to conduct case searches, contact tracing, investigations, and management of confirmed cases.



Zanzibar’s Second Vice President, Hemed Suleiman Abdulla (L), is briefed when gracing the laying of the foundation stone for Kiuyu Minungwini Health Centre in the North Pemba Region yesterday. It was all part of the countdown to the marking of the 61st anniversary of the January 12 Zanzibar Revolution. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

Moshi police revoke 64 bus licences over irregularities

By Guardian Reporter, Moshi

A TOTAL of 64 bus drivers operating both big and small passenger buses in Kilimanjaro Region have had their licences revoked due to offences including speeding, causing accidents, driving under the influence of alcohol, and reckless overtaking.

Kilimanjaro Regional Police Commander, Assistant Commissioner of Police (SACP) Simon Maigwa unveiled this here yesterday when speaking to journalists on traffic accidents which occurred this year in the region.

According to him, the group most affected by the licence revocation were the drivers involved in accidents, with 32 licences revoked.

Maigwa explained that another significant factor contributing to

licence being revocation between January and December 2024 was speeding, with 22 drivers having their licences revoked for the offence.

Three drivers had their licences revoked for driving under the influence of alcohol, while seven others had their licences revoked for reckless overtaking.

Regarding cases of gender-based violence between January and December 2024, Commander Maigwa had reported 42 cases of rape.

There were also 18 reported cases of sodomy, as well as four cases of impregnating schoolgirls and four cases of child abuse, bringing the total number of incidents to 68.

In connection with the gender-based violence cases, all of the accused have been sentenced to either life imprisonment or 30 years in jail.

RPC’s report came barely few days when ten people died in a head-on collision between a Noah van and a passenger bus at Kibaoni village, Rombo District, Kilimanjaro Region, which was due to reckless driving, trying to overtake another vehicle without caution.

In December alone, three fatal accidents in Mikese (Morogoro), Handeni (Tanga Region), and Rombo (Kilimanjaro Region) resulted in loss of lives.

A collision between a lorry and a minibus on the Morogoro-Dar es Salaam highway killed 14 and injured eight.

Two crashes in Handeni District claimed 19 lives, and another accident in Rombo on December 26 left nine dead.

The tragedies not only inflict emotional damage on families but also rob the country of essential

human resources vital for development.

Following series of traffic accidents, road safety advocate Msangi Ramadhan once blamed gaps in Tanzania’s Road Traffic Act, particularly the insufficient 30,000/- fines, which he said fail to deter offenders.

“Stricter penalties, such as lifetime driving bans for repeat offenders, are necessary,” he stressed.

Ramadhan also pointed to the unsatisfactory alcohol-testing tools and urged the police to increase their presence, especially during holidays in high-risk areas.

“Thorough vehicle inspections are crucial for ensuring roadworthiness,” he added, also proposing the provision of weather and breakdown updates to travellers to help reduce accidents.



Motorists pictured yesterday steering clear of stones placed along a Magubike section (Kilosa District) of the Morogoro-Dodoma highway by irate residents of the area demanding the installation of speed bumps. That was after a young man died at the spot on Monday after being hit by car. Photo: Correspondent Idda Mushi

WHO seeks more funding for mpox response in Uganda

KAMPALA

THE World Health Organisation (WHO) said Monday it is facing a critical funding gap of 11.1 million US dollars to scale up the mpox response in Uganda where over 1,000 confirmed cases and six deaths have been registered.

Out of the 12.9 million dollars of the total budget required to support the mpox outbreak response in the east

African country, only 1.8 million US dollars has been secured, said WHO in an intervention report issued in Kampala, the capital of Uganda.

More funds are needed to bridge the funding gap given the high utilisation rate of available funds and needs on the ground, the WHO noted, calling on all partners to “urgently support the government of Uganda through increasing their financial contributions towards the

mpox response.”

In August, the WHO declared mpox a public health emergency of international concern, highlighting its potential for further global transmission.

The Ugandan Ministry of Health, with support from WHO and other partners, has intensified preventive measures, including enhanced surveillance, case management, risk communication and community

engagement, and public awareness campaigns to curb the spread of the virus, according to health authorities.

Mpox is an illness caused by the monkeypox virus. It is a viral infection that can spread between people, mainly through close contact. Common symptoms of mpox include a rash, fever, headache, muscle aches, back pain, low energy and swollen glands (lymph nodes).

Govt: Allot disaster management budget

By Guardian Correspondent, Same

DEPUTY Minister in the Prime Minister's Office- Policy, Parliamentary Affairs and Coordination Umy Nderiananga, has directed the Same District Council in Kilimanjaro Region to allocate the budget for disaster management.

Nderiananga issued the directive on Monday during her visit to Same District, where she also distributed food items to victims of the floods caused by heavy rains that pounded on December 23, 2024.

The rains severely affected various wards, including Bombo, Msindo, Mti, Maore and Vuje. The disaster resulted in six deaths, extensive damage to crops and homes. Roads and other infrastructure were also damaged.

While delivering the food supplies, which included 3.2 tonnes of maize, 25 buckets, 25 jerrycans, cups and spoons, deputy minister Nderiananga stressed the importance of planning ahead for future disasters.

She explained that allocating specific budget for disaster response would enable the district responding swiftly to any emergencies and reduce the suffering of affected communities while they await further assistance from the central government.

She also called on the district administration to identify all high-risk areas that are prone to recurring disasters and to educate local communities on the need to relocate from these hazardous areas to prevent future loss of life and properties.

"In areas that have been repeatedly affected by disasters, it is important that the local authorities identify them and begin educating people to move away from the often hit danger zones," she added.

The deputy minister instructed the district to prepare plans for combating outbreaks of contagious diseases and to strengthen emergency response equipment.

In a related matter, director of the Disaster Management Department in the Prime Minister's Office was instructed to urgently provide maize and rice seeds to the affected communities to help them recover their damaged produce and avoid the risk of food shortages in the future.

Same District Commissioner, Kasilda Mgeni said that ten people were affected by the floods, six of whom lost their lives after being trapped under collapsed homes.

Mgeni also stated that 34 homes were destroyed, along with 260 acres of crops. Efforts to restore communication and rebuild infrastructure are ongoing.



Fatma Suedy (R), a nursing officer with Dar es Salaam's Jakaya Kikwete Cardiac Institute, pictured in the city yesterday attending to a person with disability seeking medical attention. This was at a charity event organised by Mama Ongea na Mwanao Foundation for special groups of people. Photo: Correspondent Imani Nathaniel

By Guardian Correspondent, Morogoro

27 arrested as new wave of protests reported in Kilosa

TWENTY seven people have been arrested over unlawful protests in Kilosa District, Morogoro Region

According to Police they have been arrested over breach of the peace and obstructing Magubike section of the Morogoro-Dodoma highway.

The protest arose from demands for the government to erect high speed bumps in the area following the death of Piason Senyagwa, a 20-year-old man who was killed by a car.

Speaking at the funeral of the deceased, Kilosa District Commissioner Shaka Hamdu Shaka reported that the unrest resulted in property damage and injuries to two police officers. He warned residents

against taking the law into their own hands and assured them that the government is actively addressing their concerns.

The commissioner also revealed that those arrested include the driver involved in the fatal accident and the vehicle as well. Legal proceedings including awaiting court appearances are currently underway.

Magubike Ward Councilor Abuu Msofe explained that the deceased was crossing the road when the accident occurred. He noted that repeated accidents in the area

had driven residents to block the road in protest, urging the government to install speed bumps as a preventive measure.

Msofe added that when police arrived to restore order, residents retaliated by throwing stones, prompting officers to use tear gas to disperse the crowd.

"In the past two years, nine people have been struck by vehicles in this area. We appeal to the government to take this matter seriously and provide a long-term solution to these recurring problems," he said.

Police step up security in Arusha

By Guardian Correspondent, Arusha

POLICE in Arusha Region in collaboration with other security organs have stepped up security during year-end festivities, a measure that helped to contain crime.

Arusha Regional Police Commander, SACP Justine Masejo, made the statement yesterday while speaking to the media about the preparations for the New Year's festivities.

"The Arusha Regional Police Force is well-organised to ensure that the 2025 New Year celebrations are held peacefully and with order, especially considering that there will be a three-day vigil in Arusha City," said Commander Masejo.

He further explained that the celebrations to welcome the New Year have been organised by Arusha Regional Commissioner Paul Makonda, starting from December 29 and concluding on December 31.

Masejo mentioned that some roads would be closed to facilitate the special celebrations are those expected to gather large crowds. "Together with other security

agencies, we are well-prepared to ensure that all areas in Arusha City and the surrounding districts are adequately secured using foot patrols, motorcycles, and vehicles," he added.

Additionally, Commander Masejo stated that, for the New Year's vigil, there is a ban on burning tires and placing stones on roads, as such activities cause inconvenience for other road users and damage infrastructure.

He also advised bar and entertainment joints owners to adhere to the conditions of their licences, which specify operating hours, and to avoid overcrowding premises beyond capacity.

Furthermore, he mentioned that only those who have obtained permits would be allowed to set off fireworks, and they will not be permitted to do so in residential areas.

Commander Masejo issued a stern warning to drivers who engage in reckless driving or break traffic laws, stating that strict measures would be taken against them.

By Correspondent Jaliwason Jasson,

Simanjiro

President Samia gives yearend gifts to special needs children

PRESIDENT Samia Suluhu Hassan's end-of-year 2024 gifts, marking the transition into 2025, have been officially handed over to orphans and children with special needs at the Light in Africa Centre, located in Mirerani, Simanjiro District, Manyara Region.

The Simanjiro District Office presented the gifts on behalf of Manyara Regional Commissioner Queen Sendiga.

Acting Simanjiro District Administrative Secretary (DAS), Tumaini Sebastian, accompanied by Mirerani Township Executive Officer (TEO), Isack Mgaya

announced during the gift presentation ceremony at the centre.

The gifts included 100 kilograms of rice, 25 kilograms of sugar, 25 kilograms of wheat flour, 20 liters of cooking oil, and two goats, donated by President Samia.

"We extend our gratitude to President Samia for her kindness and care towards the orphans and special needy children at this centre in Mirerani. The holiday gifts are a testament to her compassion," he said.

He also called on individuals, organisations, and institutions to support those in need by providing food and other essential items.

One of the centre's caregivers, Mariam Mbwambo, expressed heartfelt thanks during the ceremony, praising the President's generosity.

"We deeply appreciate these gifts and pray that God grants our beloved mother and President, Samia Suluhu Hassan, good health and blessings," Mbwambo said.



As we welcome the New Year, the Management and Staff of The Guardian Limited wish to convey our sincere appreciation to you, our esteemed business partner.

We are truly grateful for your steadfast trust and ongoing support. Your collaboration has been instrumental to our success, and we eagerly anticipate even greater accomplishments together in 2024.

KIBOSHO CENTRAL RURAL COOPERATIVE SOCIETY LIMITED AND VASSO AGROVENTURES LIMITED (UNDER LIQUIDATION) INVITATION OF BIDS/OFFERS. KESTER LYARUU, of Kemi Advocates, on 22nd February 2024, was appointed as the Liquidator of Vasso Agroventures Limited by the High Court of Tanzania in Misc. Civil Cause No. 3 of 2023.

KIRIMA BORO RURAL COOPERATIVE SOCIETY LIMITED AND VASSO AGROVENTURES LIMITED (UNDER LIQUIDATION) INVITATION OF BIDS/OFFERS. KESTER LYARUU, of Kemi Advocates, on 22nd February 2024, was appointed as the Liquidator of Vasso Agroventures Limited by the High Court of Tanzania in Misc. Civil Cause No. 3 of 2023.

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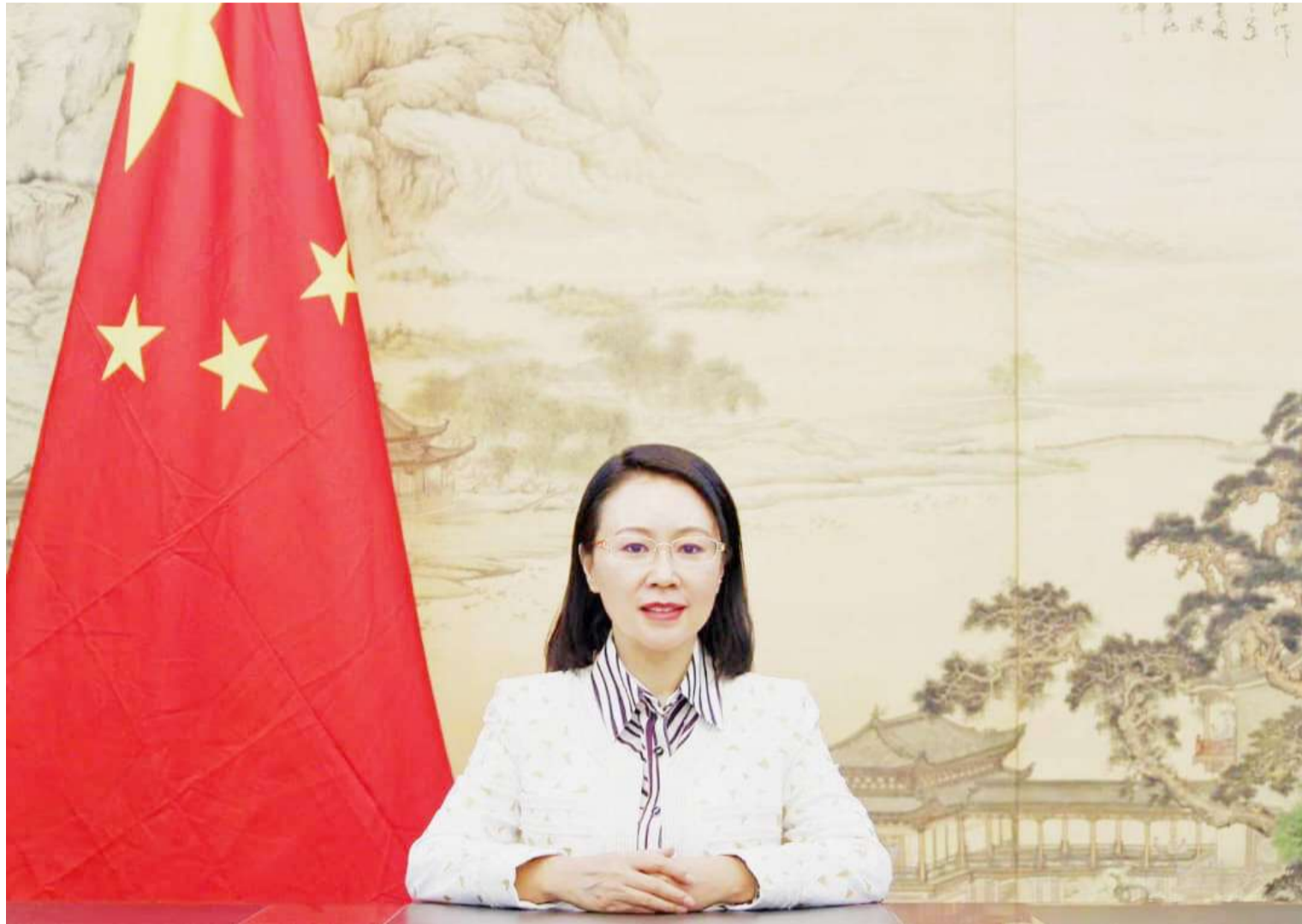
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H.E. Ambassador Chen Mingjian's 2025 New Year Message

As the new year begins, let us also start anew. At a time to ring in the new year 2025, on behalf of the Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the United Republic of Tanzania and in my own name, I wish to extend my most sincere greetings and best wishes for the new year to all the friends who have been consistent contributors to the friendship between China and Tanzania and fellow readers, as well as all the Chinese nationals, Chinese institutions and Chinese students in Tanzania!

In 2024, China acted on the blueprint drawn up at the Third Plenary Session of the 20th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (CPC), and made big strides in deepening reform comprehensively. Marking the 75th anniversary of the founding of New China, China carried forward its great cause of national development and pressed ahead with Chinese modernization with vigor and determination. Over the past year, China's diplomacy has ridden the trends of the times. A remarkable new chapter has been written in head-of-state diplomacy, which has steered the trend of the times toward peace, development and win-win cooperation. New breakthroughs have been made in building a community with a shared future for mankind. We have provided new opportunities for the world with Chinese modernization, which has promoted the development trend of modernization in countries around the world. China's cooperation with other developing countries has set a fine example, which has reinforced the trend of uniting for strength within the Global South. China has made new progress in pursuing all-around diplomacy, which has



H.E. Ambassador Chen Mingjian

built up the trend toward a new type of international relations. In 2024, China and Tanzania celebrated the 60th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between our two countries. With frequent high-level visits and a even-closer practical cooperation, a series of celebration events started a craze of jointly celebrating our 60 years' friendship. China and Tanzania

have held a series of celebration events, including the reception in celebration of the 60th Anniversary of the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations Between China and Tanzania, the China-Tanzania Youth Dialogue, the Forum for Shared Development of China-Tanzania, the Closing Ceremony of the 2024 China-Tanzania Tourism and Culture Year and China's hospital ship

Peace Ark's third visit to Tanzania. China remained the largest trading partner and source of investment of Tanzania, and Tanzania became the Guest Country of China International Import Expo (CIIE) once again. High-quality agricultural products from Tanzania, such as cashew nuts, avocados, aquatic products and honey, have brought into Chinese market. A series of

landmark projects, including the Magufuli Bridge, the SGR and the Julius Nyerere Hydropower Plant, have been well underway. In 2024, the FOCAC Summit was successfully held in Beijing. China and Africa held hands to advance modernization in six aspects and ten partnership actions, pointed out the way forward for promoting modernization of the Global South with China-Africa

modernization, and announced the new measures for China-Africa results-oriented cooperation across the board in the next three years. H.E. President Xi Jinping met with H.E. President Samia Suluhu Hassan, who came to China for the Summit. Chinese, Tanzanian and Zambian presidents jointly witnessed the signing of MoU on the revitalization project of the TAZARA railway. China stands ready to work with Tanzania on advancing and deepening China-Tanzania Comprehensive Strategic Cooperative Partnership, to deliver more benefits to our two peoples.

