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Hope remains high with modern workshop launched at ARU, industrial park at Kwana

CBE to build students' capacity in accounting and finance areas

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TEA builds 376 mixed classrooms, issues 58bn/-

By Francis Kajubi

FUNDS held by the Tanzania Education Authority (TEA) in the past two years were spent on the construction of 376 classrooms for primary and secondary schools at 58bn/-.

Masozzi Nyirenda, the TEA acting director for resource mobilisation and education support, told journalists yesterday in Dar es Salaam that during the period TEA spent 20bn/- on the renovation of 11 secondary schools countrywide.

During fiscal 2022/23, TEA disbursed 10.99bn/- for 132 projects focused on the improvement of learning infrastructure in 151 primary and secondary schools,

he said.

The projects also covered construction of 114 classrooms in 38 schools, mainly primary schools, where the project took up 3.35bn/-, intended to benefit 6,840 students, he added.

It also covered the construction of ten science laboratories in five secondary schools taking up 590.59m/- and expected to cater for 450 students, he further noted.

Similarly, 52 residential units for teachers in six primary schools and seven secondary schools were built as single family units, costing 2.72bn/-, he said.

TEA funded the construction of 888

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This is Salome Shilinde of Zongomela in Kahama Municipal Council, Kahama District, as pictured yesterday frantically "filtering" sand abandoned at the site of Kembo Gold Mine and Partners gold mine. Her dream was to stumble on some "forgotten" gold dust or particles, but the task continues to prove especially hard and time-consuming task - and seldom with encouraging returns. Photo: Correspondent Shaban Njia

'Ensure Z'bar tourists do visit Mkomazi Park, see black rhino'

TANAPA is in the process of opening five other gates at Kisiwani and Njiro in Same District, Komakota in Lushoto District, along with Uмба-Mkinga and Ndea in Mwanza District

By Guardian Reporter, Same

THE government has tasked the Tanzania National Parks (TANAPA) to improve its profile of destination such that visiting Zanzibar includes the chance of seeing the black rhinos at the Mkomazi National Park.

Dunstan Kitandula, the Natural Resources and Tourism deputy minister, said during a visit to the park in Same District, Kilimanjaro Region yesterday that the presence of black rhinos has contributed to increased numbers of tourists, doubling in the 2021/2022 season, compared to previous years.

TANAPA needs to connect the park with the Zanzibar tourism industry to improve the package for the sightseers instead of letting large groups of tourists visiting Zanzibar leave the country without seeing the unique species at the park, he said.

Mkomazi can be reached conveniently with the presence of an improved airfield, he said, affirming that TANAPA needs to use such opportunities to come up with strategies to persuade tourists visiting Zanzibar to view the black rhinos specifically, he stated.

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Bakari Shime blames pitch conditions for Nigeria defeat

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SportPesa introduces easy way for betting

EU, UK, UNDP disburse 1.2bn/- start-up grants

By Guardian Reporter

SEVENTEEN innovative start-up companies have secured grants totalling 1.2bn/- after being selected in the second cohort of a key innovation funding programme.

The programme, a joint initiative of the European Union (EU), the British High Commission and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), seeks to increase the number of successfully scaled innovation ventures making a difference in the market.

The start-ups are expected to contribute to national development goals,

which merge with the United Nations sustainable development goals in various areas of interest to the bilateral and multilateral agencies.

UNDP resident representative Shigeki Komatsubara said in a virtual address to an event to unveil the innovators in Dar es Salaam yesterday, that the funding is aimed at increasing the number of successfully scaled innovation impact ventures.

Noting that these startups will contribute to national development goals and the realisation of SDGs, he said that the UN agency has numerous similar initiatives focused on investing in talents, po-

tential and opportunities for the country's future.

He asked stakeholders to join the programme to align efforts towards unlocking the potential of the country's youth, noting that opportunities that lie ahead for them are vast, "but they need investment to be fully capitalised upon. By investing in youth, we are investing in the future of Tanzania," he declared.

This year, as part of efforts to encourage women innovators and entrepreneurs, upwards of 30 percent of the grant funds is exclusively reserved for

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Data use call as Africa Statistics Day unfolds

By Polycarp Machira, Dodoma

TANZANIANS have been urged to utilise official statistics to propel individual initiative and wider economic growth.

Jabir Shekimweri, the Dodoma district commissioner who stood in for regional commissioner Rose Senyamule, said that when public officials, ministerial departments and other institutions systematically use the data they make more informed

decisions.

The event was an experts' forum ahead of the Africa Statistics Day 2023 being marked today, where preliminary activities yesterday saw the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) and the Eastern Africa Statistical Training Centre (EASTC) bringing together a range of stakeholders to discuss statistical issues.

Africa Statistics Day is an annual event marked on November 18th to raise public

awareness on the importance of statistics in social and economic life.

However countries can choose the most suitable dates to mark the day and it is on that ground that Tanzania opted to mark it today, an event brochure affirms.

This year's theme is directed at modernising data ecosystems to accelerate the implementation of the Africa Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), with the role of official statistics and big data in economic

transformation and sustainable development of Africa.

The theme is aligned with the African Union Agenda 2023 anchored on accelerating AfCFTA implementation, encapsulating the call to modernise data systems on the continent for high quality official statistics to seize opportunities that big data presents.