The year 2025 is a critical year for comprehensively implementing the outcomes of the FOCAC Summit, and also a year that will witness the 50th Anniversary of the completion of the TAZARA Railway. No matter how the world landscape evolves, a more prosperous and open China will continue to inject more impetus and vitality into China-Tanzania cooperation, and a more mature and stable China-Tanzania relationship will provide more opportunities for common development of the two peoples. Let us join hands with each other to carry on the traditional friendship in a new chapter, to address challenges and seek common development, and contribute to building an even closer China-Tanzania and China-Africa community with a shared future.

The Lunar Year of the Snake is just around the corner. In Chinese traditions, smoothness is a characteristic of the snake year. We do hope the China-Tanzania relations will grow from strength to strength! Our best wishes also go to all of our friends, your families, and a happy new year!



Chinese Vice Premier Liu Guozhong met with H.E. President Samia Suluhu Hassan in Tanzania.



China-Tanzania Tourism and Culture Year has been successfully concluded.



Chinese medical team provided free clinic to Njombe Region.



Chinese, Tanzanian, Zambian presidents witness signing of MoU on revitalizing TAZARA railway.

NEW YEAR SPECIAL EDITION



Forum for shared development of China-Tanzania.



President Dr. Hussein Ali Mwinyi visited China for the 7th China International Import Expo and was welcomed by Chinese Premier Li Qiang.



The Chinese Embassy and MFA Tanzania co-host the reception in celebration of the 60th anniversary of bilateral friendship.



The Chinese hospital ship Peace Ark visited Tanzania for the third time.



The Premier for TV show Welcome to Milele.



The reception of Spring Festival in Tanzania in February.



The Third Plenary of the CCCPC held in China.



The two sessions held in China in March.

Bridging the gap: Agriculture still drives Tanzania's economy

By Thomas Lyimo

STRUGGLES to advance the agricultural sector in Tanzania are now taking a different shape as intellectual pursuits are tied to them. It's normal to come across such kind of discussions on media outlets as well as symposiums at higher learning institutions which are connected to the agricultural field.

These initiatives manifest efforts to put agricultural activities in a scholarly perspective which can significantly elevate the sector that employs almost 75 percent of the country's population. Among other things, these efforts are directed towards attracting youth to agriculture and uplifting its contribution to the national economy. Agriculture's contribution to the national economy has dropped from the previous 40 percent to 26 percent.

Two decades after independence in Tanzania was dedicated to poverty alleviation through investment in agriculture. The 'Ujamaa na Kujitegemea' (socialism and self-reliance) policy was then introduced by the government aiming at attaining collective agriculture thus making individuals work together through Ujamaa villages.

Ujamaa villages were meant to ensure Tanzanians use the available resources including land to bring about development. Tanzania had a total of 13502500ha of arable land in 2021, according to the World Bank collection of development indicators. However, 60 percent of the world's arable land is in Africa.

Unlike the post-independence's Tanzanian agriculture which aimed at self-reliance by avoiding dependence on foreign food aid, the current agricultural initiatives have to be commercialized to match the rest of the world which embraced market economy.

Scholars and proponents of agricultural revolution like the late Prof Damian Gabagambi waged a good battle



With fewer farmers producing more and reaching high-value markets, Tanzania can achieve a thriving agricultural sector.

of simplifying the correlation between development of agriculture and that of other sectors such as business and industrial production. In one of his radio presentation, he revealed that when farmer's income increases due to good performance of agriculture, they will be willing to extend their expenditure in buying items produced by different firms thus supporting the growth of industrial and commercial sectors.

Awareness like the one by Prof Gabagambi can result into youth joining the sector willingly.

Luckily enough, academicians have continue to drive agriculture forward and this can be revealed by the symposium that took place at Sokoine University of Agriculture (SUA) on December 6th this year aiming at assessing the journey of the agriculture sector in 63 years of independence of Tanganyika.

Prof Daniel Ndyetabula from SUA informed delegates that agriculture is a bridge towards service sector economy which is the dominant feature of the current world economy. According to Nyetabula, when few individuals engage

in agriculture and others in various sectors, it is a sign of development. He calibrated his argument by revealing statistics which showed that one farmer in Germany can feed 105 individuals compared to Tanzania where three years back, a single farmer could feed half a person before the current food security that the country is proud of.

This food security which is with surplus should motivate more searches for international markets for the sector to flourish and make Tanzanians proud of it. Farmers get discouraged when they

labour intensively and fail to find markets for their produce, thwarting government's poverty eradication efforts.

If valued, the contribution of agriculture into the country's economy can help farmers interpret the world economic trend, thus being able to plan their farming activities accordingly.

Commercializing agriculture

There are two major strategies which the government can embark on to make agricultural sector an attractive business venture which can help to mitigate challenges such as low productivity and poverty that the country face.

One of the strategies to commercialize agricultural sector is for the government providing subsidies to farmers to enable them to cultivate commercially.

Providing subsidies to agricultural exporters can help them scale up operations, ensuring farmers sell all their produce. When farmers earn enough to reinvest in the next planting season, agricultural success becomes sustainable. Securing international markets for Tanzanian produce is crucial.

Another strategy is strengthening of co-operative unions. For years the business on agriculture has been done by the government through co-operative unions. Strengthening them enhances advancement in agriculture as well as providing employment to other experts in the agricultural field who are necessary for the development of the field.

The Tanzanian government

and society must view agriculture as a business opportunity. Just as other nations take pride in manufacturing, Tanzania should take pride in producing and exporting crops. Recognizing agriculture's contribution to the national economy can inspire broader engagement, with a focus on agro-business.

Export success will likely encourage some farmers to transition into export roles, leaving a smaller number of well-equipped farmers to meet market demands. This mirrors advanced economies where a few farmers feed entire populations.

By supporting individuals and cooperative unions, Tanzania could foster the development of significant agricultural companies, embodying the agro-business model and achieving scholars' vision: fewer farmers, higher productivity, and more substantial economic contributions.

The key to transforming Tanzania's agriculture lies in modernization and commercialization. Emphasizing market access, strengthening cooperative unions, and aligning farming practices with economic trends can propel the sector forward.

With fewer farmers producing more and reaching high-value markets, Tanzania can achieve a thriving agricultural sector that uplifts the national economy and reduces poverty.

The author is a teacher based in Moshi. He can be reached at lyimo.thomas@yahoo.com

By Ananilea Nkya

ELEVEN years ago, Kenyans voted to decentralize government, ushering in a new era of leadership with 47 governors and their teams initiating economic projects to better the lives of people in their respective counties. Dairy industry is one of the sectors in Kenya which have benefited with devolution.

In November 2024, I visited Kangari United Dairy Cooperative Society Limited in Murang'a County where efforts made by the County Governor improved raw milk prices and ultimately transformed the lives of dairy farmers in the area.

Founded in 2015, the Kangari dairy cooperative has a network of 1,500 farmers and its main focus is improving the economic, social and cultural status of dairy farmers through processing raw milk into vanilla and strawberry yoghurt.

According to Kangari Dairy Cooperative Chairman, Fimmuna Mugambi farmers are shareholders in the cooperative and among other things, they get dividends, a guarantee to borrow from banks for their dairy projects and subsidy from the country government.

In 2022 Murang'a county government gave subsidy to Kangari United Dairy Cooperative Society Limited farmers.

Mugambi said before the cooperatives started farmers were selling a litre of milk at Kshs15 to middlemen who would transport them to Nairobi city. Through the initiative, the county leadership after the cooperative started raw milk prices went up to Kshs45 per litre.

Since farmers are shareholders in the cooperative, the value added after processing raw milk into yoghurt also benefits them because a litre of yoghurt fetches as much as Kshs200 thanks to the product processor purchased in 2017.

"Dairy farming has improved my life tremendously" says Parity Wangari a woman member of Kangari United Dairy Cooperative Society Limited in Murang'a county.

Wangari says before the cooperative was established she was selling only 10 liters of raw milk per day to middlemen each litre at Kshs15 but now she sales 180 liters per day at the price of Kshs45 per litre.

She elaborates" fifteen years ago I was getting only Kshs12,000 per month for selling milk but nowadays I receive Kshs243,000 per month which is equiv-

Decentralisation revolutionising dairy sector in Kenya's Murang'a County



Parity Wangari stands behind her car

alent to more than four million Tanzanian shillings. She proudly said: "The money I earn from milk sells have enabled me to educate my children in private schools and now two of them have gone to university". I have bought an acre of land for two million shillings (equivalent to 36 million Tanzanian shillings) two cars one for her personal use and the other for collecting animal feeds."

"I stated buying a vehicle for collecting cattle feeds because we do zero grazing", noted Wangari,

adding "without feeding the cows properly and appropriately you cannot get the desired quality and quantity of milk.

Dairy industry is a baby of devolution in Murang'a county and it was engineered by Wangi Wa Iria who was elected the county Governor on March 4th 2013 and re-elected for the second term in 2017

"Having realized the potential of Murang'a County in dairy industry, Governor Iria set up dairy union in the county and bought coolers using country govern-

ment money" says James Gathong, an engineer in the industry.

He said the Governor had experience in the dairy industry as before elected he was the Chief Executive Officer of KCC, a company based in Nairobi city which sells milk products.

The engineer said Governor Iria's efforts to transform the lives of dairy farmers in his country also transformed dairy industry in entire Kenya because when the dairy union in his country started paying raw milk at higher prices,

farmers in nearby countries of Nyeri, Kiambu and Nyandarua started agitating for better price and before long all the county prices for raw milk went up. "Indeed it was like a revolution", Gathong said.

With more than 40 employees, Kangari Dairy has invested in chilling machines, pasteurizers and coolers. At the factory, yoghurt processing is automated.

Milk requires top-notch hygiene levels due to its high perishability. After arriving at a di-

ary center from the farm, a disc pump helps transfer it from cans to pasteurizers or from the boiler to storage tanks. The pump maintains milk quality and increases efficiency. Apart from transferring milk it can also be used during processing of yoghurt

Kangari Dairy Chairman said the cooperative is grappling with storage and preservation challenges as the needed machines are expensive. However, he says, the future for the cooperative is bright.

Six ways to make the internet safer for women

By Kovila Coopamootoo

WOMEN are less likely to protect themselves online because current safety advice does not take full account of their needs - despite women being more at risk from cyber abuse and threats than men. This abuse of women is a growing problem, with one in five reporting they have experienced harm online.

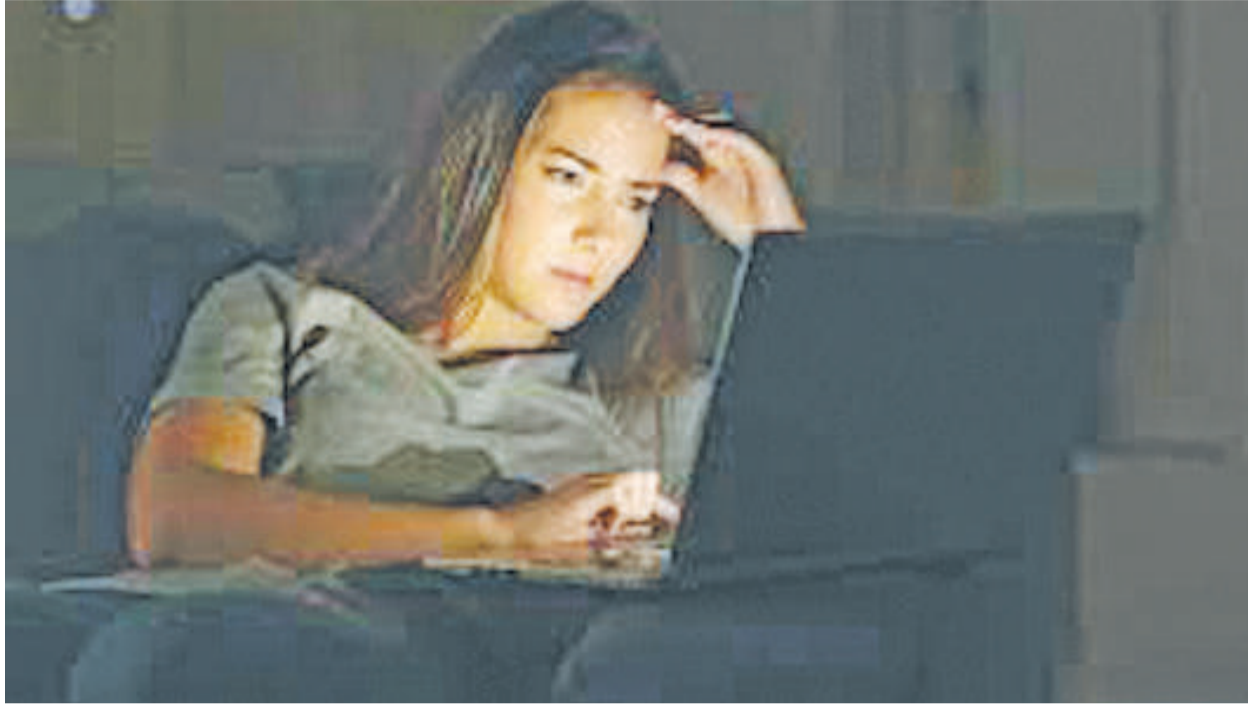
While the UK's Online Safety Act commits to tackling online violence against women and girls, the solutions are not straightforward. Prevention, training and education for women are all essential.

My research with Magdalene Ng from the University of Westminster has identified a gender gap in accessing online safety advice and technology. We found that men are more likely than women to engage with and be informed about security and privacy technologies aimed at keeping people safe online.

We conducted a survey asking more than 600 UK adults (approximately 50 percent women and 50 percent men) about their preferred online privacy and security methods. Respondents indicated their preferred approach to keeping informed about online safety, with options including formal training from official bodies, semi-formal advice from webpages, downloading and using cyber safety technology, and getting informal advice through word of mouth from family and friends.

Our findings reveal a significant difference between the way men and women access online safety advice. For example, 76 percent of women said their go-to approach is asking their family and friends, compared with less than 24% of men. In contrast, 70 percent of men said they seek this advice from online sources, compared with only 38 percent of women.

While guidance from family and friends is not necessarily risky, there is



no guarantee that they have the skills to provide appropriate information and advice. At the same, our results suggest trusted online sources of digital safety advice are not reaching the majority of women.

The study also found that women are more likely to rely on simple or built-in online protections such as privacy settings, security software updates and strong passwords. By contrast, men participating in the study appear to be more fluent with a wider spectrum of protection methods, including more sophisticated technologies such as firewalls, VPNs, anti-spyware, anti-malware, anti-tracking software, and multi-factor authentication.

Our report includes the following recommendations for researchers, technology developers and providers, online

safety advocates and policy-makers to consider, if we are to make digital safety protection more inclusive of women's needs.

Encourage support in the community

Some community NGOs that focus on protecting women and girls, such as End Violence Against Women, have in-depth, first-hand experience of safeguarding women's online safety. They can offer specialised support to women who have encountered online abuse or cyber attacks. These types of support methods tend to be more effective for women, as our study shows women are about twice as likely as men to seek face-to-face advice. By contrast, men more often look up advice online or in books and magazines.

These NGOs should there-

fore receive active support from the UK government and other funding organisations so they can have the tools, resources and skills to reach all women.

Make online advice more accessible

Our research suggests that revamping online safety advice so it makes sense to people without technical backgrounds would be helpful. Jargon and technical explanations can put people off, and act as a barrier to the dissemination of sound advice.

This also means prioritising the most important pieces of advice, and providing these consistently across the online sources that people use most often. These sources include search engines, online reviews and recommendations, technology company adverts, so-

cial media including YouTube and X (formerly Twitter), as well as online forums.

Tailor advice to scenarios faced by women

Unfortunately, women disproportionately face many specific online threats such as intimate image abuse, cyberflashing and online harassment. Safety advice in response to such harms is usually provided on the websites of NGOs who support women. However, we need such advice, which is tailored to abuse, to be more widely distributed across the online sources mentioned above.

Develop safe online spaces

Safety advice in response to online violence against women and girls is often embedded in the support packages that are given to help victims recover from abuse and trauma, via NGOs. But it is also important to develop new online spaces for communities of women who've experienced abuse to share advice and support for digital safety.

This would provide emotional support and trustworthiness in situations where complex harms have taken place, enabling women to help women in an open and accessible way.

Empower women and girls with the right skills

Our research suggests there should be greater focus on ensuring women and girls have the right digital skills to understand and take action regarding their online safety. This means making training

courses available - these could be offered in schools and local community centres and libraries, via a national effort.

It's also important to design advice and technology that anyone can use to gain optimal protection, irrespective of their skill level and without a cost attached.

Analyse risks before releasing new technology

When a new technology or online platform is developed, it's vital to gather different parties with a stake in the issue to assess whether it could contribute to gender-based online harm. Importantly, this should take place before the technology enters public use, rather than only after it has been misused to harm specific users, including women.

This should involve dialogue and collaboration between the government, Ofcom, the technology industry, online platforms, NGOs and research institutions. One example of an equivalent process is the activity and discussion that is occurring around the use and impact of artificial intelligence.

Online safety is considered a social good, and equity in this area is advocated by international human rights organisations. We need cooperative action to bring about greater gender equity in online spaces.

This requires re-imagining the current models of how online safety advice is offered, because our research shows these don't best serve women. Taking this step alongside other advances will make the online experience safer and fairer for everyone.

Report: Brazil Facebook groups give poachers safe space to flex their kills

By Adele Santelli

BETWEEN 2018 and 2020, users of Facebook groups in Brazil shared more than 2,000 records of wildlife poaching, amounting to 4,658 dead animals: everything from pacas and armadillos to capybaras and various species of birds.

That was the finding from a study carried out by a group of researchers led by Brazilian biologist Hani R. El Bizri from the Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR) and the Mamirauá Institute for Sustainable Development. They collected and analyzed data from the five most relevant Brazilian Facebook poaching groups, both open and private, to understand how the activity impacts biodiversity.

By identifying the patterns of illegal hunting in Brazil, it was possible to map the municipalities and biomes in which poaching took place; estimate the number of poachers involved and the number of animals killed; identify the species affected; and count the amount of meat in tons, in order to know how much biomass was removed from the habitats.

The survey showed that illegal hunting took place in all of the country's biomes and in 14% of Brazilian municipalities, spread across all states. There were an estimated 1,400 poachers involved and a total of 29 metric tons of wild meat obtained from the activity. A total of 157 species were killed, from small amphibians to large mammals. Of these, 19 were threatened species, such as tapirs, peccaries, jacutinga birds and coandu-mirim dwarf porcupines, a species only described by science in 2013.

Hunting for sport According to El Bizri, most of

the killing was done with firearms, often equipped with accessories such as sights, indicating the poachers tended to be relatively well-off.

"What I call 'sporting' or 'leisure' hunting, as it's also called in science, is not done out of necessity, it's not done out of conflict," he said. "It's when the person is happy to be doing it, because they really want to, to feel the emotion of doing it."

"We use various indications, various pieces of evidence, to say that it was 'sport hunting,'" El Bizri added. "Most of the municipalities we found have a larger population, less poverty, a higher [human development index], so this means that they are possibly wealthier regions, not rural, isolated or small municipalities."

The Amazon, the most biodiverse biome in the country, was the source of most of the poached animals. In the Atlantic Forest and Caatinga dry forest, both highly degraded biomes, poachers tended to target fewer large mammals and reptiles, and more small birds, often caught in larger quantities as a way of compensating for the size of the animal.

"The most worrying thing is that even in an affected area like the Caatinga, an area that has already been heavily deforested and destroyed, there is still hunting," El Bizri said. "There's no more hunting of large animals, because they've disappeared from there, they've become extinct. But there's still hunting of small animals, so there's no limit. It's hunting all the way down the chain, losing animals and making it increasingly difficult for more species, including smaller ones, to survive."

The negative impacts of hunting on Brazil's fauna are compounded by other human pressures on the environment,



Poached birds arranged around a gun in a photo from a Facebook poaching group.

said biologist and Fauna Network researcher André Pinassi Antunes, who wasn't involved in the study.

"I think Brazil has always had this kind of hunting," he said. "It was cultural. Imagine how many men didn't get together in the 1960s to go to the Pantanal to do this kind of thing. It's always been for fun, but I think what we're seeing today is the loss of several intact areas, very large, intense deforestation, fewer and fewer natural areas, and more people. So today the impact of hunting is different. One thing leads to another and then we lose control."

No fear of reprisal

The study highlights the impunity for environmental crimes and the easy dissemination of content related to illegal practices on social media networks in Brazil.

"We can get a better view

of how much social media is being used to disseminate this type of information, and information that is being shared without any fear - so much so that we joined open groups that had no restrictions to participate," said co-author Marcela Álvares Oliveira, a professor in the postgraduate program at the Federal University of Rondônia. "Activities that are illegal are becoming much easier to share, distribute and, at the same time, foster through social networks. And without any fear of reprisal."

"Both the scientific and social results are important for us to think about what guidelines our country should take in the face of [illegal] hunting," Oliveira said. What is the limit to the freedom of expression we can have on social media, especially when it comes to publicizing crimes, which

happens with total freedom and without any cost to the criminal?"

This online display of poached animals reveals another characteristic of the practice, the "trophy" part of trophy hunting, in which the kill is seen as an achievement in and of itself, researchers say.

"I'm totally in favor of subsistence hunting by Indigenous peoples and traditional communities," Antunes said. "I've been working directly with them for over 15 years. It's totally justifiable, because it's part of their cosmology and of fundamental nutritional importance. I've never seen a manifestation of disrespect from these peoples. Now, [if] you kill for fun, post a photo ... the difference is an abyss."

According to Oliveira, environmental law enforcers need to address the fact that wildlife crimes have

an increasingly online aspect, for which specialized agents must be deployed.

"We have a law in Brazil that's very clear in relation to crimes against fauna," she said. "Facebook is American. The law in the United States is very different from our law in this regard, which makes it easier for these social networks to set up in different locations, without respecting the laws of those countries. The social network makes people feel safe, it gives them a freedom of expression that goes beyond the parameters of ethics. They use the argument that the group isn't based in Brazil, it's based in the United States."

Oliveira also pointed to education as one of the priority actions to combat environmental crimes. "We're focused on the student getting into college, getting a good score in the exams. We're not concerned with educating citizens, teaching them why this is a crime," she said.

El Bizri said there's no simple solution to the problem. Instead, he said, it will take a combination of cultural changes, highlighting the risk of diseases transmitted from wild animals, and better gun control. But the first and most significant step, El Bizri said, is to effectively regulate the content of social media networks.

"Creating opportunities for these communities instigates, makes these people persist in that activity, in that crime," he said. "They are people who are there reinforcing the identity of the sport hunter, who can hunt and is unpunished, who has no problems."

"Somehow, by blocking these connections, we might also be able to limit the activity from happening," he went on. "If the photo is a trophy, then it is no longer a trophy. This doesn't just apply to Facebook, there are several others, perhaps even more problematic, because they're the ones where things aren't so open."

In 2022, Brazilian environmental regulator IBAMA fined Meta, parent company of Facebook, WhatsApp and Instagram, 10 million reais (about \$1.9 million at the time), for publishing 2,227 ads for the illegal sale of wild animals on its platforms. The company denies having received the fine notification.

Chinese doctors deliver critical care in Botswana

GABORONE

KELESETSE Bosha from Semotswane Village, located 30 km southwest of Francistown, Botswana's second-largest city, will never forget how the 17th Chinese Medical Team members saved her life.

For many years, Bosha, 62, endured periodic, excruciating abdominal pain but initially dismissed it as insignificant. In June this year, after visiting her local clinic, she was referred to Nyangabgwe Referral Hospital in Francistown, where she was diagnosed with kidney stones.

"The kidney stones caused the unbearable pain I have suffered for years," Bosha told Xinhua at her bedside, following a successful laparoscopic surgery at the hospital. A mother of two, Bosha was initially distressed upon being recommended for surgery, as she had long feared open-wound operations and the associated pain after the procedure.

Fortunately, Bosha's diagnosis coincided with the arrival of the 17th Chinese Medical Team, which

included Hu Minxiong, a urologist specializing in treating kidney stone-related abdominal pain. With expertise in laparoscopy, a minimally invasive surgical procedure requiring only small incisions, Hu quickly began assisting patients needing this technique.

"I will never forget how the members of the 17th Chinese Medical Team relieved me from years of agony," said a smiling Bosha, now the fifth beneficiary of the less invasive surgical procedure. Her laparoscopic surgery, performed in October, lasted just 90 minutes, much shorter than a conventional open-wound operation.

As a peasant farmer, the abdominal pain had prevented Bosha from tending to her crops. "Now I can farm without hesitation," she said. "The Chinese doctors have given me a new lease on life. The pain disappeared just hours after the operation."

Despite Nyangabgwe Referral Hospital's limited experience with laparoscopic surgeries, the Chinese doctors collaborated effectively with their local counterparts

to perform Bosha's surgery in under two hours, earning recognition from their Botswanan colleagues. "The procedure is minimally invasive, resulting in less bleeding and quicker recovery," Hu explained, noting that many locals are now opting for this operation.

Irvin Kgetse, superintendent of Nyangabgwe Referral Hospital, said the arrival of the Chinese medical team is a blessing. "Dozens of patients with kidney-related ailments who would have been sent to India for treatment can now be treated locally," he said, adding that it would save the government significant amounts of money.

Since 1981, China has dispatched 17 medical teams comprising 557 medical personnel to Botswana, providing clinical services to more than 2 million patients in the past 43 years. Gomolemo Montsho, a medical officer and Hu's understudy, praised the Chinese medical personnel's contributions. "I am learning a great deal from Dr. Hu, knowledge that I will apply to treat patients in the future," said Montsho.



Erasto Mhina Muheza District Council chairman Erasto Mhina (C) and youths from Mishemishe group of Mangubu village in Tongue Ward head for laboratory to donate blood to welcome the New Year 2025. Photo: Correspondent Steven William

DRC marks New Year festivity in insecurity

GOMA

AS the world prepared to celebrate the New Year 2025 yesterday, an atmosphere of sadness and uncertainty loomed over the city of Goma, in the east of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).

The conflict that has been ravaging the region for several months has cast a dark shadow over the

usual festivities, and the hope for a better future seems to be fading.

The central market of Goma, usually lively and colourful as the New Year approached, was sad. The stalls were almost empty, the vendors were disappointed, and customers scarce. The fighting between the Congolese army and the M23 has intensified in recent months, threatening the city of Goma and plung-

ing its residents into fear.

Josephine Kahindo, a mother of four children, shared her difficulty in celebrating in a war-torn environment. "The holidays are here, but we haven't seen anything. A holiday during the war, a holiday with many problems. We don't know what our children will eat or wear. We just watch other people pass by, but we don't know anything about the holi-

days."

The impact of the war on the local economy is devastating. Business activities are paralyzed, investments have been frozen, and government tax revenues are plummeting. The loss of earnings is enormous, and this is likely to have dramatic consequences for the region's development.

Deogracias Bengehya, an eco-

nomics professor, said: "These food products are becoming scarce. With the law of supply and demand, the price trend is increasing, and when prices rise, purchasing power deteriorates and decreases. Not only that, but there are also other people who rely on small businesses."

The hope for lasting peace is the only gift the people of Goma wish to receive for the New Year. U.S. Secre-

tary of State Antony Blinken called on the M23 and Rwanda to cease hostilities and withdraw their positions in the DRC during a phone conversation with both heads of state. Despite calls for peace, uncertainty still looms over Goma. The residents are preparing for a New Year marked by fear and scarcity, hoping that 2025 will finally bring peace and stability to their region.



Itigi ward executive officer, Saimon Sirilo, provides entrepreneurship training to women, disabled individuals, and youth groups from Mgandu ward who are set to receive the 10% loan allocation provided by Itigi District Council. Photo: Correspondent Tobias Mwanakatwe

Carter Centre busy engaged in war against another guinea worm outbreak

JARWENG

THE community in Jarweng village thought they'd seen the end of Guinea worm in 2014, but last year the remote settlement of some 500 people became the epicentre of South Sudan's latest outbreak, recording four of the country's six cases.

Nyingong Aguek and her 13 and seven-year-old sons contracted the worm after drinking from a swamp while travelling outside their village in May 2021.

"Having the worm pulled out is more painful than giving birth," said the 30-year-old. Sitting under a tree outside her yard, she points to the scars on her left leg where four worms emerged last August.

Despite the agony, thanks to the Carter Centre, treatment wasn't half as painful as it was when she contracted it as a girl, she said. Running her fingers over a much larger scar, also on her lower left leg, Aguek said before the Carter Centre came to South Sudan, locals would cut open Guinea worm blisters with a knife, often damaging a nerve and not bandaging the wound, which would become infected, causing permanent damage. After the worm was removed from her leg when she was nine, Aguek said she couldn't walk for a month.

"When I had Guinea worm as a child, it was operated and cut, but the second time when I had Guinea worm the Carter Centre helped me. They pulled the worm and I wasn't operated on again," she said.

In 2017, after years of no cases, the Carter Centre stopped working in Awerial county, where the remote village of Jarweng is situated. Since the emergence of last year's cases, however, it's returned with its staff and volunteers walking house to house raising awareness about what Guinea worm looks like and distributing water filters and training people how to use them. The organization's also started teachings on how to search for Guinea worm in animals, as one of the six new cases was found in a dog.

Belgium to ban single-use vapes starting January to protect youth

BRUSSELS

FROM January 1, Belgium will ban the sale of single-use vapes, marking a significant step in its national anti-tobacco strategy aimed at protecting young people's health.

This decision aligns with the European Union's goal to create a tobacco-free generation by 2040, which seeks to cut smoking rates across the 27-member bloc from 25% to less than 5%.

Single-use vapes, often mar-

keted with appealing flavors and vibrant packaging, have gained popularity among teenagers but have come under fire for their addictive nicotine content and environmental impact. "The problem is that young people start using vapes without always knowing their nicotine content, and nicotine is addictive," said Nora Melard, spokeswoman for Belgium's Alliance for a Tobacco-Free Society.

Belgium proposed banning disposable vapes to the Europe-

an Commission in 2021, receiving approval in March 2024. Under the new law, all sales of single-use e-cigarettes will be prohibited, following in the footsteps of France, which also plans to enforce a similar ban with stiff fines of up to €100,000 for violations.

Critics of disposable vapes point to their accessibility, low cost—typically half the price of a 20-pack of cigarettes—and their appeal to young users, with some products allowing thousands of puffs. Moreover, health experts

warn that habitual nicotine use among adolescents could harm brain development and potentially lead to the use of other addictive substances.

Beyond health concerns, environmental groups have labeled disposable vapes an "ecological disaster." These products, often made with plastic and lithium batteries, are typically discarded after just five days of use, contributing significantly to electronic waste.

While some young users ques-

tion why traditional tobacco products aren't also banned, others welcome the move. "It's good to stop selling them," said Yona Bujniak, a Brussels resident. "A lot of young people don't think about the consequences when they start."

As Belgium enforces its ban, tobacco shops across the country are reporting dwindling supplies of disposable vapes, signaling the end of a short-lived trend with long-term implications for health and the environment.

Curtain falls on 2024: Year that tested the strength of Namibia's democracy

By Special Correspondent

DECEMBER is a time to reflect, celebrate our triumphs and accomplishments, or simply rejoice in the fact that we made it from January to December. As the year ends, we look back on 2024 - a year filled with challenges and victories, a year that will be remembered for its trials and the resilience displayed by the Namibian people.

Twenty-twenty-four was a tumultuous year, marked by a mixture of the good, the bad, and the ugly.

Yet, despite all the obstacles, Namibians emerged as the biggest winners. It was a year that tested the strength of Namibia's democracy, its systems, processes, and institutions, as they faced numerous challenges and litmus tests. One of the most profound moments in the country's history came on 4 February, with the passing of President Hage Geingob.

The death of a sitting president is always a moment of national reflection and mourning, but on that fateful day, Namibia's institutions were put to the test - and they passed with flying colours.

That Sunday, 4 February 2024, will forever be etched in Namibia's history, standing alongside 21 March 1990 as one of the most defining moments. The head of state, the commander-in-chief, was gone.

The Executive branch was left without its leader, and the nation was plunged into grief. But, in the face of tragedy, Namibia's democratic institutions rose to the occasion. The country did not falter. It remained steady, anchored by a deep-rooted commitment to the rule of law and governance.

The transition of power, smooth and without incident, demonstrated the strength of Namibia's democracy. Less than 14 hours later, the country had a new president: Then Vice President Nangolo Mbumba, who stepped into the void left by Geingob. The swiftness and professionalism of this transition were a testament to Namibia's democratic maturity. Despite the loss, Namibia is moving forward.

As months went by it became clear that the science teacher and seasoned politician was a man committed to continuing the work of his late friend and brother.

The year was far from short of notable events. From the beginning, it was clear that 2024 would be politically charged, with the November Presidential and National Assembly elections hanging in the balance.

The campaign for voter registration intensified, with civil society, political actors, the electoral commission, and the media all mobilising to encourage citizens to register. The response was overwhelming, as more than 1.4 million Namibians registered to vote, showing their commitment to shaping their own future.

Political parties and presidential candidates crisscrossed the country, each presenting themselves as the best



Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah, Namibia's first female President

choice to lead Namibia into the future. Young voters were highly engaged, with over 900 000 of them registering to vote - an increase from the 700 000 when juxtaposed to 2019.