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EU, UK, UNDP ink 1.2bn/- start-ups innovation grants

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women-founded or women-led startup ventures, he said.

Applications for this round emanated from 22 regions, spanning sectors like agriculture, energy, fisheries, healthcare, education and technology-driven solutions, he affirmed, pointing out that 17 innovative businesses were selected from 356 applications.

This selection comes after the successful completion of first cohort grants which saw its 25 investors raising over 1.28bn/- in additional funding, creating 3,400 direct and indirect jobs and forging over 250 strategic partnerships, he elaborated.

Beyond the catalytic funding, investees stand to gain from supplementary technical assistance, profiling and showcasing opportunities. These additional supports are strategically designed to assist them in attracting further investment, enhancing their overall growth trajectory, to expedite progress towards certain aspects of the SDGs locally, he explained.

Ambassador Christine Grau, EU zonal head of delegation for the East African Community partner states, asserted that the European Union had so far provided a total of 3.8bn/- in grant catalytic funding.

He pointed at immense opportunities emerging with private sector innovation and start-ups, where the EU's global gateway strategy involves

expanding various direct financing opportunities for private sector firms.

In the EU's current portfolio this amounts to more than 1tr/-, with its latest programmes taking up components to enhance private sector catalytic role in economic transformation, he stated.

Baraka Aligaesha, the Investment and Planning ministry's director of the business environment unit, said the government is streamlining regulatory processes, reducing bureaucracy and implementing policies that encourage entrepreneurship.

"Our goal is to make it easier for startups to navigate the business landscape and flourish. Some of these initiatives are supported by the EU through the business environment (BEGIN) programme, he further noted.

"We are investing in infrastructure, education and skills development to ensure a robust foundation for innovation to blossom. Through strategic partnerships with the private sector, we are working to create a business-friendly environment that attracts both local and foreign investments," he emphasized.

Dr Nkundwe Mwasaga, the Information and Communication Technologies Commission (ICTC) director general, said the government wishes to implement robust efforts to create a conducive environment for ICT sector investments, including supporting start-ups.



President Samia Suluhu Hassan chairs a Cabinet meeting at Chamwino State House in Dodoma Region yesterday. Photo: State House

TEA builds 376 mixed classrooms, issues 58bn/-

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toilet holes in 37 schools, among them eight secondary schools, where 21,312 students benefited in the 2.07bn/- project, he elaborated.

TEA funded the improvement of facilities in eight schools, one a secondary school for special needs students, with the renovation covering toilets, classrooms and dormitories. The project has benefited 2,010 students, he said.

Dr Erasmus Kipasha, the TEA director general, said that from

2019 to 2023 the authority issued 20.20bn/- to the Skills Development Fund (SDF) to train 49,060 students in agriculture, information technology, tourism, energy and transportation.

He said TEA faces a shortage of funds in relation to proposed projects emerging on a yearly basis which demand its attention, he said, noting that the authority had received donations for education sector development totalling 1.44bn/- during the period.

Donations involved hard cash and educational equipment, he said, pointing out that cash dona-

tions came from public and private entities such as the Tanzania Revenue Authority (TRA), the Tanzania National Parks Authority (TANAPA), Asilia Giving, and the Flaviana Matata Foundation.

Donations of learning items were handed by Yalin Global Co., SamaKiba, Camara Education (T) BRAC (T), Baobab Shalom Ltd, Darsh Industries Ltd, Nissan (T), Sayari Safi and the Tanzania Communications Regulatory Authority (TCRA).

TEA was established under the National Education Fund Act No. 8 of 200, he added.

Data use call as Africa Statistics Day unfolds

FROM PAGE 1

Statistics anchors the legitimacy of decision making and based on the data, countries know what to do to flourish under AfCFTA, the DC noted, pointing out that living to the objectives of the free trade area agreement, signatories to the pact need to progressively eliminate tariffs and non-tariff barriers to trade in goods.

This will progressively liberalise trade in services, improve cooperation on investment, intellectual property rights and competition policy, as well as cooperating on all trade-related areas, he explained.

NBS director of statistical operations Emilian Karugendo, standing in for Albina Chuwa, the chief statistician, said AfCFTA is aimed at creating a single African market for goods and services.

It is facilitated by free movement of persons, capital and investments to deepen economic integration, attaining sustainable and inclusive socio-economic development tied with gender equality, he said.

AfCFTA seeks to contribute to establishing regional value chains enabling investment and job creation, he said, noting that the practical implementation of AfCFTA has the potential to foster industrialisation, job creation and other investments, thus enhancing African competitiveness in the medium to long term.

Godfrey Chaga, an EASTC administrator, affirmed that the 2022 Population and Housing Census reminded people that statistics remain important in trade and planning, from family to national level, hence the urgency of using the data in most of these areas



Zanzibar President Dr Hussein Ali Mwinyi swears in Sadifa Juma Khamis (R) as Central Unguja district commissioner at Zanzibar State House yesterday. Photo: Zanzibar State House

'Ensure Z'bar tourists do visit Mkomazi Park, see black rhino'

FROM PAGE 1

A number of tourists from Asia travel to different destinations yearly, thus Mkomazi stands out as a special attraction when listed

in their favorite travel spots shecules, he said. Increasing the number of visitors is possible as the area is vast, covering 234 square kilometers, as a special attraction that Mkomazi exhibits, with each of the 22 na-

tional parks having one or other aspect of scenic diversity aplenty.