Their energy and determination were evident on Election Day, 27 November. Long lines, hot sun, and unpredictable weather could not deter them; they were determined to have their voices heard.

Despite the Electoral Commission of Namibia's administrative and logistical flaws that were on full display during the elections, which had to be extended by two days to cater for voters who were left out, when the results were announced, over 1.1 million Namibians had cast their votes.

Every vote counted, and every voter contributed to the country's progress. Whether they were turned away or unable to vote for any reason, those who showed up to the polls demonstrated the power and unity of the Namibian people.

A significant milestone of the election was the election of Vice President Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah as the first-ever female president-elect of Namibia, a historic achievement that brings a new level of hope and possibility to the country's leadership.

As we reflect on the gains, the losses, and the lessons of 2024, we also take this moment to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. The year has been a testament to the resilience, strength and unity of the Namibian people in our diversity. As we look forward to 2025 with sheer optimism, let us carry these lessons into the new year, striving for a brighter future for all.

Namibia, you have made it through. Keep moving forward
The domestic economy maintained

a positive growth trajectory during the third quarter of 2024 albeit at a slower pace when compared to the same time last year. According to the central bank, Namibia's economy registered a growth rate of 2.8% during the third quarter of 2024, which is lower than the 3.1% growth recorded in Q3 2023.

The moderation stemmed from the primary industry, particularly within the agriculture and mining sectors. In contrast, the secondary industry registered positive growth, with most manufacturing subsectors, including cement, blister copper, beer and soft drinks, showing an upward trend.

In its last quarterly bulletin for the year, the Bank of Namibia noted that domestic construction activity increased as government construction continued to recover, despite a weak performance in the private sector. However, electricity generation experienced a second consecutive decline due to lower water levels feeding into the Ruacana hydropower plant.

Meanwhile, domestic annual inflation slowed both on a quarterly and yearly basis during the third quarter of 2024, largely attributed to a deceleration in transport and food inflation.

BoN further noted that inflation slowed to 4.1% during the third quarter of 2024 from 4.8% registered in the preceding quarter. The quarterly slowdown in inflation mainly stemmed from a decline in transport inflation, specifically in the sub-categories' operation of personal transport equipment and purchase of vehicles.

In a groundbreaking leap for agriculture, northern Namibia is stepping into the spotlight with its very first grape harvest. This remarkable feat proves that even the harshest climates can yield sweet success. The Otjimbele Agriculture Project, led by CEO Car-

los Lertxundi, is not just cultivating grapes. It is sowing the seeds of economic transformation and community empowerment in the heart of the Omusati region.

Africa has the highest average intowing fuel price globally. This fact alone is stifling Africa's aviation sector simply because jet fuel typically constitutes the largest operational cost for an airline, currently at around 30% of total industry budgets.

There is no doubt that regions or airlines with higher fuel prices are disadvantaged in terms of their profitability and competitiveness. This is because regional fuel cost variation boils down to how well a country's aviation sector can compete on the global stage. There continues to be empirical evidence that when this jet fuel reaches its final destination of being poured into the wing of the airplane, it costs more per litre in Africa than anywhere else on the planet.

The demand for enhanced rail infrastructure in Namibia is surging, driven by the ambitious Hylron Oshivela project, which aims to revolutionise iron production through green technology.

James Mnyupe, the Green Hydrogen commissioner, emphasised the urgency of upgrading rail links to accommodate the project's projected needs. "Hylron is looking to import iron ore potentially from South Africa, which will have policy ramifications because it means there should be considerations to upgrade rail links," he stated.

Namibia is taking significant steps to enhance its mineral beneficiation strategy. The aim is to create much-needed local jobs and increase the value derived from rich natural resources. However, for the country to successfully implement this strategy and effectively process the minerals

it mines, substantial investments in infrastructure are essential.

This means Namibia requires improvements in various sectors, particularly in water supply and transport logistics. Last year, Cabinet resolved to prohibit the exportation of critical minerals in their raw form, including lithium, graphite, cobalt, manganese and rare earth elements.

Kelp Blue, a groundbreaking sustainable aquaculture enterprise, is on the verge of significantly contributing to the domestic economy with a bold investment plan, which could reach N\$3 billion over the next three to four years. This investment follows an initial capital injection of N\$350 million, and ongoing annual operational costs ranging from N\$80 million to N\$100 million. "We expect those numbers to multiply tenfold as Kelp Blue aims to scale its production capacity from the current 3 000 tonnes to an impressive 50 000 tonnes per year," said Daniel Hoof, the company's founder and CEO.

Namibia's power spending hits N\$87b Namibia is facing a steep rise in electricity expenditures. Total spending on purchased power has increased by 25% from approximately N\$70.86 billion (US\$4 billion) in 2019 to N\$86.85 billion (US\$5 billion) in 2023. This surge is largely attributed to the rising costs of electricity imports, which have more than doubled since 2019. The increase has grown from N\$13.90 billion (US\$800 million) to over N\$31.23 billion (US\$1.8 billion) despite a decline in the amount of electricity imported.

The domestic economy continued to record growth since the second quarter of 2021, and during the third quarter of this year, the size of the domestic economy stood at N\$61.6 billion in nominal terms, reflecting an expansion of N\$5.3 billion from N\$56.3 billion recorded in the same period of 2023.

QatarEnergy, one of the biggest oil and gas companies in the world, is deepening its interest in the Orange basin by expanding its footprint in what industry experts consider one of the world's newest and hottest oil and gas hunting grounds. This is as QatarEnergy, formerly known as Qatar Petroleum, this week announced it had entered an agreement with Harmattan Energy Limited (HEL), an indirect subsidiary of Chevron Corporation, to acquire a working interest in the Petroleum Exploration Licence and Petroleum Agreement for Block 2813B (PELO090) in the Orange basin offshore Namibia.

Harsh lives of undocumented charcoal workers

The domestic charcoal industry is grappling with pressing challenges, particularly concerning the treatment of undocumented workers. A recent report on the industry reveals a significant number of charcoal cutters and burners on farms are undocumented Angolan immigrants. The report stipulates that many of these workers often find themselves without passports or identity documents, which often results in a lack of signed employment contracts, lower wages, and unfair deductions.

RADIO One RATIBA YA VIPINDI JUMATATU - JUMAPILI

MONDAY TIME PROGRAMME	TUESDAY TIME PROGRAMME	WEDNESDAY TIME PROGRAMME	THURSDAY TIME PROGRAMME	FRIDAY TIME PROGRAMME	SATURDAY TIME PROGRAMME	SUNDAY TIME PROGRAMME
05:00 AM HALLI YA HEWA / KUMEPAMBAZUKA I 06:00 AM AMKA NA BBC 06:30 AM NIPASHE 06:50 AM MATANGAZO 07:00 AM NEWS BULLETIN 07:10 AM MATANGAZO 07:15 AM TAARIFA ZA BARABARANI 07:25 AM UDONDOZI WA MAGAZETI 08:00 AM HABARI NYEPESI 09:00 AM HABARI ZA BIASHARA 09:10 AM MATANGAZO 09:20 AM BRAND TALK 10:00 AM NEWS BULLETIN 10:03 AM DEATH ANNOUNCEMENTS 10:10 AM YALIVOMO YAMO 11:00 HRS NEWS BULLETIN 11:30 HRS DJ SHOW 12:00 HRS HOJA YA LEO 12:30 HRS DIRA YA DUNIA BBC 13:00 HRS SPOTI LEO 13:30 HRS RADIO ONE DOCTOR 21:00 HRS NEWS BULLETIN 21:05 HRS DAKIKA 45 22:15 HRS AFRO TIZI 23:00 HRS NEWS BULLETIN 23:03 HRS AFRO TIZI 01:00 - 05:00 HRS MUZIKI (MCHANGANYIKO)	05:00 AM HALLI YA HEWA / KUMEPAMBAZUKA I 06:00 AM AMKA NA BBC 06:30 AM NIPASHE 06:50 AM MATANGAZO 07:00 AM NEWS BULLETIN 07:10 AM MATANGAZO 07:15 AM TAARIFA ZA BARABARANI 07:25 AM UDONDOZI WA MAGAZETI 08:00 AM HABARI NYEPESI 09:00 AM HABARI ZA BIASHARA 09:10 AM MATANGAZO 09:20 AM BRAND TALK 10:00 AM NEWS BULLETIN 10:03 AM DEATH ANNOUNCEMENTS 10:10 AM YALIVOMO YAMO 11:00 HRS NEWS BULLETIN 11:30 HRS DJ SHOW 12:00 HRS HOJA YA LEO 12:30 HRS DIRA YA DUNIA BBC 13:00 HRS SPOTI LEO 13:30 HRS RADIO ONE DOCTOR 21:00 HRS NEWS BULLETIN 21:05 HRS DAKIKA 45 22:15 HRS AFRO TIZI 23:00 HRS NEWS BULLETIN 23:03 HRS AFRO TIZI 01:00 - 05:00 HRS MUZIKI (MCHANGANYIKO)	05:00 AM HALLI YA HEWA / KUMEPAMBAZUKA I 06:00 AM AMKA NA BBC 06:30 AM NIPASHE 06:50 AM MATANGAZO 07:00 AM NEWS BULLETIN 07:10 AM MATANGAZO 07:15 AM TAARIFA ZA BARABARANI 07:25 AM UDONDOZI WA MAGAZETI 08:00 AM HABARI NYEPESI 09:00 AM HABARI ZA BIASHARA 09:10 AM MATANGAZO 09:20 AM BRAND TALK 10:00 AM NEWS BULLETIN 10:03 AM DEATH ANNOUNCEMENTS 10:10 AM YALIVOMO YAMO 11:00 HRS NEWS BULLETIN 11:30 HRS DJ SHOW 12:00 HRS HOJA YA LEO 12:30 HRS DIRA YA DUNIA BBC 13:00 HRS SPOTI LEO 13:30 HRS RADIO ONE DOCTOR 21:00 HRS NEWS BULLETIN 21:05 HRS DAKIKA 45 22:15 HRS AFRO TIZI 23:00 HRS NEWS BULLETIN 23:03 HRS AFRO TIZI 01:00 - 05:00 HRS MUZIKI (MCHANGANYIKO)	05:00 AM HALLI YA HEWA / KUMEPAMBAZUKA I 06:00 AM AMKA NA BBC 06:30 AM NIPASHE 06:50 AM MATANGAZO 07:00 AM NEWS BULLETIN 07:10 AM MATANGAZO 07:15 AM TAARIFA ZA BARABARANI 07:25 AM UDONDOZI WA MAGAZETI 08:00 AM HABARI NYEPESI 09:00 AM HABARI ZA BIASHARA 09:10 AM MATANGAZO 09:20 AM BRAND TALK 10:00 AM NEWS BULLETIN 10:03 AM DEATH ANNOUNCEMENTS 10:10 AM YALIVOMO YAMO 11:00 HRS NEWS BULLETIN 11:30 HRS DJ SHOW 12:00 HRS HOJA YA LEO 12:30 HRS DIRA YA DUNIA BBC 13:00 HRS SPOTI LEO 13:30 HRS RADIO ONE DOCTOR 21:00 HRS NEWS BULLETIN 21:05 HRS DAKIKA 45 22:15 HRS AFRO TIZI 23:00 HRS NEWS BULLETIN 23:03 HRS AFRO TIZI 01:00 - 05:00 HRS MUZIKI (MCHANGANYIKO)	05:00 AM HALLI YA HEWA / KUMEPAMBAZUKA I 06:00 AM AMKA NA BBC 06:30 AM NIPASHE 06:50 AM MATANGAZO 07:00 AM NEWS BULLETIN 07:10 AM MATANGAZO 07:15 AM TAARIFA ZA BARABARANI 07:25 AM UDONDOZI WA MAGAZETI 08:00 AM HABARI NYEPESI 09:00 AM HABARI ZA BIASHARA 09:10 AM MATANGAZO 09:20 AM BRAND TALK 10:00 AM NEWS BULLETIN 10:03 AM DEATH ANNOUNCEMENTS 10:10 AM YALIVOMO YAMO 11:00 HRS NEWS BULLETIN 11:30 HRS DJ SHOW 12:00 HRS HOJA YA LEO 12:30 HRS DIRA YA DUNIA BBC 13:00 HRS SPOTI LEO 13:30 HRS RADIO ONE DOCTOR 21:00 HRS NEWS BULLETIN 21:05 HRS DAKIKA 45 22:15 HRS AFRO TIZI 23:00 HRS NEWS BULLETIN 23:03 HRS AFRO TIZI 01:00 - 05:00 HRS MUZIKI (MCHANGANYIKO)	05:00 AM HALLI YA HEWA / KUMEPAMBAZUKA I 06:00 AM AMKA NA BBC 06:30 AM NIPASHE 06:50 AM MATANGAZO 07:00 AM NEWS BULLETIN 07:10 AM MATANGAZO 07:15 AM TAARIFA ZA BARABARANI 07:25 AM UDONDOZI WA MAGAZETI 08:00 AM HABARI NYEPESI 09:00 AM HABARI ZA BIASHARA 09:10 AM MATANGAZO 09:20 AM BRAND TALK 10:00 AM NEWS BULLETIN 10:03 AM DEATH ANNOUNCEMENTS 10:10 AM YALIVOMO YAMO 11:00 HRS NEWS BULLETIN 11:30 HRS DJ SHOW 12:00 HRS HOJA YA LEO 12:30 HRS DIRA YA DUNIA BBC 13:00 HRS SPOTI LEO 13:30 HRS RADIO ONE DOCTOR 21:00 HRS NEWS BULLETIN 21:05 HRS DAKIKA 45 22:15 HRS AFRO TIZI 23:00 HRS NEWS BULLETIN 23:03 HRS AFRO TIZI 01:00 - 05:00 HRS MUZIKI (MCHANGANYIKO)	05:00 AM HALLI YA HEWA / KUMEPAMBAZUKA I 06:00 AM AMKA NA BBC 06:30 AM NIPASHE 06:50 AM MATANGAZO 07:00 AM NEWS BULLETIN 07:10 AM MATANGAZO 07:15 AM TAARIFA ZA BARABARANI 07:25 AM UDONDOZI WA MAGAZETI 08:00 AM HABARI NYEPESI 09:00 AM HABARI ZA BIASHARA 09:10 AM MATANGAZO 09:20 AM BRAND TALK 10:00 AM NEWS BULLETIN 10:03 AM DEATH ANNOUNCEMENTS 10:10 AM YALIVOMO YAMO 11:00 HRS NEWS BULLETIN 11:30 HRS DJ SHOW 12:00 HRS HOJA YA LEO 12:30 HRS DIRA YA DUNIA BBC 13:00 HRS SPOTI LEO 13:30 HRS RADIO ONE DOCTOR 21:00 HRS NEWS BULLETIN 21:05 HRS DAKIKA 45 22:15 HRS AFRO TIZI 23:00 HRS NEWS BULLETIN 23:03 HRS AFRO TIZI 01:00 - 05:00 HRS MUZIKI (MCHANGANYIKO)

Tembelea mitandao ya kijamii ya Radio One



Radio One



African economy maintains resilient growth in 2024 amid challenges

NAIROBI

THE African economy has maintained a steady growth in 2024, demonstrating resilience and potential despite global challenges such as geopolitical conflicts and growing protectionism.

Over the past year, African countries have intensified domestic reforms while promoting global cooperation. These efforts have resulted in significant advancements in critical sectors, laying a solid foundation for sustainable progress.

At the same time, China-Africa cooperation has continued to inject fresh momentum into the continent's development, fostering innovation and contributing to long-term growth.

STRONG GROWTH

According to the African Economic Outlook 2024 report by the African Development Bank, Africa's economy is projected to grow by 3.7 percent in 2024, outpacing the anticipated global economic growth rate of 3.2 percent. This upward trend is expected to continue, with growth climbing to 4.3 percent in 2025, positioning Africa as the world's second-fastest-growing region.

The continent's growth momentum remained robust throughout 2024, driven by increased infrastructure investment and strengthened regional cooperation.

East Africa is projected to lead the way as Africa's fastest-growing region, with real gross domestic product (GDP) growth surging from an estimated 1.5 percent in 2023 to an impressive 4.9 percent in 2024. Similarly, West Africa displayed strong dynamism, with growth forecasted to rise from 3.6 percent in 2023 to 4.2 percent in 2024.

Data from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) indicate strong growth momentum across many African countries that don't rely on resources. Fueled by regional integration and infrastructure investments, Rwanda's economy is projected to grow by 7 percent. Cote d'Ivoire, driven by robust growth in telecommunications, manufacturing investments and agricultural exports, is expected to expand by 6.5 percent. Meanwhile, Kenya's growth is forecasted to reach 5 percent, supported by a recovery in agriculture and tourism.

However, resource-dependent countries have registered comparatively sluggish growth. Nigeria, for example, is expected to record a GDP growth of 2.9 percent, hindered by challenges such as low oil production, the IMF said.

DIVERSIFIED DEVELOPMENT

In 2024, the diversification of Africa's economic development has become increasingly prominent.

Regional economic integration, digital transformation, scientific and technological innovation and talent cultivation have emerged as key catalysts propelling the continent's economic growth.

Significant progress has been made in the development of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). The AfCFTA has been launched in countries such as Cameroon, South Africa and Ghana, creating new opportunities for economic growth across the continent.

Al-Mal News, an Egyptian economic

daily, reported that intra-African trade is projected to soar from 192.2 billion U.S. dollars in 2023 to 520 billion dollars by 2030, driven by the AfCFTA.

African countries have also significantly ramped up investments in digital infrastructure, fueling a surge in the development of digital economy and e-commerce.

According to the International Telecommunication Union, the number of Internet users in Africa has skyrocketed from 181 million in 2014 to nearly 646 million in 2024, with projections indicating it could surpass 1.1 billion by 2029. This exponential growth is enabling the continent to integrate more effectively into the global economic system.

Thanks to this digital transformation, mobile payments have rapidly increased across Africa. According to a report from the Global System for Mobile Communications Association, in 2023, the number of mobile money accounts in Africa reached 856 million, accounting for 49 percent of registered accounts worldwide.

In addition, African countries are actively driving industrial upgrading and technological innovation through measures such as establishing research funds, developing technology parks, and attracting the return of overseas talent.

ENHANCED COOPERATION

Despite steady growth in 2024, the African economy faces challenges that require concerted efforts both within the continent and through cooperation with the global community in the coming years.

The IMF said that Africa's economic outlook is under increasing pressure from a turbulent global environment characterized by high inflation, rising borrowing costs, climate-induced disasters and political instability.

Kenyan economist James Shikwati has said that infrastructure development remains a bottleneck for Africa's economic progress. The continent lags behind global standards in critical sectors such as transportation, communication and energy, which not only hinders trade and investment but also slows industrialization efforts and regional connectivity.

To address these challenges, African countries are increasingly strengthening ties with BRICS countries and other emerging market economies to diversify partnerships and tap into new opportunities.

In 2024, Egypt and Ethiopia officially became BRICS members, expanding cooperation with China through the mechanism. The Beijing Summit of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation held in September further strengthened the foundation of China-Africa cooperation.

China has consistently increased its support for Africa's regional connectivity, providing comprehensive empowerment for Africa's development in areas such as infrastructure construction, technology, talent, and markets.

Under the frameworks of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation and the Belt and Road Initiative, China and Africa have been working together over the past year to advance infrastructure development, with tangible results across the entire African continent.

Butterfly collector determined to 'protect' research centre in Kenya

NAIROBI

THE owner of a research centre housing a collection of millions of butterflies is attempting to ensure its future.

Steve Collins' 1.5 acre plot of land in Nairobi encompasses hundreds of trees and flowering bushes - the perfect conditions for breeding butterflies. His decades long career all began as a childhood hobby.

"I've always learnt about nature since I've been a very small boy. We spent the first 28 years of our lives up in Mt Elgon, but I have been working on butterflies since I was five (years old) and it got really quite serious from about the age of nine," Collins explains.

Millions of butterflies are stored in the centre, a figure that even Collins has difficulty wrapping his



head around.

"This collection here is the biggest collection of African butterflies in the world. It is 1.2 million pinned butterflies and 3 million (others), which is very difficult to understand in terms of size. It is

huge," Collins marvels.

The researcher is seeking funding, as well as an individual or institution to protect the collection.

"For us, for the future, is to get some financial support to get the biodiversity going and to actually

find a safe home for this (Butterfly Research Centre) when Collins is no longer here," he says.

In addition to his research and collections, Collins has penned eight books over the course of his 60 years in the field.

Ethiopian venture capital firms show optimism on deregulation

By David Thomas

ETHIOPIA'S venture capital space is hopeful that the government's programme of financial liberalisation will encourage more regional companies and foreign investors to enter the Ethiopian market, which in turn could stimulate greater activity and stronger growth among the country's own domestic startups.

Speaking to African Business from the GITEX Global conference in Dubai, Hilina Resom, founding partner of the Addis Ababa-based Kazana Fund, says that VCs interested in the Ethiopian market will have long faced a challenging regulatory environment that has stunted growth and complicated foreign investment.

"Because the market has been closed for a very long time, most local startups are quite confined

to Ethiopia as they have been prohibited from expanding outside the country," Resom explains.

"Under current regulations, foreign investors also need to invest a minimum of \$150,000 in Ethiopia, which has made it very hard for a lot of startups to secure funding."

"However, these regulations are now being changed to create the foundation for money to easily flow in and support promising ideas," she adds.

"Capital will always go where it is accepted and taken care of. The government is working on a 'Startup Proclamation Act' and is announcing other reforms that will not just support local startups, but also support regional startups wishing to set up in Ethiopia."

Government plots liberalisation The Ethiopian government has pursued a broad programme of financial liberalisation which has

involved opening national strategic sectors, such as banking and telecommunications, to foreign competition for the first time. Most recently, the National Bank of Ethiopia floated the Ethiopian birr (ETB) and agreed to phase out interventions in the foreign exchange market, making it easier for investors to move funds in and out of the country.

Resom is hopeful that these trends will encourage more business leaders and VCs in Africa and elsewhere to consider investing in Ethiopia. She explains that the motivation behind the Kazana Fund is "to invest in the best startups in any sector across the region and support these companies to enter the Ethiopian market".

The idea is not only to help these companies take advantage of the opportunities offered by a market of over 120m people - and

therefore to secure strong returns for the fund - but to encourage foreign talent and ideas to come into Ethiopia and help develop the broader startup space.

"We hope that slowly but surely, initiatives like this will mean more talent coming in, and more competition taking place," Resom tells African Business. "Eventually, there will be an increasing number of deals available, and more opportunities for investors."

"Ethiopia's opening up is happening as we speak. Up until now, the regulation and protection has made it difficult for regional startups to successfully enter the market," she says. "But what we are excited about is that now there is the opportunity to connect investors and companies in the region with the Ethiopian ecosystem, to the benefit of both."

East Africa expecting drier-than-usual conditions from January to March 2025

By Guardian Reporter



THE East Africa region will experience drier-than-usual conditions between January and March 2025, the Climate Prediction and Applications Center of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), a regional bloc has said.

The center said in a forecast that the drier conditions will affect mainly Ethiopia, Uganda, Rwanda, Kenya, Burundi, and Tanzania.

The region will also record warmer-than-usual temperatures during the January-to-March 2025 season. "Normal temperatures are likely to be recorded in a few areas of northern Uganda and western Sudan," the statement reads in part.

The center observed that across the region, only southern Tanzania and southwestern Uganda would experience wetter-than-usual conditions during the period, an indication of increased climate variability in the region due to climate change.

The Horn of Africa region is among the worst hit by climate change as drought, floods, and pests become common amid higher temperatures of 32 degrees Celsius, according to the center.

More than 64 million people needed humanitarian assistance in the Horn of Africa at the end of November due to conflicts and climate shocks, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and IGAD noted in a recent report.

Africa's mines turn to solar in sustainability push

By David Thomas

In 2018, at the Otjikoto mine in Namibia, B2Gold unveiled what was then an unusual sight at an African mining operation – an installation of solar panels.

The 6MW solar facility, which also included a battery storage (BESS) component, now provides around 13% of the mine's power according to the company. Ken Jones, B2Gold's director for sustainability, says the company was mainly motivated by the need to reduce its carbon footprint.

"Climate risk management is really what it's about," he says. "You can't decarbonise the rest of your operation until you clean up your electricity generation"

B2Gold, like many mining companies operating in remote parts of the continent, has historically relied on purpose-built heavy fuel oil (HFO) plants to provide power. It has now been able to put its HFO plant at Otjikoto under care and maintenance after deploying solar power and connecting to the Namibian electricity grid in 2023. The company has also invested in solar at its other African operation, at Fekola in Mali, where solar and storage will soon deliver around 30% of the mine's electricity.

Jones tells us that solar has proven reliable at the mines in Namibia and Mali. "These facilities have more than performed. They've met and actually exceeded projections and modelling."



2024 a fruitful year in China-Zambia ties

LUSAKA

The year 2024 has been fruitful for the China-Zambia cooperation as the two countries celebrated 60 years of diplomatic ties.

Spurred by the elevation of the cooperation to a Comprehensive Strategic and Cooperative Partnership following a state visit to China by Zambian President Hakainde Hichilema in September 2023, the two countries designated 2024 as the Year of Business Cooperation, as well as the Year of Culture and Tourism.

Han Jing, the Chinese Ambassador to Zambia, said during a ceremony to commemorate 60 years of ties on Oct. 29 that the commemoration of the anniversary of the

establishment of diplomatic relations could not have taken place at a better time and was aiming to carry forward the traditional friendship between the two countries from generation to generation.

For his part, President Hichilema said the relationship between the two countries has reached its best in history and Zambia will never forget the valuable support from the Chinese government and people over the past 60 years. Indeed, 2024 has been a momentous year in the bilateral relations between the two countries.

To celebrate the anniversary, a number of activities have been held and several cooperation agreements inked to enhance the ties.

Among the events was the Zambia-China

High-Quality Development Forum and Economic Exhibition in May.

The exhibition attracted more than 200 enterprises from China and Zambia. During the event, dozens of documents on practical cooperation worth 1.03 billion U.S. dollars were signed between Chinese and Zambian enterprises.

Other activities included the signing of a memorandum of understanding for the establishment of the first-ever vaccine manufacturing plant in Zambia.

The two countries also launched the "Harmony in Diversity: Zambia-China Bilateral Relationship Art Exhibition" as part of the commemoration of 60 years of bilateral ties.

A hallmark of the year was the attendance

of the Zambian president at this year's Forum on China Africa summit in China, during which Zambia signed a number of deals in various sectors.

One of the documents aims to assist Zambia in diversifying its energy mix by investing in alternative power generation projects, including solar energy. According to the Chinese Ambassador, these projects are expected to add an additional 720 megawatts of electricity to Zambia's grid once completed.

Another key agreement was to revitalize the Tanzania-Zambia Railway to turn it into a viable regional connectivity project.

China also donated about 500,000 dollars to help Zambia tackle an outbreak of cholera. Additionally, on Aug. 30, a ceremony was

held to exchange letters regarding Emergency Humanitarian Food Assistance and China-Aid Projects.

This involved China's provision of emergency humanitarian food aid to Zambia and assistance in the construction of mealie meal milling plants.

The relationship between China and Zambia in the past 60 years has seen tremendous growth for the mutual benefit of the two countries.

As the Zambian president said in the commemoration ceremony, the two countries were celebrating 60 years of partnership with renewed vigor and more focus on what the partnership means to the two governments.



Tomato farmers in Egypt turn to sun-dried goods for export to boost income

LUXOR, Egypt

In the southern Egyptian village of Al-Baghdadi, Luxor Province, tomatoes are a popular crop among local farmers like Baker Sidqy, thriving in the area's warm temperatures and abundant sunshine.

Tomato prices fluctuate throughout the year. During peak production months, when supply is abundant, prices often drop sharply, resulting in surplus waste. Sidqy said that growing tomatoes is fraught with risks, expressing concern that a significant portion of his harvest may

go to waste. To offset post-harvest losses, Sidqy has turned to the sun-dried tomato export market to boost revenue.

"I learned to dehydrate tomatoes when I realized they were in high demand abroad. Drying tomatoes has given farmers a new lease on life," the 56-year-old man told Xinhua.

Sidqy slices the tomatoes in half and places them on white plastic sheets, where they dry for three days on the roof of his house.

The price of one kilo of fresh tomatoes is 7 Egyptian pounds (14 U.S. cents), while the price of

one kilo of dried tomatoes averages 170 pounds. According to Sidqy, it takes 10 kilos of fresh tomatoes to produce 1 kilo of dried tomatoes.

In July of last year, Sidqy exported 250 kilograms of dried tomatoes to Italy, boosting his family's tomato income by 30 percent.

Hany Fatahallah, an agricultural expert at Egypt's National Research Center, said that sun-dried tomato projects in rural areas of southern Egypt – where many people live below the poverty line – have attracted large numbers of farmers and households. These individuals have

gained economic independence by learning to craft homemade sun-dried tomatoes on their rooftops or in their backyards.

In March 2024, villages in western Luxor exported 350 tons of sun-dried tomatoes in 14 containers to countries across Europe, East Asia, as well as the United Arab Emirates, Brazil, and Oman, according to the expert.

According to data from Egypt's Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reclamation, the country's exports of dried tomatoes exceed 100 million dollars annually. The data also revealed that one hectare yields 35 tons of dried toma-

atoes, which are sold for 350,000 Egyptian pounds.

Adilah Mohamed, an unemployed housewife in her 40s, joined a sun-dried tomato project in Al-Hamidat, another village in Luxor, which provided her with both a skill and a stable income. She worked six months a year, earning 12,000 Egyptian pounds.

Her daughter, a university graduate, along with other family members, also work in similar part-time jobs.

"This project employs many people and allows women to challenge poverty," Mohamed said.

Kenyan brand designs inclusive fashion line for the visually impaired

NAIROBI

IN Nairobi, Hisi Studio is redefining fashion by catering to a group often overlooked by the industry: the blind and visually impaired. Founded by Angela Wanjiku, the company creates clothing with braille prints and tactile designs, ensuring inclusivity and accessibility.

"We create clothing that meets the needs of visually impaired people by adding braille prints to all our pieces," Wanjiku explains. "Some of the phrases include, 'The less we see with our eyes, the more we see with our hearts,' championing a call for inclusion."

Globally, 39 million people are blind, and another 500 million live with visual impairments, according to the World Health Organization. In Kenya alone, 224,000 people are blind, while 750,000 have visual impairments. Despite these numbers, the Kenyan fashion industry has largely ignored this demographic.

Julius Mburu, a visually impaired lawyer and Hisi Studio customer, shares his experience: "The t-shirt I'm wearing allows me to appreciate fashion in a way I never could before. I can read the messages myself, thanks to the tactile and braille designs, without needing anyone else's help."

One of his t-shirts bears the message, "Wade in the water, contend for your future," displayed alongside artwork depicting Mount Kenya's contours.

All of Hisi Studio's materials are locally sourced, and their products are sold through social media and e-commerce platforms. The company also has plans to expand by partnering with retail shops nationwide.

WORLD

Trump's appeal denied in \$5m E. Jean Carroll defamation, sexual assault verdict case

NEW YORK

A federal appeals court on Monday upheld a \$5-million verdict that E. Jean Carroll won against Donald Trump when a jury found the US president-elect liable for sexually abusing and later defaming the former magazine columnist.

A unanimous three-judge panel of the 2nd US Circuit Court of Appeals in Manhattan rejected Trump's argument that the trial judge should not have let jurors hear evidence about the Republican's alleged past sexual misconduct, making the trial and verdict unfair.

The court said that evidence, including Trump bragging about his sexual prowess on an "Access Hollywood" video that surfaced during the 2016 US presidential campaign, established a "repeated, idiosyncratic pattern of conduct" consistent with Carroll's allegations.

"Taking the record as a whole and considering the strength of Ms Carroll's case, we are not persuaded that any claimed error or combination of errors in the district court's evidentiary rulings affected Mr

Trump's substantial rights," the court said in an unsigned decision.

The May 2023 verdict stemmed from an incident around 1996 in a Bergdorf Goodman department store dressing room in Manhattan, where Carroll, now 81, said Trump raped her, and an October 2022 Truth Social post where Trump denied Carroll's claim as a hoax.

Though jurors in federal court in Manhattan did not find that Trump, 78, committed rape, they awarded the former Elle magazine advice columnist \$2.02 million for sexual assault and \$2.98 million for defamation. "Hoax", trump spokesperson says

A different jury ordered Trump in January to pay Carroll \$83.3 million for defaming her and damaging her reputation in June 2019, when he first denied her rape claim.

In both denials, Trump said he did not know Carroll, she was "not my type," and that she fabricated the rape claim to promote her memoir.

Steven Cheung, a Trump spokesperson, said in a statement that Americans "demand an immediate end to the political



Writer E. Jean Carroll (right) and her attorney Roberta Kaplan are outside a Manhattan federal appeals court in New York, Sept 6, 2024. (PHOTO / AP)

weaponization of our justice system and a swift dismissal of all of the Witch Hunts, including the Democrat-funded Carroll Hoax, which will continue to be appealed."

It was not clear if any appeal would go to the US Supreme Court. Trump tapped Cheung last month to be his White House communications director.

Roberta Kaplan, a lawyer for Carroll, said in a statement: "E. Jean Carroll and I are gratified by today's decision."

Carroll's cases are continuing despite Trump's having won a second four-year White House term.

In 1997, in a case involving former President Bill Clinton, the US Supreme Court ruled unanimously that sitting presidents have no immunity from civil litigation in federal court over actions predating and unrelated to their official duties as president. Court: Evidence showed pattern

Trump argued the \$5-million verdict should be thrown out because the trial judge, US District Judge Lewis Kaplan, who is not related to Roberta Kaplan, should not have let jurors hear testimony from two other women who accused him of sexual misconduct.

One, businesswoman Jessica Leeds, said Trump groped her on

a plane in the late 1970s. The other, former People magazine writer Natasha Stoyloff, said Trump forcibly kissed her at his Mar-a-Lago estate in 2005.