Mkomazi is located at the plains of the Eastern Arc Mountains, established as a reserve forest cut from the Ruvu Reserve Forest in 1951.

Happiness Kiemi, the park's chief conservation officer (tourism division), assured the deputy minister that the park management was going to work on the instructions as well as finding solutions to human

wildlife conflicts.

The park has improved tourism infrastructure, with an entrance gate for visitors as well as an airfield for a variety of charter aircraft, she stated.

TANAPA is in the pro-

cess of opening five other gates at Kisiwani and Njiro in Same District, Komakota in Lushoto District, along with Umba-Mkinga and Ndea in Mwanza District, she added.

ECOWAS launches information centre to enhance coordination on electricity supply

COTONOU

THE West African Power Pool (WAPP) Information and Coordination Centre of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) was inaugurated on Friday in Abomey Calavi, a city in southern Benin.

The center aims to promote and develop power generation and transmission infrastructure, and to coordinate electricity exchanges among ECOWAS member States.

It is also a platform for coordinating the operation of the WAPP, which will enable national power grids to be integrated into a unified regional electricity market, to ensure a reliable and competitively-priced supply of electricity to the people of ECOWAS member states in the medium and long term.

This interconnected network will make possible the

sales and purchases of electricity starting from the first quarter of 2024, regardless of geographical location in the region, said Damtien L. Tchintchibidja, the vice president of the ECOWAS Commission.

"Only 52 percent of West Africa's population currently has access to electricity. For those who have access to it, the reliability of the supply remains a major challenge: prolonged outages, unexpected power outages, the destruction of household appliances and electrical equipment is their daily fate," said Kwawu Mensan Gaba, a practice manager of the World Bank.

The WAPP, created by the decision of the heads of state and government at the 29th ECOWAS Summit, has covered 14 of the 15 countries in the regional economic community.



Residents of Bunju in Dar es Salaam line up to register for medical attention at a free Rotary Club health camp conducted in the suburb at the weekend. Over 1,000 were attended to with check-ups, consultation and treatment. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

9.8percent of Tanzanians do not have toilet facilities, Umyy says

By Guardian Reporter, Dodoma

AS Tanzanian community marks the World Toilet Day on Sunday, Katavi, Simiyu, Manyara, Tabora and Arusha have been mentioned among the leading regions with a large number of people without toilets.

However, 9.8 percent of the people in the country do not have toilets. The situation is worse in rural areas where 13.4 percent of the residents relieve themselves in the bushes.

According to the World Bank State of Economy report 2023, the government has been losing 5.6trn/- due to various reasons including the cost of treatment of patients and finding water sources.

In her statement to mark the World Toilet Day, Health Minister, Umyy Mwalimu noted that in Katavi Region, 24.3 percent of residents do have toilets while in Simiyu (24.3 percent), Manyara (22.3 percent),

Tabora (21.9 percent) and Arusha (20.5 percent). Mwalimu directed regional authorities in the specific regions and councils to ensure all the households have good toilets.

She said the 2022 maternal and child health and the malaria indicators research report have shown that there is a significant increase in the number of people using good toilets from 21 percent in 2016 to 74.8 percent in 2022. She added that despite the progress, there are some people who do not use toilets. She said available statistics show that 9.8 percent of people in the country do not have toilets at all, noting the situation is worse in rural areas.

However, 13.4 percent of rural residents do not have toilets at all; a situation that contributes to the presence of epidemic diseases including cholera whereas between January and October, 2023, a total of 749 people suffered the disease while 16 lost

their lives. The report also indicates that 30 percent of children under five years in the country are stunted, a situation which is partly contributed with lack of good toilets which causes diarrheal diseases, thus causing the body to lose nutrients.

Mwalimu called upon Tanzanians to continue improving their toilets to be in a quality health taking into consideration the on-going El-Nino rains. "Each household should have a well-built toilet to withstand the heavy rains. The government continues to support the community to build and use good toilets," she said, urging regional authorities to make sure all public places and buildings have better toilets.

The Minister warned travelers and upcountry passenger buses from stopping in the bush to let people relieve themselves, saying measures will be taken against anyone violating the order.

SUZA curricula to be in line with Z'bar's development vision 2050, says minister

By Guardian Reporter, Zanzibar

ZANZIBAR Minister for Education and Vocational Training, Lela Mohamed Mussa said the government plans to improve the State University of Zanzibar (SUZA) by aligning its curricular with Isles development vision 2050.

She made the statement yesterday at the launch of the 8th council of the University, an event which took place at Maruhubi Zanzibar Tourism College.

She noted that SUZA has successfully established various programs while the number of students is also increasing. She said the demand increases annually as the number of students completing advanced secondary school education also increases.

"The government has been making efforts to improve infrastructures and create a friendly environment for learning at primary and secondary levels, the initiative that led to increased student's demand at SUZA," said Mussa.

She directed the university management to supervise expansion of infrastructures so that it can enrol more students.

The minister noted that SUZA is the only government university that serves both local and foreign students. She said expansion of infrastructure would facilitate registration of many more students as well as establishment of new courses.


SUZA Principal, Prof Muhammed Makame Haji said that the launch of the council will help the university to achieve its set targets because the council is the high-level leadership and management body of the university.

He said the council will be responsible for overseeing all the matters including leadership, the use of funds and ensuring the university contributes to bringing about development to the country.

Prof Makame commended the 7th council for its job well done, expressing hopes that the new council will also perform accordingly.

One of the newly appointed council members, Dr Ahmed Ramadhan Abeid said the university has a great role to play to make sure graduates are competent enough to compete in the labour market.

Salma Haji Saadat, who represents people with disabilities, said there are 21 students with disabilities who have been enrolled at the university.



WWF for a living planet®

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TERMS OF REFERENCE

REPEAT KNOWLEDGE ATTITUDES AND PERCEPTIONS (KAP) ALONGSIDE HOUSEHOLD SOCIO-ECONOMIC SURVEY (HHES) IN RUMAKI SEASCAPE AREA (TANZANIA)

1. Background:
WWF Tanzania Country Office (TCO) through the Marine Programme has been implementing a project titled "Strengthening Marine Protected Areas Management in Rufiji, Mafia and Kilwa District in Tanzania" since 2019 with funding from the Blue Action Fund commonly abbreviated as (RUMAKI-BAF). The project aims to improve the management effectiveness of Mafia Island Marine Park (MIMP) and associated buffer zones within the "Rufiji-Mafia-Kilwa Seascape".

In the course of these 3 years, the RUMAKI-BAF project has invested in improving the management effectiveness of Mafia Island Marine Park, Rufiji Delta mangrove forest reserve, and MIMP buffer zones and building community livelihoods through diversified skills and opportunities that are intended to improve coastal communities' population's living conditions and economic well-being.

WWF TCO facilitated a Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices (KAP) Survey (2020), a Household Socio-economic survey (2021), and a demand-led training assessment (2022) at the inception of the project. This repeat survey aims to identify changes from the previous surveys to re-measure project indicators and measure the progress and achievements of the RUMAKI BAF project.

2. The overall objective of the consultancy:
Adapt and repeat the Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices (KAP) Survey (2020) and Household Social and Economic surveys (2021 and 2022) to assess project progress/trend toward achieving the project goal.

3. Qualifications and skills:
A suitable individual for this assignment should possess the following qualifications:

Master's or higher degree in sociology, economics, marine sciences, natural resource management/governance, development studies, or any other related discipline. Extensive experience in the quantitative and qualitative study and natural resources management surveys, Data analysis, and production of quality, analytical survey reports. Knowledgeable, and aware of political and cultural sensitivities of coastal communities. Excellent analysis and writing skills in research reports with constructive and practical recommendations and Excellent skills in both written and oral English and Kiswahili (more, see the website).

4. WWF TCO invites applications from competent, qualified, and experienced local consultant(s) for this assignment
5. Please, send your application to:

Secretary, Procurement Committee; WWF Tanzania; Kiko Street, Off Mwai Kibaki Road Plot 252, Mikocheni P. O. Box 63117, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania;
Tel: +255 22 277 5346/277 2455/270 0077 Fax: +255 22 277 5535;
Website: wwf.or.tz
The time span for this activity is spread from **April - May 2024**

All applicants should direct their **electronic applications both Technical and financial (in one document)** to the procurement: e-mail at procurement@wwftz.org. The deadline for submission is **Monday 4th December 2023 at 10.00 am Local Time**. Interested applicants may get the detailed Terms of Reference (ToR) through the following websites: https://www.wwf.or.tz/jobs_and_opportunities/jobs/

WWF TCO reserves the right to accept or reject any or all the applications without assigning any reason thereof. The late application shall not be accepted for evaluation irrespective of the circumstance.

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

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| Na. | JINA LA MDAIWA/MDHAMINI | MAELEZO YA DHAMANA NA MAHALI ILIPO | TAREHE |
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| 1. | PETER JOHN MACHELA | Nyumba ya makazi yenye hati namba 93910, Kitalu "D" iliyopo Changanyikeni Manispaa Ya Ubungo | 09.12.2023 |

MASHARTI YA MNADA
1. Dhama itauzwa kama ilivyo.
2. Mfunuzi atatakiwa kulipa siku ya mnada asilimia 25% ya bei iliyofikiwa.
3. Malipo ya asilimia 75% yalipwe ndani ya siku kumi na nne (14). Kukamilisha malipo yote. Kushindwa kufanya hivyo mfunuzi atakuwa amepoteza malipo yote ya awali ya asilimia 25%, na mnada kurudiwa, au mshindi wa pili atapewa ushindi.
4. Gharama za kuona, kukagua, kuhamisha umiliki, kumtoa mdaiwa/mpangaji na zingine zinazombatana na hilo ni jukumu la mfunuzi.

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Shinyanga launches drug campaign to combat bilharzia and intestinal worms

By Guardian Correspondent, Shinyanga

AUTHORITIES in Shinyanga region have launched a mass drug administration campaign to combat bilharzia, intestinal worms to children under-five to 14.

This comes after an assessment conducted in the region showed the need to carry out the exercise and interrupt transmission.

Bilharzia and intestinal worms belong to the group of Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs).

Speaking at the preparatory meeting for the campaign to kick off, Shinyanga Regional Commissioner Christina Mndeme said that health workers will move door to door and issue doses of Mebendazole for intestinal worms and Praziquantel for bilharzia during the campaign.