Trump's lawyers also said the trial judge should not have let jurors watch the 2005 "Access Hollywood" video, where Trump boasted graphically about forcing himself on women.

But the appeals court said that in each of these encounters, "Mr Trump engaged in an ordinary conversation with a woman he barely knew, then abruptly lunged at her in a semi-public place and proceeded to kiss and forcefully touch her without her consent."

It said this was "relevant to show a pattern tending to directly corroborate witness testimony and to confirm that the alleged sexual assault (of Carroll) actually occurred."

The court also rejected Trump's claim that Kaplan should have allowed evidence that a prominent Democratic critic, billionaire LinkedIn co-founder Reid Hoffman, funded Carroll's case, saying it had "little probative value." Carroll is also a Democrat.

Judge Kaplan also oversaw the trial that ended with the \$83.3 million verdict.

Agencies

'From "shared response" in 2004 tsunami to "vital force" for progress in Indo-Pacific': Jaishankar highlights Quad's progress

NEW DELHI

EXTERNAL Affairs Minister S Jaishankar yesterday marked the 20th anniversary of the Quad, emphasising its progress from providing a "shared response" to the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami into a "vital force stability, progress and prosperity" in the Indo-Pacific region.

He further reaffirmed India's commitment, alongside Australia, Japan, and the United States, to addressing the region's needs.

Sharing a post on X, Jaishankar wrote, "Two decades ago, the idea of Quad began with a shared response to the Indian Ocean tsunami. Today, the Quad stands as a vital force for stability, progress and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific."

"On its 20th anniversary, I join @SenatorWong, FM Takeshi Iwaya and @SecBlinken in reaffirming our commitment to addressing the region's needs together," the post added.

Earlier in the day, commemorating the 20th anniversary of Quad cooperation, India, Australia, Japan, and the United States highlighted the grouping's origins in the 2004 Indian Ocean earthquake and tsunami.

In a joint statement released by the Secretary of State of the United States of America and the Foreign Ministers of Australia, India, and Japan, the group said, "Twenty years ago, in response to the 2004 Indian Ocean earthquake and tsunami, Australia, India, Japan, and the United States came together in service to the people of our region for the first time as the grouping now known as the Quad. The tsunami was one of the worst disasters in history, claiming the lives of nearly a quarter million people and displacing 1.7 million across 14 countries. Together, our four countries contributed over 40,000 emergency responders, working with other partners across the Indo-Pacific region to support millions of people affected by the catastrophe. We honor the memories of those no longer with us and recognise the survivors and the families of those who were lost."

The statement added, "Our foundational commitment to humanitarian assistance and disaster relief remains strong. We continue to work side-by-side to prepare for and respond quickly and effectively to disasters across the region. In 2024, our four countries collectively supported disaster preparedness and life-saving relief efforts across the Indo-Pacific, and we continue to build on those efforts to identify new ways to respond rapidly to humanitarian crises and disasters."

The group further said that over the past 20 years, the Quad has evolved from an initial collaboration for disaster relief into a dynamic partnership committed to addressing the challenges in the Indo-Pacific region.

"What began as an emergency response to a catastrophe has grown into a full-fledged partnership delivering positive outcomes for the people of our region. Quad countries now work together and with partners across the Indo-Pacific to address complex challenges, from fighting climate change, cancer, and pandemics, to bolstering quality infrastructure, maritime domain awareness, STEM education, counter-terrorism efforts, critical and emerging technologies, and cyber security. Since 2021, the Leaders of our four nations have met annually to drive the Quad's positive contributions across South Asia, Southeast Asia, and the Pacific," the joint statement said.

The nations in the joint statement further said that as four partners, they share a vision of a free and open Indo-Pacific that is peaceful, stable, and prosperous, underpinned by effective regional institutions. "We reaffirm our unwavering support for ASEAN's centrality and unity as well as mainstreaming and implementation of the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific. We respect Pacific-led regional architecture, foremost the Pacific Islands Forum. We are also steadfast in our support for the Indian Ocean Rim Association, the region's premier organisation. The Quad is committed to working together in responding to the future needs of the region," the statement said.

The Quad is a diplomatic partnership between Australia, India, Japan, and the United States committed to supporting an open, stable and prosperous Indo-Pacific that is inclusive and resilient. The Quad's origins date back to our collaboration in response to the December 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami.

ANI

Israeli attacks in Gaza dismantle means of survival: UN

UNITED NATIONS

ISRAEL'S onslaught on health care and emergency services, crippling humanitarian access and attacks on civilians in Gaza are dismantling the very means of survival, UN humanitarians said on Monday.

The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) issued the warning after the announcement by World Health Organization (WHO) Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus that following an Israeli raid on Kamal Adwan Hospital of North Gaza and the detention on Friday of its director, Hussam Abu Safiya, the facility closed.

On X, formerly known as Twitter, Tedros said that patients in critical condition were taken to the non-functioning Indonesian Hospital. Dr. Safiya's location is unknown and Dr. Tedros called for his immediate release.

"Amid ongoing chaos in northern Gaza WHO and partners today (Monday) delivered basic medical and hygiene supplies, food and water to Indonesian Hospital and transferred 10 critical patients to Al-Shifa Hospital," Tedros said.

"Four patients were detained during the transfer. We urge Israel to ensure their health care needs and rights are upheld."

Tedros said that hospitals have be-



This picture taken from Gaza City shows smoke billowing after an Israeli strike in the north of the Palestinian territory on Dec 29, 2024. AFP

come battlegrounds, and the health system is under severe threat.

He reported attacks on Al-Ahli and Al-Wafa Hospitals in Gaza City, both of which were damaged, and called to stop attacks on hospitals and to secure access to health care.

OCHA said that on Sunday, it joined the delivery with WHO, the World Food Programme (WFP), the Palestine Red Crescent Society and the UN Department for Safety.

The team reported that the hospital has no water, electricity or sanitation. The office

said the team's mission to North Gaza was exceptional because most of the 150 mission attempts since October have been denied by the Israeli authorities.

Even the few that were initially agreed faced heavy impediments. It said that between Friday and Sunday, three of four attempts to access the area were denied by Israeli authorities.

Only the joint team effort was let through, but it faced significant impediments. "It should not require breaking a siege to help

survivors in critical need. Aid workers must be granted safe and unhindered access to assist people wherever they are."

OCHA said humanitarian access remains systematically hindered across the Gaza Strip.

Since Friday, more than 60 percent of the 42 UN-coordinated movements were denied, interfered with or impeded on the ground.

The office said another constraint on delivering aid in Gaza is armed looting of humanitarian relief convoys.

Two incidents recorded over the past three days in southern Gaza affected dozens of truckloads of supplies and further exposed drivers to serious risks. Fighting and Israeli restrictions on commercial and other imports also persist.

These continue to dangerously paralyze the humanitarian operation when families urgently need more food, shelter materials, and clothing to survive winter weather.

To ensure that China-US sci-tech cooperation truly benefits both countries and world

ON Dec. 13, China and the United States signed a protocol to extend the Agreement Between the United States and China on Cooperation in Science and Technology for an additional five years. The extension of the 45-year-old Agreement is of great significance that goes beyond the realm of technology.

Viewed from a historical context, the Agreement served as an ice-breaking accelerator for China-U.S. relations. It was one of the first inter-governmental agreements signed between the two countries after the establishment of diplomatic relations, playing a crucial role in stabilizing bilateral relations, enhancing mutual understanding, propelling sci-tech progress, and benefiting the peoples of both countries.

Under the guidance of the Agreement, China and the U.S. have created numerous stories of mutual benefit. The sci-tech cooperation between the two countries has evolved from sporadic communication in the early days to comprehensive, multi-level, and wide-ranging collaboration, covering more than 20 sub-fields including energy, environment, natural resources, medicine and health, earthquakes, oceans, and atmosphere.

For instance, the two countries launched a "folic acid revolution" within the framework of the Agreement, which confirmed the remarkable effects of folic acid supplementation in preventing neural tube defects, saving millions of newborn lives worldwide.

The Daya Bay Reactor Neutrino Experiment is one of the largest collaborative projects between China and the U.S. in basic research. It is also the second-largest overseas investment by the U.S. Department of Energy in particle physics, second only to the Large Hadron Collider. The groundbreaking results from this experiment were recognized by Science Magazine as one of the top 10 scientific breakthroughs of 2012.

The cooperation between China and the U.S. in influenza surveillance has substantially strengthened China's influenza monitoring capabilities, expanding China's influenza monitoring sites from a few dozen to over 30,000. The Chinese National Influenza Center was designated as a World Health Organization Collaborating Center, providing significant support for the global influenza vaccine development and pandemic preparedness.

Today, the Agreement has become a propeller for the steady, sound and sustainable development of China-U.S. relations. Chinese President Xi Jinping pointed out that as two major countries, China and the U.S. should bear in mind the interests of the whole world, and inject more certainty and positive energy into the turbulent world. This is also a consensus widely shared by insightful American individuals.

Over 1,000 American scientists and scholars signed a joint letter urging the extension of the Agreement, and many American experts emphasized the need for sci-tech exchanges to

prevent bilateral relations from "derailing." They argued that restricting sci-tech cooperation with China would inevitably hinder the progress of U.S. science and technology.

In recent years, certain individuals in the U.S. have unilaterally pursued technological hegemony, placing undue faith in suppressing China's technological advancements. This approach of "technological isolationism" will ultimately harm the U.S. interests and the shared interests of the world. The extension of the Agreement underscores the aspiration of both countries - and the broader international community - for mutually beneficial sci-tech cooperation between China and the U.S., rather than decoupling and severing industrial and supply chains. It reflects a call

for openness and shared benefits, as opposed to building "small yard with high fences."

Looking ahead, the Agreement should serve as a multiplier for China-U.S. relations benefiting both countries and the wider world.

The advancement of science and technology thrives in openness, which is a fundamental rule of sci-tech progress. Recently, the First Committee of the 79th Session of the United Nations General Assembly overwhelmingly adopted a resolution proposed by China - "Promoting International Cooperation on Peaceful Uses in the Context of International Security," which calls for the peaceful use of science and technology and safeguarding the development rights of all countries. **People's Daily**

Xi calls Carter a promoter of China-US ties

BEIJING

CHINESE President Xi Jinping on Monday offered his condolences over the death of Jimmy Carter, saying the former US president was a driving force behind the establishment of diplomatic ties between the two countries.

In his message, Xi called Carter a promoter and decision-maker in establishing Sino-US diplomatic relations, noting that the late US leader had long contributed to the development of bilateral ties, as well as the friendly exchanges and cooperation between the two countries.

Carter, who served as the 39th president of the United States from 1977 to 1981, died on Sunday at the age of 100, according to the Carter Center.

On behalf of the Chinese government and people, as well as in his own name, Xi expressed deep condolences over the passing of Carter and extended sincere sympathy to the Carter family.

The Chinese leader said that he deeply



regrets the former president's passing.

Noting that the China-US relationship is one of the most important bilateral ties in the world, he said China is ready to work with the US side to focus on the fundamental interests of their people and meet the common expectations of the international community, and advance China-US relations along the right track of sound, stable and sustainable development.

Xinhua

UN: Israeli attacks in Gaza dismantle means of survival

UNITED NATIONS

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African economy maintains resilient growth in 2024 amid challenges

NAIROBI

THE African economy has maintained a steady growth in 2024, demonstrating resilience and potential despite global challenges such as geopolitical conflicts and growing protectionism.

Over the past year, African countries have intensified domestic reforms while promoting global cooperation. These efforts have resulted in significant advancements in critical sectors, laying a solid foundation for sustainable progress. At the same time, China-Africa cooperation has continued to inject fresh momentum into the continent's development, fostering innovation and contributing to long-term growth.

STRONG GROWTH

According to the African Economic Outlook 2024 report by the African Development Bank, Africa's economy is projected to grow by 3.7 percent in 2024, outpacing the anticipated global economic growth rate of 3.2 percent. This upward trend is expected to continue, with growth climbing to 4.3 percent in 2025, positioning Africa as the world's second-fastest-growing region. The continent's growth momentum remained robust throughout 2024, driven by increased infrastructure investment and strengthened regional cooperation. East Africa is projected to lead the way as Africa's fastest-growing region, with real gross domestic product (GDP) growth surging from an estimated 1.5 percent in 2023 to an impressive 4.9 percent in 2024. Similarly, West Africa displayed strong dynamism, with growth forecasted to rise from 3.6 percent in 2023 to 4.2 percent in 2024.

Data from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) indicate strong growth momentum across many African countries that don't rely on resources. Fueled by regional integration and infrastructure investments, Rwanda's economy is projected to grow by 7 percent. Cote d'Ivoire, driven by robust growth in telecommunications, manufacturing investments and agricultural exports, is expected to expand by 6.5 percent. Meanwhile, Kenya's growth is forecasted to reach 5 percent, supported by a recovery in agriculture and tourism. However, resource-dependent countries have registered comparatively sluggish growth. Nigeria, for example, is expected to record a GDP growth of 2.9 percent, hindered by challenges such as low oil production, the IMF said.

DIVERSIFIED DEVELOPMENT

In 2024, the diversification of Africa's eco-



This photo taken on Dec. 1, 2024 shows a train of the Lagos Rail Mass Transit (LRMT) Blue Line in Lagos, Nigeria. Xinhua

nomically diverse economy has become increasingly prominent. Regional economic integration, digital transformation, scientific and technological innovation and talent cultivation have emerged as key catalysts propelling the continent's economic growth. Significant progress has been made in the development of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). The AfCFTA has been launched in countries such as Cameroon, South Africa and Ghana, creating new opportunities for economic growth across the continent. Al-Mal News, an Egyptian economic daily, reported that intra-African trade is projected to soar from 192.2 billion U.S. dollars in 2023 to 520 billion dollars by 2030, driven by the AfCFTA. African countries have also significantly ramped up investments in digital infrastructure, fueling a surge in the development of the digital economy and e-commerce.

According to the International Telecommunication Union, the number of Internet users in Africa has skyrocketed from 181 million in 2014 to nearly 646 million in 2024, with projections indicating it could surpass 1.1 billion by 2029. This exponential growth is enabling the continent to integrate more effectively into the global economic system. Thanks to this digital transformation, mobile payments have rapidly increased across Africa. According to a report from the Global System for Mobile Communications Association, in 2023, the number of mobile money accounts in Africa reached 856 million, accounting for 49 percent of registered accounts worldwide. In addition, African countries are actively driving industrial upgrading and technological innovation through measures such as establishing research funds, developing technology parks, and attracting the return of overseas talent.

ENHANCED COOPERATION

Despite steady growth in 2024, the African economy faces challenges that require concerted efforts both within the continent and through cooperation with the global community in the coming years. The IMF said that Africa's economic outlook is under increasing pressure from a turbulent global environment characterized by high inflation, rising borrowing costs, climate-induced disasters and political instability. Kenyan economist James Shikwati has said that infrastructure development remains a bottleneck for Africa's economic progress. The continent lags behind global standards in critical sectors such as transportation, communication and energy, which not only hinders trade and investment but also slows industrialization efforts and regional connectivity. To address these challenges, African countries are increasingly strengthening ties with BRICS countries and other emerging market economies to diversify partnerships and tap into new opportunities.

In 2024, Egypt and Ethiopia officially became BRICS members, expanding cooperation with China through the mechanism. The Beijing Summit of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation held in September further strengthened the foundation of China-Africa cooperation. China has consistently increased its support for Africa's regional connectivity, providing comprehensive empowerment for Africa's development in areas such as infrastructure construction, technology, talent, and markets. Under the frameworks of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation and the Belt and Road Initiative, China and Africa have been working together over the past year to advance infrastructure development, with tangible results across the entire African continent.

Eurasia seeks peace, cooperation in 2024 amidst turbulence

MOSCOW

THE Eurasian region has remained a focal point on the global stage throughout 2024, grappling with persistent conflicts and instability.

Despite these challenges, the complex international landscape has not deterred Eurasian countries from their historical pursuit of peace, cooperation, and development. Their aspirations for lasting peace and common prosperity remain unwavering.

ESCALATING UKRAINE CRISIS, RISING TERRORIST THREATS

The Ukraine crisis, now exceeding 1,000 days, shows no signs of abating. It has inflicted mounting casualties, devastated infrastructure and displaced countless families. The risk of spillover into neighboring regions grows with each passing day, further complicating prospects for peace. In August, Ukrainian forces launched cross-border operations in Russia's Kursk region, supported by U.S.- and NATO-supplied long-range precision-guided weaponry. In response, Russia intensified strikes on Ukraine's military and energy infrastructure. November saw Russia firing its Oreshnik intermediate-range ballistic missile on the city of Dnipro.

Meanwhile, Russian President Vladimir Putin approved updates to the country's nuclear doctrine, allowing the use of nuclear weapons in response to conventional missile attacks supported by nuclear powers. Beyond the Russia-Ukraine conflict, the region continues to face the menace of terrorism. In March, a tragic terrorist attack at Moscow's Crocus City Hall claimed over 140 lives and left 550 injured, marking one of the deadliest attacks Russia suffered in decades and underscoring the urgent need for enhanced regional security measures.