The RC warned against misinformation against the vaccine, saying the vaccine is safe.

She said during the campaign, the regional authorities will deal with anyone displaying misinformation saying this is the time for parents to protect their children from the diseases.

Mndeme said about 286,782 children who have been targeted for the campaign will be vaccinated against schistosomiasis while 466,095 will be given anti-worms tablets.

"It is not a topic of discussion to issue vaccinations because this is the only way to protect our children against these diseases," she said.

Timothy Sosoma, head of neglected tropical diseases in Shinyanga region said the exercise will be conducted on a single day which is November 24 in all the schools across the region.

He said in the region, bilharzia has been a problem because children like swimming in stagnant water pools especially during rainy seasons.

Faustine Mulyutu, acting regional medical officer (RMO) insisted on the issuance awareness campaign to parents so that they bring their children for the vaccination on the day so that the targeted goals are reached.

Bilharzia, also referred to as Schistosomiasis is a neglected tropical disease and one of the most damaging parasitic diseases.



Craig Hart, USAID Mission director for Tanzania, exchanges greetings with Njiapanda Primary School pupils in Iringa Region while on assessment tour of the impact of the Determined, Resilient, Empowered Aids-free, Mentored and Safe (DREAMS) and Coaching Boys into Men (CBIM) programmes funded by the US President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR). Photo: Correspondent Beatrice Philemon

Commissioner: Many Tanzanians are yet to be reached with formal financial services

By Guardian Reporter, Zanzibar

THE Commissioner for Financial Sector Development in the Ministry of Finance, Dr Charles Mwamwaja, has said that a large percentage of Tanzanians are yet to be reached with formal financial services.

He made the revelation during the third national celebration of the financial services week that is on-going in Arusha at the

Sheikh Amri Abeid stadium. The celebration will end on November 26th this year.

Dr Mwamwaja said that until now only 53.8 percent of Tanzanians have been reached with formal financial services, hence the need for enhanced efforts to reduce the gap.

"According to research, there is still a big gap and we have a lot of work to do to achieve the set national goals," he said, not-

ing the government has set goals to reach 80 percent of Tanzanians with financial services by 2025.

He added: "When we say formal financial services, we mean those that involve formal transactions in the financial systems including banking services, securities, capital markets, insurance and economic empowerment funds."

He said the government has been putting in place an enabling policy and environment as well

as providing various guidelines to facilitate the provision of financial services in the country.

He said the Ministry of Finance has prepared and coordinated the celebration in collaboration with stakeholders in the financial sector whereas a total of 35 banks are participating.

The main agenda of organizing the event is to provide education to the public to create awareness and enable them to use financial

services in a correct way, he added.

He also said that another goal of the event is for Tanzanians to recognize the various opportunities offered in the financial sector as data shows that a large percentage of citizens are still not reached by the services.

Novess Mosses, Assistant Manager, Communications Department at the Bank of Tanzania (BoT) said the bank is partici-

pating in the financial services week for purposes of providing education to citizens on how to use banking services at financial institutions.

"Once people are well educated it helps them to make the right decisions on how to use various banking and financial services that are provided by financial institutions, thus promoting the country's economy," said Mosses.

Two killed as flooding hits northern Tanzania

By Guardian Correspondent, Mbulu

TWO people have died in Mbulu district, Manyara region after being washed away by running water following heavy rains that hit the district in recent days.

Mbulu District Commissioner, Kheri James said the two people were workers of the Saraa mine calling upon residents to avoid necessary travels to avert calamities.

Addressing residents at Nowu secondary school DC Kheri said the rains have destroyed road infrastructure in the area, causing some areas unreachable.

"Parents should keep a close eye on school going children, whenever you see the time that your child was supposed to return from school has come and has not come, follow up," he said.

He said district authorities will follow up on the destroyed road infrastructure by instructing the Tanzania Rural Roads Agency (TARURA) to follow up.

He also called upon people in the district to use the rains profitably to avert a looming hunger crisis which may be caused by the rains.

The DC called upon families to take care of their families saying all kinds of crime behaviours derive from a disorganized family.

Heavy rainfall since late October 2023 has severely affected northern Tanzania, especially the Arusha Region. The resulting floods and river overflows have led to at least 10 fatalities, displacement of approximately 90 families, and significant damage to houses and bridges. The worst-hit areas in the Arusha District include Muriet, Terrat, Elerai, Morombo, Lolovono, and Ngarenaro. Further heavy rainfall is forecasted for most of the country.

Since late October 2023, northern Tanzania, particularly the Arusha Region bordering southern Kenya, has been grappling with heavy rainfall and devastating floods.

As reported on November 16, the flood has resulted in at least 10 fatalities and the displacement of approximately 90 families. The Arusha District, comprising villages and neighbourhoods like Muriet, Terrat, Elerai, Morombo, Lolovono, and Ngarenaro, stands as the hardest hit.



Police officers pictured yesterday escorting a 19-year-old resident of Mawelewele suburb in Iringa Urban District (foreground) to a police post in connection with reports that she had taken murdered her nine-month-old son. Photo: Correspondent Francis Godwin

President Dr Mwinyi unhappy with leaders fighting in offices

By Guardian Reporter, Zanzibar

ZANZIBAR President Dr Hussein Mwinyi yesterday took a swipe at government leaders in the Isles over quarrels and disagreements among themselves which he said was derailing service delivery.