HEIGHTENED TENSIONS

The year 2024 witnessed heightened tensions between Russia, the



Russian President Vladimir Putin (R) speaks during his annual press conference in Moscow, Russia, Dec. 19, 2024. Xinhua

region's major country, and the West, as the United States and its NATO allies continued to exacerbate the situation in Ukraine. In March, Putin was re-elected Russian president with a landslide victory of 87.28 percent of votes. For many observers, Putin's reelection is a sign of continuity and a reaffirmation of Russia's resolve to resist Western pressure while emphasizing national sovereignty, security, and stability. Russia has repeatedly cautioned against NATO's growing presence in Asia-Pacific and its expanding influence in the South Caucasus.

In December, Putin warned that Western countries are pushing Moscow to its red line and announcing plans for the mass production of its advanced Oreshnik weaponry. In response to the conflict, the European Union imposed three additional sanction packages against Russia in 2024, the latest in December targeting shadow fleets seeking to evade the Western oil price cap on Russian exports. Most analysts agree that the conflict has profoundly reshaped relations between Russia and the West, making any kind of partnership extremely difficult.

MULTILATERAL COOPERATION

Amid rising geopolitical tensions, regional nations are increasingly turning to multilateral frameworks like the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and BRICS to foster stability and development. In July, leaders of the SCO member states convened in Astana, Kazakhstan to discuss cooperation in political security, economic and trade investment, transportation, energy, and culture and people-to-people exchanges, and adopted 25 key documents. The summit underscored the importance of maintaining regional security, combating the "three evil forces" of terrorism, extremism, and separatism, upholding the SCO Charter's objectives, and advancing the Shanghai Spirit with determination.

According to Kazakh President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, the SCO has become an effective mechanism for fostering interstate relations, guided by the principles of the Shanghai Spirit, which features mutual trust, mutual benefit, equality, consultation, respect for diversity of civilizations, and pursuit of common development. The recently concluded BRICS sum-

mit in Kazan, Russia once again emphasized the region's growing interests in achieving lasting peace and sustained development. During the summit, leaders from the Global South and Eurasian countries discussed important issues such as world peace and stability, governance reforms, development, and the international financial structure.

CHALLENGES AND HOPE

As winter grips Ukraine, the human toll of its conflict with Russia has grown ever more dire. According to the UN, over 14.6 million Ukrainians required humanitarian assistance in 2024, with millions expected to remain dependent on aid into 2025. Public sentiment on both sides increasingly favors peace, with over half of Ukrainians now supporting negotiations, according to a recent Gallup poll. Similar trends are emerging in Russia. While U.S. President-elect Donald Trump has expressed confidence in his ability to resolve the conflict quickly, most experts consider an immediate resolution improbable due to fundamental differences in negotiation stances. Analysts predict prolonged negotiations will be interspersed with continued fighting, as both Ukraine and Russia seek to strengthen their positions ahead of Trump's inauguration.

Meanwhile, the year 2025 promises to be pivotal for the region, with significant events on the horizon. The year 2025 will mark the 80th anniversary of the victory of World War II with commemorative events planned in countries, including Russia, to reaffirm a shared commitment to upholding historical justice. Besides, SCO member countries will convene for their annual summit, aiming to promote shared prosperity and steer global governance toward a more equitable global governance framework. Amid the uncertainties and challenges, the call for peace and collaboration grows stronger, offering hope for a more stable and cooperative future in Eurasia.

Several people arrested as new wave of protests erupts in Kenya

NAIROBI

SEVERAL people, including an opposition politician, were arrested on Monday as protests erupted across Kenya over the rising abduction of social media activists. Businesses were also disrupted in various towns as angry youths took to the streets, demanding action from the Kenyan government.

Carrying placards and chanting anti-government slogans, the protesters marched through towns, including Kenya's capital, Nairobi. Police fired teargas and engaged in running battles with the youths in an attempt to disperse them. "No more abductions, no more abductions," the youths chanted. On Kenyatta Avenue in Nairobi, protesters read aloud the names of social media activists who had been recently abducted or had disappeared without a trace. Some carried roses, offering them to police officers as a gesture of peace.

Okiya Omtatah, an opposition senator and protester, decried the abductions before being arrested alongside other demonstrators. "If they have committed a crime, let them be prosecuted and presented in court to defend themselves," he said. Police erected roadblocks on major routes into Nairobi, barring public transport minibuses, locally known as matatus, from entering the city center. Passengers were frisked as officers searched for potential protesters. In Kitengela, a Nairobi

suburb and previous protest hotspot, police carried out road checks and air surveillance to thwart gatherings. Protests also erupted in Embu and Nyeri, where demonstrators clashed with police while demanding the release of a young social media activist.

This new wave of unrest came six months after youth-led protests in June over proposed tax increases, which were eventually shelved after public outcry. Although those demonstrations subsided following the dismissal of President William Ruto's cabinet, online activism persisted. Youths have used social media platforms to critique the government, often employing creative tools such as cartoons, short videos, and artificial intelligence-generated images. However, a worrying pattern of abductions targeting vocal activists has emerged. The Kenya National Commission on Human Rights, a state-funded body, reported that 82 people remain unaccounted for since the June protests, with at least 50 killed and over 300 injured during demonstrations in recent months.

Addressing the nation on Dec. 27, Ruto pledged to investigate the abductions and take action against those responsible. "What has been said about abductions, we will stop them, so Kenyan youth can live in peace, but they should have discipline and be polite so that we can build Kenya together," he said.



Ramovic's early days at Yanga: A promising start amid high expectations

By Correspondent Seth Mapoli

ON November 15, 2024, Sead Ramovic was officially introduced as the new head coach of Young Africans Sports Club.

This announcement came swiftly after the club parted ways with Miguel Angel Gamondi, a coach whose tenure had brought both triumphs and challenges.

Just over a month later, Ramovic (pictured) in charge offer a glimpse into the changes and momentum he has brought to the reigning Tanzanian champions.

Ramovic transitioned to Young Africans from South Africa's TS Galaxy, stepping into a role left by Gamondi, who had experienced a mixed spell in his final days.

Despite leading Young Africans to significant victories, including a flawless run in the CAF Champions League knockout stage where the team netted 17 goals without conceding, Gamondi's tenure ended on a sour note.

Consecutive league losses to Azam FC (1-0) and Tabora United (3-1) raised questions about the team's form and cohesion.

In contrast, Ramovic's arrival has seen Young Africans regain their footing. In his first seven competitive matches, the team has shown renewed energy, blending tactical adjustments and inclusivity in player selection to impressive effect.

The changes in the team's approach are evident both in terms of results and the rejuvenation of individual players.

Gamondi's tenure, while ending controversially, had its high points. Under his guidance, Young Africans excelled in various competitions, including a dominant league campaign where they played ten matches, winning eight and losing two.

The team scored 16 goals and conceded just four. Additionally, Gamondi guided Young Africans to the Community Shield title, overcoming arch-



rivals Simba SC (1-0) and Azam FC (4-1).

However, a dip in form and goal-scoring efficiency towards the end of his tenure hinted at underlying challenges.

Ramovic has sought to address these issues head-on. His focus on teamwork, tactical flexibility, and giving opportunities to previously overlooked players has already begun to bear fruit.

Young Africans' league form under Ramovic began with a solid 2-0 victory away at Namungo, followed by a thrilling 3-2 win over Mashujaa FC and a commanding 4-0 triumph against Tanzania Prisons and Dodoma Jiji and then 5-0 against Fountain Gate.

One of the most noticeable aspects of Ramovic's leadership is his inclusive approach to squad rotation. Several players who were on the periphery during Gamondi's time have been reintegrated into the team. This strategy has not only increased competition within the squad but also improved the overall morale.

Defender Kibwana Shomari, for instance, had seen limited opportunities under Gamondi despite being a versatile player who excelled under former coach Nasreddine Nabi.

Ramovic gave Kibwana a fresh start, allowing him to feature prominently in matches against Mashujaa FC, Tanzania Prisons, Dodoma Jiji and Fountain Gate. Similarly, Farid Mussa, who had been sidelined due to injury, made a triumphant

return, earning valuable minutes in recent games.

These decisions have not only strengthened Young Africans' defensive solidity but also provided fresh options in attack. Mussa's performance against Tanzania Prisons was particularly noteworthy, as he played a crucial role in the team's dominant victory.

Among the standout stories of Ramovic's early days is the resurgence of striker Prince Dube. The Zimbabwean forward, who joined the Jangwani-based side from Azam FC, endured a frustrating start to the season, failing to score in nine league matches under Gamondi.

Despite showing glimpses of his potential in other competitions, including the Community Shield and CAF Champions League, Dube's goal drought in the league was a point of concern.

Under Ramovic, however, Dube has rediscovered his scoring touch. In just six matches, he has been directly involved in seven goals, including a remarkable hat trick against Tanzania Prisons.

His ability to link up with teammates and create space has also improved, making him a more complete striker. Fans and analysts alike have taken notice, with Dube emerging as a key player in Young Africans' attacking setup.

Ramovic's impact extends beyond individual performances. The team as a whole has embraced a more cohesive play-

ing style, characterized by fluid passing, tactical discipline, and a high pressing game.

Players are now more willing to support each other both offensively and defensively, leading to a higher goal tally and fewer mistakes in critical moments.

This newfound cooperation was evident in the way Young Africans dismantled Tanzania Prisons. Ramovic's emphasis on creating and converting chances has seen the team score 16 goals in just four league matches.

The coach's ability to instill confidence and belief in his players has been instrumental in these successes.

While the early results are promising, Ramovic's journey with Young Africans is just beginning. The coach has inherited a team with high expectations, both domestically and in continental competitions.

Maintaining the momentum and building on the team's recent performances will be key to his long-term success.

Young Africans' next challenges will test the resilience and adaptability of Ramovic's strategies. As the league progresses and the CAF Champions League resumes, the coach will need to balance squad rotation, tactical adjustments, and player development to keep the team competitive on all fronts.

Ramovic as Young Africans' head coach has already marked a significant shift in the team's dynamics. By addressing weaknesses, fostering inclusivity, and bringing out the best in players like Dube, he has set the stage for a potentially transformative season.

As the season unfolds, the Young Africans faithful will be eager to see whether Ramovic can guide the team to new heights and solidify their dominance in Tanzanian football.

For now, his tenure is off to a promising start, with both fans and players optimistic about what lies ahead.

Kaizer Chiefs eye Clement Mzize amid competition from Wydad Casablanca

By Guardian Correspondent & Agencies

SOUTH African football giants Kaizer Chiefs have set their sights on Young Africans striker Clement Mzize as they seek to bolster their attacking options during the January transfer window.

The 20-year-old Tanzanian international (pictured) has become a key target for Chiefs as they address their goal-scoring challenges.

According to reliable sources, Kaizer Chiefs have inquired about Mzize as part of their plans to sign at least one striker before the transfer window closes.

Insiders indicate that the Glamour Boys view Mzize as a feasible option compared to other high-profile targets like Fiston Mayele or Michael Olunga, whose financial demands may exceed Chiefs' budget.

"What they are looking at now is finding a solution. They've been exploring possibilities, but financial issues have been a hurdle. With Clement Mzize, the chances of signing him are higher.

"He's young, promising, and could significantly address Chiefs' goal-scoring problems. That's why they've turned their attention to him."

Another factor that could facilitate the potential transfer is the strong working relationship between Young Africans and Kaizer Chiefs. This collaboration may ease negotiations if Chiefs formally pursue Mzize.

"There is a good business understanding between Young Africans and Kaizer Chiefs. Chiefs are hopeful that Young Africans will understand their plea for a striker to strengthen their squad. If Mzize is the chosen player, both clubs could work together to finalize a deal. Chiefs have shown interest, but everything will depend on the discussions between the two sides."

Mzize was promoted from youth

team in 2022 as a teenager and has quickly made his mark in Tanzanian football. The forward has showcased his talent in the Premier League and the CAF Champions League, scoring crucial goals over the past two seasons.

Notably, he played a pivotal role in Young Africans' 4-0 victory over Kaizer Chiefs in the Toyota Cup earlier this year, where he netted the third goal. His performances on the continental stage have demonstrated his ability to compete at the highest level.

Kaizer Chiefs are not the only club interested in Mzize. Back in October, Moroccan giants Wydad Casablanca were said to have made a formal offer of USD 500,000 for the striker. The three-time CAF Champions League winners also proposed a lucrative package, including covering all expenses for Young Africans' pre-season trip to Morocco next year.

Additionally, Wydad's proposal included performance-based incentives, promising Young Africans additional compensation if Mzize achieved milestones such as winning the top scorer award in Morocco or contributing to Wydad's success in the Botola league, Moroccan Cup, or African Football League.

Despite Wydad's enticing offer, Young Africans decided to retain the talented striker, emphasizing his value to the team.

As Kaizer Chiefs continue their search for a striker, Mzize's name remains prominent on their radar. The young forward's proven track record, potential for growth, and affordability compared to other targets make him an attractive option.

Attempts to contact representatives from both Kaizer Chiefs and Young Africans for comments were unsuccessful at the time of publishing.

Dauids praises Simba's resilience and winning momentum

By Correspondent Nassir Nchimbi



SIMBA SC coach Fadlu Dauids has praised his players' readiness and winning momentum after the team concluded the first half of the Premier League season with 40 points, securing first place.

Simba returned to league play after earning six points from three CAF Confederation Cup group stage matches, which included a win against Bravos Do Maquis, a loss to CS Constantine, and a 2-1 victory over CS Sfaxien.

Dauids (pictured), known for his strategy of squad rotation, led Simba to four consecutive league victories against KenGold, Kagera Sugar, JKT Tanzania, and Singida Black Stars after resuming domestic competition.

During this four-game winning streak, the Msimbazi Street-based club scored nine goals and conceded just two, finishing the first round on a high note.

Simba boast the league's best defensive record, having conceded only five goals, and is second in goals scored with 31.

Through 15 league match-

es, Simba lead the standings with 40 points, one point ahead of defending champions Young Africans SC.

Under Dauids' leadership, the team has recorded 13 wins, one draw, and one loss. Their sole league defeat came against Young Africans in October, and the team is determined to end their rivals' dominance.

Reflecting on the successful first half of the Premier League season, Dauids commended his players for their resilience and never-give-up attitude, particularly in securing last-minute victories in several matches.

"First, I want to commend my players for their readiness in various Premier League matches. It hasn't been easy, and in some games, we had to maintain intense focus until the very last minute to secure victories. This demonstrates the players' maturity and preparedness."

"I frequently rotate the squad to give every player an opportunity to play. This allows some players to regain fitness and recover while also maintaining high momentum across the team. This approach has

No one expected Chelsea to be where they are now, says boss Maresca

LONDON

IPSWICH Town put a dent in Chelsea's Premier League title hopes with a 2-0 win at Portman Road on Monday, but the west London side's head coach Enzo Maresca said no one expected his young team to be in their current position this season.

Chelsea were stunned by the promoted side after Liam Delap and Omari Hutchinson scored either side of the break, which dropped Maresca's side down to fourth place, 10 points behind leaders Liverpool who have a game in hand.

Having finished sixth in the last campaign and 12th in the 2022-23 season, Chelsea hired Maresca in June after he guided Leicester City to the English Championship title in his first season in charge.

"Not one of us in this room expected us to be where we are now," Maresca told reporters. "This means and shows that we are in the right direction, as I've said many times, but also shows that we are far from competing (with) consistency and to be there with the best teams in England.

"I think we (have) to be satisfied with where we are, but at the same time we need to know we (can) do things better."

Maresca has consistently played down his expensively assembled squad's title chances, despite some impressive victories this season.

Chelsea have now collected just one point from their last three league outings. But the Italian said recent results were unavoidable.

"We expected this kind of moment during the season because we know that this kind of moment belongs to football. It is almost impossible to have a season where you do not have a moment like now for us," he said.

REUTERS

Referees to explain VAR decisions to stadium in League Cup semis

LONDON

REFEREES will explain VAR decisions to the crowd in a trial measure to be implemented in the League Cup semi-final matches next week, the English Football League (EFL) said on Monday.

As part of the trial, referees will use the stadium public address system to announce the final decision following a visit to the VAR pitchside monitor, or after decisions made on matters such as accidental handball by a scorer or offside judgments.

"The new pilot forms part of PGMOL's broader commitment to transparency and embracing technological advancements for the benefit of Match Officials and fans," the EFL said in a statement.

In-stadium VAR announcements have already been made in trial runs at FIFA tournaments including the Women's World Cup last year and also at the 2023 Club World Cup.

VAR is only used in the League Cup at the semi-final stage, and the trial will cover both legs of the Arsenal versus Newcastle United and Tottenham Hotspur against Liverpool ties.

The first-leg matches take place at Arsenal's Emirates Stadium on Jan. 7 and at the Tottenham Hotspur Stadium the following day.

REUTERS

Proud Conceicao ready to work hard and take Milan back where they belong

MILAN

NEW AC Milan manager Sergio Conceicao said he is prepared for the tough job ahead as he aims to turn the team into a side worthy of the club's heritage, and his first task will bring him up against his son at Juventus.

Conceicao was appointed on Monday after the club sacked Paulo Fonseca, with the club eighth in the Serie A standings and already out of the title race, after seven wins from their opening 17 games leaves them 14 points off leaders Atalanta.

"I'm proud to take on this adventure. The emotions are temporary because we need to work," Conceicao said.