Speaking at State House in Zanzibar yesterday when swearing in Regional and District Commissioners who were appointed recently, Dr

Mwinyi said there has been a challenge in his government where officials have been quarrelling hence leading to slow service delivery.

He asked all the newly appointed officials to work in harmony with those they find in offices to avoid unnecessary conflicts.

"We have seen a growing challenge where ministers argue with secretaries, or secretaries argue with directors, regional commissioners argue with regional adminis-

trative secretaries, this is bad for the country, let's go and serve the people," said Dr Mwinyi.

President Mwinyi said he was not ready to see such incidents continue adding that those who are not ready to work as a team will be suspended.

"If it gets to a point where you can't work together, then let's call each other early so that we talk because there have been a lot of quarrels and conflicts which is

derailing efficiency," said Dr Mwinyi.

In addition, President Mwinyi also asked regional and district commissioners to manage and follow up on the security and defense issues in their localities.

President Mwinyi said recently there has been a breach of security in various areas, especially areas where tourism is growing rapidly, including Nungwi and Paje and received security reports showing many incidents.

"I want you to make sure that when you are chairmen of your regional and district defense and security committees, then these incidents do not increase but they are dealt with all the attention needed to make sure the security situation in our areas is good at all times," he said.

Dr Mwinyi also gave instructions to the leaders to ensure that they take time to solve the problems in their localities.

"Make sure you address

the land conflicts in your territories, it is your duty to do justice and do not be part of those problems because they are not fully addressed at local levels, that is why they reach me easily," he said. He said Zanzibar is a country of tourism adding that one third of the national income comes from tourism emphasizing the need to solve land problems with investors.

"There are people who deliberately remove the rights

of those investors, so it is necessary to ensure that they are given their rights and that they are part of the solution to their challenges," he said.

He said that there are local leaders who do not perform their duties asking the newly appointed leaders to help in supervising them.

"You have to see that justice is being done because there are cases coming to me and you can see clearly that justice is being avoided," he insisted.



Mary Mihigo, a finance management officer with the Finance ministry's Financial Sector Development Department, pictured in Arusha yesterday taking residents of the city through the basics of financial management. It was at the ministry's pavilion at the third edition of the National Financial Services Week held yesterday under the motto: 'Financial Education, the Foundation of Economic Development'. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

Nairobi hosts this year's EA tourism 3rd regional Expo

NAIROBI

KENYA'S Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife has marked the commencement of the 3rd East African Regional Tourism in Nairobi.

The well-attended tourism expo has been inaugurated by Kenya's Tourism Cabinet Secretary Dr Alfred Mutua and the conference is set to run from Monday until tomorrow.

The event is set to serve as a pivotal platform for collaboration among tourism service providers and trade partners in the sector.

Speaking during the forum, East African Community (EAC) Deputy Secretary General Steven Mlote emphasized on the need for joint efforts to promote the diverse attractions of East Africa.

Speaking on behalf of East African Community (EAC) Secretary General Peter Mathuki, Deputy Secretary General Annette Mutaawe Ssemu-wemba said, "We have what it takes to be a premier tourist destination. To leverage these attractions, we need to work together through various initiatives, such as joint tourism promotion."

Dr Anastasia Nyalita, Nairobi County Executive Committee member in charge of inclusivity, public participation and customer service high-

lighted the city's flourishing status as a promising destination.

"Nairobi has been ranked as a promising destination to visit - Sights, sounds, tastes, and smells of Nairobi are a full sensory experience," said Nyalita.

The Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife anticipates discussions on regional tourism challenges, collaborative strategies, and an exploration of the captivating beauty that East Africa has to offer over the next three days.



Nairobi has been ranked as a promising destination to visit – Sights, sounds, tastes, and smells of Nairobi are a full sensory experience

Museveni defends Uganda's oil project ahead of COP 28 in Dubai

KAMPALA

UGANDAN President Yoweri Museveni has advocated for a collective African voice at the upcoming climate change meeting in the United Arab Emirates, emphasizing the importance of articulating the continent's development and energy needs.

In a recent speech delivered by Minister of Energy and Mineral Development, Ruth Nankabirwa, at the African Energy Week in Cape Town, South Africa, ahead of the Conference of the Parties (COP)

in Dubai at the end of this month, Museveni stressed the significance of presenting a common message at the COP to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

"Africa will continue working with global partners but this should be premised on mutual respect and partnership."

His remarks were a continuation to defend Uganda's move to invest heavily in the oil and gas sector despite some opposition to the project by environmental activists from foreign countries.

For Uganda, Museveni said, "We are proceeding with the oil and gas developments despite the attempted disruptions."

Uganda reached the Final Investment Decision (FID) for its oil and gas sector last year in February ushering in the era of making investments between US\$15-20bn to enable the country to get first oil in 2025.

Museveni said, commercializing the country's oil and gas will provide funds for Uganda's development and investment in more renewable energy sources and the

achievement of energy access for all Ugandans.

In addition, he said, the project will produce Liquefied Petroleum Gas which will be key in providing a cleaner cooking energy source that will save forest cover, that is being lost rapidly to charcoal and firewood.

"We should now focus on reducing potential emissions from the oil and gas operations and not stopping the development of oil and gas resources," he said.

"For Uganda's case, we are happy with the project developers

who have designed the projects to technologically generate the lowest possible carbon footprint," he added.

The COP is the decision-making body of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) which came into force in March 1994. The 197 countries that have ratified the Convention are called Parties to the Convention.

The ultimate aim of the UNFCCC is to prevent "dangerous" human interference with the climate system.

Environmental activists argue that oil drilling and related projects like the East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP) are a danger to the environment and could impede wildlife migration among other social risks.

However, oil companies are operating with clearance from the country's environmental authority - the National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) which says that adequate mitigation measures have been put in place to protect biodiversity.

EAC to partner with other players to boost refugee welfare in east Africa

By Guardian Reporter

THE East African Community remains committed to partnering with all stakeholders to develop policies and guidelines to ensure that human rights violations and challenges facing refugees in East Africa are addressed.

Andrea Aguer Ariik Malueth, EAC Deputy Secretary General in charge of Infrastructure, Productive, Social and Political Sectors made the commitment yesterday when speaking during a courtesy call made by the Director of the UNHCR Regional Bureau for East and Horn of Africa and the Great Lakes, Mamadou Dian Balde at the EAC Headquarters in Arusha.

He said that the EAC was working to address state fragility, establish and monitor regional peace mechanisms, implement democratic electoral processes, promote regional/bilateral mediation and reconciliation processes and support transitional justice processes in the region.

Ariik said that EAC was also pursuing a regional approach on economic inclusion through investment in climate reform, financial inclusion and private sector investments in refugee hosting communities and returnees' areas.

"We are currently working to finalise and adopt the EAC Regional Refugee Management Policy and develop costed action plans to ensure harmonised regional approaches that are consistent with international standards including access to quality asylum procedures, protection and assistance, digital identity documents, family unity and durable solutions.

The DSG disclosed that the EAC was also developing joint guidelines on the inclusion of the forcibly displaced and stateless populations, in particular women and youth in humanitarian, peace and development processes.

He said that the region was enjoying a relative calm state of peace and security except in Eastern DRC which for the last three decades has experienced insecurity and underdevelopment. "This state of affairs has led to internally displaced persons in Eastern DRC and refugees in neighbouring countries," he added.

The DSG said that to address the issue of refugees and asylum seekers in the EAC region, Article 10 of the Protocol on Peace and Security establishes common mechanisms for the management of refugees.

He observed that EAC and UNHCR have enjoyed a cordial relationship over the years and it was against this background that both parties had signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) that among other things stipulates cooperation on preserving and promoting the right to seek and enjoy asylum for persons in need.

Mamadou Dian Balde, Director of the UNHCR Regional Bureau for East and Horn of Africa and the Great Lakes said that the UN agency was mobilising support to enable it assist the EAC to better manage refugee matters.

Balde emphasised the importance of supporting refugees on the continent to live a better life by equipping them with life skills through training so that their lives are not wasted.

Minister directs PCCB to tame corruptive acts in public offices

By Guardian Correspondent, Dodoma

GEORGE Simbachawene minister of State in the President's Office (Public Service Management and Good Governance) has tasked the Prevention and Combating of Corruption Bureau (PCCB) to enter into customer service contracts with ministries to easily assess their performances.

Simbachawene made the sentiments here yesterday when opening the PCCB regional leaders' annual general meeting.

He said the public still complains about corruption in government offices, a move which denies them the right to access various services.

He said there are complaints from citizens of the availability of corruption elements in various government institutions which slows the public appetite to seek services in public offices.

"We still receive complaints about graft, this kind of corruption ranges from tips to get services in which public officers ask the citizenry to pay for an entitled service," he said.

He gave an example of some of the sectors which are being complained about mostly as education, health, revenue department and driving license where a bureaucratic system has been set up to make people pay something before being served.


He said PCCB must also increase pace on dealing with people who engage in corruption without looking at their status.

"We must deal with all the people who are involved in corruption in the country. There are corruptions that appear before the completion of projects, but there are those that begin to appear after three years from the completion of the project, so all the parties should be arrested and questioned, even if they are retired," he said. He said that the move will help to stop the behaviour that has been reported by public servants to get involved in bribery.

Commissioner General of the PCCB Salum Rashid Hamduni said the meeting will be for three days where the aim is to discuss the successes and challenges of the past year in order to find solutions.

Hamduni, said that in the past year the institution has saved aT17.9 bn/- that would have gone into the pockets of individuals.

However, he said that the meeting will come out with deliberations to increase pace in the war against graft to reduce complaints from the general public.



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

RFP Title: Baseline Study and Value Chain Assessment in Post-Harvest Management in Tanzania
RFP Number: 2023-TAHA/11/02
Date of Solicitation: 21 November 2023
Closing Date and Time: 28 November 2023, 11:00 am (Arusha, Tanzania)
Questions and Clarifications: Due by 27 November 2023

Introduction to TAHA and Tuhifadhi Chakula (TC) Activity
Tanzania Horticultural Association (TAHA) is an apex member based private sector organization that advocates for the growth and competitiveness of the horticulture industry in Tanzania. Since its inception in 2004, TAHA has been an effective voicing platform for producers, traders, exporters and processors of horticultural products mainly; flowers, fruits, vegetables, horticultural seeds, and spices. The Association safeguards the interests of industry stakeholders and ensures industry issues are well represented within national and international agendas. Visit us at <https://www.taha.or.tz/taha/about>

USAID Tuhifadhi Chakula Activity (USAID - TCA) is a five-year project funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and implemented by the Tanzania Horticulture Association (TAHA). The overarching objective of the Project is to reduce food loss and waste and resultant climate effects for improved food security and livelihoods. The project has been co-created to improve food handling, storage, and value addition, facilitate market access, inform and promote policy and regulatory frameworks that reduce food loss and waste, and strengthen local organizations' capacity to lead in post-harvest management. Overall, the project will contribute to reducing post-harvest losses from 30-40% for horticulture to 15% and from 13% to 7% for cereals by the end of the project.