"We need to have a warm heart and cool head to work as hard as we can and win the matches. That's what we want because we represent a great club on a global level and we need to be worthy of this great club."

Conceicao was to depart with his players for Saudi Arabia later yesterday, as his first game in charge comes in Riyadh on Friday when Milan take on Juventus in the semi-final of the Italian Super Cup.

"We don't have much time but that's absolutely not an excuse," the new manager said.

"With the time at my disposal, I have to work as hard as I can so that the players understand what they have to do, first as individuals and then be a strong team in every game we have."

Conceicao, who played with Lazio, Inter Milan and Parma in Italy, will have good memories of the Super Cup, and playing against Juventus.

REUTERS

Amorim says Manchester United could be in relegation battle

By Lori Ewing

RUBEN Amorim called it "embarrassing" as a Manchester United manager to be discussing the threat of relegation, but after Monday's miserable 2-0 Premier League loss to Newcastle United he conceded that is the reality his team are facing.

Newcastle's Alexander Isak and Joelinton headed early goals to hand Amorim's team their fifth loss in their last six league games. They go into the new year 14th in the table, much closer to the relegation zone than the Champions League positions.

"I think (relegation) is a possibility and we have to be clear with our fans. We have to change something but this season will be really hard on everybody. It can make us stronger and we have to fight," Amorim said.

"It's also my fault in this moment, because I think the team is not improved, I think it is a little bit lost in this moment. So it's a little bit embarrassing to be much as United coach and to lose a lot of games. But we have to cope with that, difficult moments in the life of everybody. So it's a hard moment."

Amorim has had anything but a dream start to his United career, suffering five defeats in his first eight league games – the worst record for a Manchester United manager in 103 years.

"Worrying times for



Manchester United manager Ruben Amorim and players look dejected after the Premier League match against Newcastle United at Old Trafford, in Manchester, Britain on December 30, 2024. REUTERS

Manchester United and Ruben Amorim," former United defender Gary Neville said on Sky Sports.

"He came in as a young manager and knew it was going to be a big job, but it is far bigger than he could have ever imagined."

Neville called United "the worst pound for pound team in the country."

There have been questions over Amorim's commitment to his tactical 3-4-3 approach, and there were even more after Monday's loss.

The defensive issues that plagued former manager Erik ten Hag have haunted Amorim as well, with both goals on

Monday coming largely thanks to blunders in the back line.

"Of course, I didn't choose the players specifically for that position, but that I already knew," Amorim said, when asked if he has the talent to play his formation. "I have to sell my idea, if I'm going to change all the time it is going to be even worse."

"But I understand that they have a lot of difficulties, because they spend two years playing one way, and then they are playing another, and with a lot of losses, is really tough on them, and you can feel it during the game."

"I have to sell my idea. I don't have another

one."

One of the game's ugliest moments came when Amorim took struggling Joshua Zirkzee off in the 33rd minute to boos from the Old Trafford crowd.

Meanwhile, Newcastle United manager Eddie Howe said his side's winning run was built on defensive improvement after they claimed a fourth straight Premier League victory with a 2-0 win at Manchester United on Monday.

Newcastle have conceded just once in their last five games in all competitions, with four successive clean sheets in the league helping them climb to fifth.

"Early in the season

we were on the other end of it by conceding early goals and it makes such a difference," Howe told the BBC.

"We gave ourselves mountains to climb at times, particularly on the road, and it is great to reverse it the last few games."

"Those goals have helped with momentum and confidence and from that point we have never looked back."

Howe marked out goalkeeper Martin Dubravka for praise but said the whole side had helped deliver the clean sheet.

"Really pleased for Martin and the back line, the whole team really, for the clean sheet," he

added. "Historically we have prided ourselves on being strong defensively and it is great to see us returning to that."

Early goals from Alexander Isak and Joelinton earned Newcastle the win, which put them just three points off Chelsea in fourth.

"Confidence is the ultimate thing that makes the difference," Howe added. "The players are playing in their best positions and look happy and comfortable and our injury record has also improved from last year."

Newcastle next visit Tottenham Hotspur in the league on Saturday.

REUTERS

Barcelona lose another appeal to register Olmo

BARCELONA

BARCELONA have lost another appeal for the precautionary registration of Dani Olmo for the rest of the season on Monday, one day before the deadline to register the Spanish international.

Barcelona signed Olmo (pictured) in August for around 55 million euros (\$57.22 million) but with the club unable to meet LaLiga's wage cap, the attacking midfielder was registered for the first half of the season only.

The four-month allowance is set to expire at the end of the month.

The club managed to register Olmo after long-term injuries kept first team players out of the squad for months, allowing Barca to allocate a portion of their wages to register the 26-year-old, along with forward Pau Victor.

On Friday, the Commercial Court number 10 of Barcelona rejected the club's request to provisionally register Olmo, and the Court of First Instance number 47 of Barcelona has agreed with that ruling on Monday.

According to LaLiga, the court rejected the precautionary registration of Olmo, since none of the necessary prerequisites for the adoption

of the precautionary measure were met.

LaLiga also defended the competence of its Delegate Commission to approve its budgeting rules, and that this has never been questioned by any club, including Barcelona.

The initial decision to not register Olmo was taken by LaLiga's Budget Validation Body.

That decision was then confirmed in three separate appeals by its Financial Fair Play Committee, its Social Appeals Committee and by the UEFA Second Instance Licensing Committee of the Spanish Football Federation.

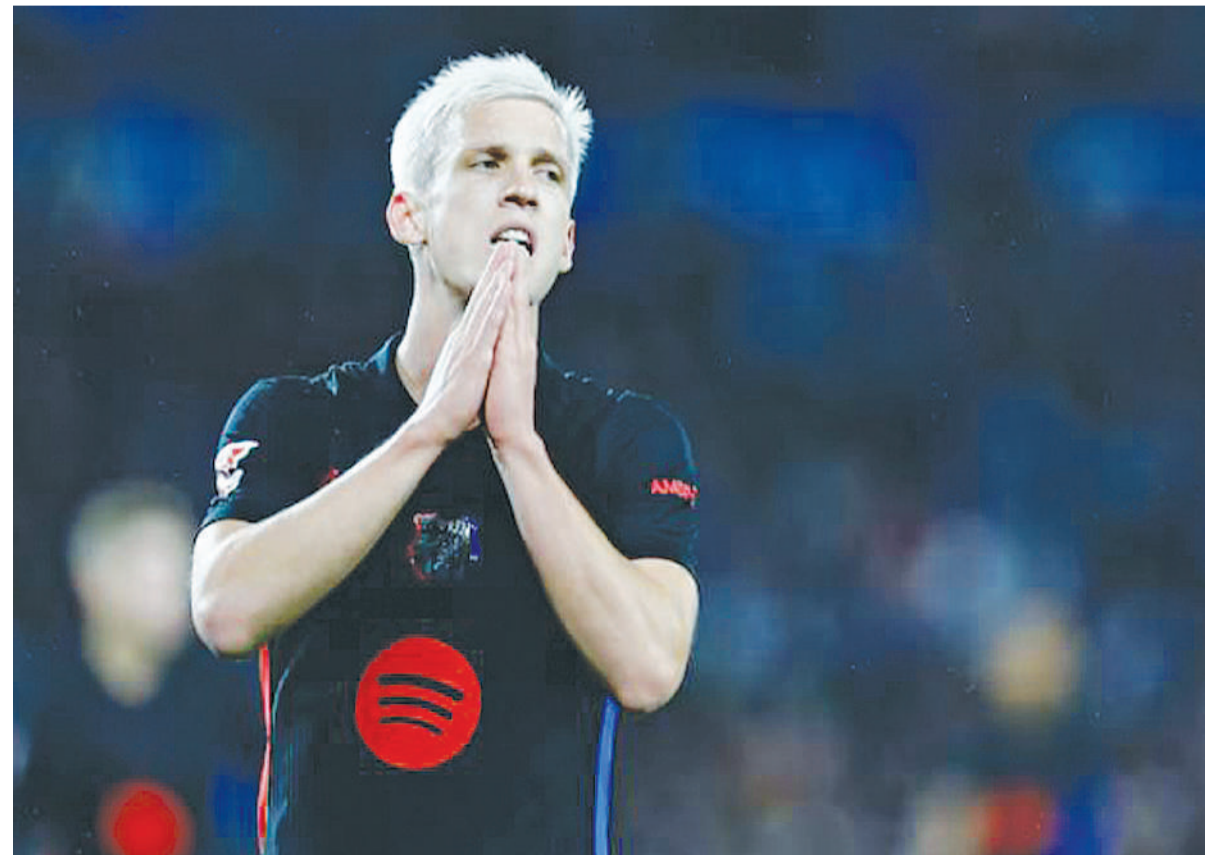
Barcelona then decided on the judicial route but now face a race against time to find an alternative plan.

Spanish media reports say that Barcelona are planning to use the sale of VIP boxes at the Camp Nou stadium which could bring in over 100 million euros, which will need the approval of LaLiga. Reuters has contacted the club for comment.

Barcelona are third in the LaLiga standings, three points behind leaders Atletico Madrid, and their next game is a Copa del Rey round of 32 tie away to fourth-tier Barbastro on Saturday.

(\$1 = 0.9613 euros)

REUTERS



Gwiji by David Chikoko



Amorim says Manchester United could be in relegation battle

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TO NIGHT @ 9:00

EATV WEDNESDAY

11:00 DADAZ
12:00 KIPENGA XTRA
13:00 MJADALA (r)
13:55 Dondoo Za Michezo
14:00 Mpera Mpera
15:00 Funguka
15:30 Mpera Mpera
16:00 Zote Kuntu
16:55 Dondoo Za Michezo
17:00 SSELECT
17:55 Kurasa
18:00 Kall Za Wana
18:30 #HASHTAG
19:00 EATV SAA 1
20:00 DADAZ (r)
21:00 UJENZI
21:30 Mid week Movie
21:00 UJENZI
21:30 Mid Week Movie
23:00 KURASA
23:05 EATV SAA 1

UJENZI

UJENZI provides information and ideas on residential construction, interior decor and residential appliance markets values. The show aims to enhance residential construction. It provides free expert advice, news and commentary.

eastafrika RADIO

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

88.1FM
DAR ES SALAAM

TPLB collects 10.5m/- in penalties during first league round

By Correspondent Nassir Nchimbi

THE Tanzania Premier League Board (TPLB) management and supervision committee has collected 10.5 million shillings in penalties issued during the first round of the local tier leagues.

These penalties were levied for various offenses committed by teams, players, leaders, and team officials in the Premier League, Championship League, and First League.

The largest penalty was imposed on Biashara United of Mara, which was fined 3m/- for failing to appear at the stadium for a Championship League match against Mbeya City scheduled for December 1, 2024.

Mbuni FC received a fine of 2m/- for two offenses, each carrying a penalty of 1m/-. These included their player, Pascal Mwakapuya, hitting an assistant referee and their fans causing disturbances toward the same referee, Leah Petro.

Other fines included:

- 1.5m/- for KenGold manager Nuhu Nkaekwa.
- 1m/- for Azam FC assistant coach Bard Ed-dine Dris.
- 500,000/- for JKT Tanzania.
- 1.5m/- for Geita Gold goalkeeping coach Augustine Malindi.
- 1m/- for African Lyon coach Elia James.
- 1m/- for African Lyon goalkeeping coach Ibrahim Bigambo.

The committee also issued stern warnings to certain officials. JKT Tanzania's chief executive, Jemedari Said, was warned for entering the field of play during a match against Simba. Similarly, a warning was issued to Abdihamid Moalin of Young Africans.

"The Management and Supervision Committee of the Tanzania Premier League Board has issued a stern warning to the Technical Director of Young Africans, Abdihamid Moalin, for sitting on the club's technical bench in three (3) NBC Premier League matches, contrary to the requirements of Rule 17:17 of the Premier League regarding Match Procedures.

"This penalty is in accordance with Rule 17:62 of the Premier League regarding Match Procedures."

The Tanzania Premier League Board also announced that it has received confirmation from the Tanzania Football Federation (TFF) that Young Africans has completed all procedures for appointing Abdihamid Moalin as their second assistant coach.

He was officially recognized in the match held on December 29, 2024, against Fountain Gate, according to the statement from the TPLB league management and supervision committee.

Ahmed Ally confident as Simba head to Tunisia for CAF Confederation Cup showdown

Ally declared that Simba are traveling with one clear mission: to secure victory.

"We are heading to Tunisia with a single goal in mind; winning against CS Sfaxien. The team is prepared and focused on achieving this objective," Ally stated.

The clash, scheduled for Sunday, January 5, 2025, will be played behind closed doors after CAF imposed a two-match fan ban on CS Sfaxien due to violent incidents during their previous home games.

Simba, currently leading the Premier League standings, will aim for a win or a draw to bolster their chances of advancing to the quarter-finals. The team heads into the fixture with momentum after concluding 2024 on top of the league standings.

Simba players returned

to training yesterday after a two-day break, holding two intense sessions morning and evening to sharpen their skills before departing for Tunisia early today morning.

The team is set to complete its group stage fixtures over the next three weeks, needing at least four points to secure a quarter-final berth.

Simba's final two matches in the group stage include an away game against Angola's Bravos do Maquis on January 12 and a decisive home encounter against Algeria's CS Constantine on January 19.

Group A is tightly contested, with Simba, CS Constantine, and Bravos do Maquis all tied on six points. CS Sfaxien, the group's weakest link, has yet to register a point, making them a target for the top teams aiming to

advance.

Simba's strategy is clear: secure crucial points on the road and capitalize on home advantage. A total of 10 points is viewed as the threshold for quarter-final qualification, although nine points could suffice depending on other results.

"Winning on the road and maintaining dominance at home are essential. The team that achieves this will likely advance to the next stage," Ally emphasized.

In unfortunate news, Simba's attacking midfielder Joshua Mutale is expected to be out for three weeks due to a knee injury sustained during their 1-0 league victory over JKT Tanzania on December 24.

Mutale's absence has been a recurring issue since joining Simba, as injuries have plagued his debut season. He is likely to miss

all three remaining group stage matches in the CAF Confederation Cup.

Despite Mutale's injury, head coach Fadlu Davids has reliable options to maintain the team's competitiveness. The recent addition of Elie Mpanzu and the rising form of young winger Ladack Chasambi provide assurance of quality depth in the squad.

Simba remain optimistic as they look to build on their domestic success and translate it into continental triumphs. With a strong squad and strategic focus, the team is determined to secure its place in the CAF Confederation Cup quarter-finals.

Simba's journey to Tunisia marks the beginning of a crucial phase in their campaign, with every point vital in the race for continental glory.

By Correspondent Seth Mapoli

SIMBA SC's Communication and Information Manager, Ahmed Ally, has expressed confidence ahead of the team's trip to Tunisia for their CAF Confederation Cup return leg against CS Sfaxien.



Simba Sports Club players and coaches before their Premier League match against Singida Black Stars last Saturday at Liti Stadium in Singida. Simba won 1-0. Photo: Courtesy of SSC

Messi's real estate trust debuts in Spain with 223 mln euro market cap

MADRID

A REAL estate investment trust owned by Argentine soccer star Lionel Messi made its Spanish market debut at 57.4 euros per share, giving it a market capitalisation of 223 million euros (\$232.12 million).

Messi (pictured), the Inter Miami player and former FC Barcelona forward, is named as chairman of Edificio Rostover Socimi's board in documents published by the Portfolio Stock Exchange, a small European alternative market. Edificio Rostover's only shareholder is Messi's family investment vehicle, Limecu Espana 2010, the documents showed.

But the trust has told the exchange it plans to open up to new investors, the chief executive of Portfolio Stock Exchange, Santiago Navarro, told Reuters without elaborating.

Messi's fund has yet to trade.

The exchange, launched in 2023 and supervised by

the Bank of Spain, only allows trading when a company seeks to sell shares or increase its capital, Navarro said.

The approach allows greater flexibility and control as well as lower costs compared to traditional initial public offerings, he said, adding any purchase request order must first be approved by shareholders.

Edificio Rostover did not immediately respond to a request for comment on its stock market debut, which took place on Monday.

The company owns seven hotels in Spain and Andorra, three office spaces and five apartments in Spain, as well as apartments in London and Paris, the documents said.

Founded in 2013, the company posted a 1.7 million euro loss in 2023, according to records the Portfolio Stock Exchange published.

Most of the company's investments are in the Spanish region of Catalonia, where Messi, 37, moved in 2000 when he was 13 years old to join FC Barcelona's youth

teams.

He lived there until 2021 when he unexpectedly left FC Barcelona to sign for Paris St Germain after the indebted Catalan club said it could not afford to keep him because of La Liga's financial fair play rules.

The eight-times Ballon d'Or winner has long said he plans to return to live in Barcelona with his wife and three children after he retires from soccer.

Messi's wife, Antonela Rocuzzo, is the board's vice-president. The other members of the board are Alfonso Nebot, who runs Messi's family office, and Ramon Adell, who is a board member of Spanish energy company Naturgy.

Spain's government last month said it planned to increase the corporate tax rate paid by real estate investment trusts, which is lower than for other companies.

But it has failed so far to garner support in parliament for its approval.

(\$1 = 0.9607 euros)

REUTERS

Flexibles by David Chikoko