TAHA through USAID TCA has set aside a budget to solicit and engage an eligible and qualified consultant to conduct a comprehensive baseline survey and value chain assessment to establish a robust foundation for the implementation of USAID Tuhifadhi Chakula Activity.

guide the implementation of the project based on the standard and custom indicators.

- Clearly assess whether the planned activities will lead to the desired outcome.
- Assess gender, youth, environment and climate change as cross-cutting issues in the project

Value chain Assessment

- Identify and map the key value chain actors and stakeholders (in horticulture and cereal) involved in post-harvest management and value addition within the selected value chains.
- Assess the existing technologies, practices, infrastructures, and facilities related to post-harvest management within the value chains
- Assess existing challenges, and relationships among actors in post-harvest processes.
- Identify the policy and regulatory framework constraints related to post-harvest management.
- Identify opportunities for enhancing food handling, storage, and value addition at both producer and commercial levels.
- Analyze the existing market access challenges and opportunities within the selected value chains.
- Evaluate the capacity of local organizations to lead post-harvest management initiatives by assessing their existing strengths and weaknesses.
- Identify the key players in the post-harvest processes who provide capacity-building services along the selected value chains.

B. Submission Instructions
Interested bidders should download the terms of reference through <https://shorturl.at/iyEW4>

C. Clarification on the Advert

- All correspondence related to the RFP shall be made in English
- Should there be any uncertainty, the Bidder shall seek clarification in writing through e-mail to: procurement@taha.or.tz copying magdalene.mhina@taha.or.tz and henesta.masau@taha.or.tz
- Any clarification sought by the bidder in respect to the RFP shall be titled **CLARIFICATION ON RFP – BASELINE STUDY & VALUE CHAIN ASSESSMENT**.
- TAHA will only respond to requests for clarification received no later than **Monday, 27th November 2023**.
- Copies of TAHA's response will be forwarded to all registered participants (registration form on Appendix 1), including a description of the inquiry, but without identifying its source.

Overall Objective

The overall objective of this consultancy is to conduct a comprehensive baseline survey and value chain assessment to establish a robust foundation for the implementation of the project. The findings will inform project strategies, interventions, and impact measurement over the project's lifespan.

A. Scope of Work
This consultancy will be guided by the below scope of work;

Baseline survey

- Establish the baseline of key indicators and set target/benchmark before the intervention so that the magnitude of change can be measured during the final evaluation of the project.
- Clearly produce information that will be used to direct and

India external affairs minister to visit Tanzania and Kenya

By Guardian Reporter

INDIAN Minister of State for External Affairs and Parliamentary Affairs SHRI Muralidharan led a 30-member business delegation in Tanzania for an official tour that started yesterday and ends on November 23.

The Indian envoy was expected to start his first visit in Zanzibar where is to pay a courtesy call on the Isles' President Hussein Ali Mwinyi and also hold discussions with other Ministers.

He will also visit the Campus of IIT Madras that has been set up in Zanzibar. Thereafter, he will travel to Dar-es-Salaam for bilateral discussions with the leadership of Tanzania.

While in Tanzania, the Indian minister will also chair a business meeting along with his Tanzanian counterpart that will bring together the Indian business delegation with their Tanzanian counterparts with the objective of increasing bilateral trade and investment flows between the two countries. During the visit he will also interact with the Indian community in Dar es Salaam.

From Tanzania the minister will visit Kenya from 22-23 November 2023. During the visit MoS will call on the top leadership of the country and also co-chair an India-Kenya Business Meet being organized in association with the government of Kenya.

He is also expected to meet several Ministers and other functionaries of the government of Kenya.

While in Kenya, the minister will pay a visit to the University of Nairobi and also interact with the Indian diaspora based in Kenya and also inaugurate an exhibition on the role of the Indian Soldiers in East Africa during World War I.

The visit to Tanzania and Kenya is expected to further strengthen India's strong bilateral relations with these countries.



Manyara regional commissioner Queen Sendiga (with microphone) pictured at Mirerani township on Saturday briefing Minerals minister Anthony Mavunde (L), who had just toured Tanzanite mining Bloc C - operated by Franone Mining Ltd. Second left is company's director, Onesmo Mbise. Photo: Correspondent Gift Thady

African banks take over after international lenders exit

LONDON

UK-headquartered Standard Chartered Bank announced it was exiting five African countries and partially exiting two others - breaking its 'here for good' brand promise after more than a century on the continent.

A year earlier, another British-based bank but a fairly new entrant, Atlas Mara withdrew from seven markets, walking away from its bold statement, "Africa: too big to ignore", after only seven years.

Barclays sold its majority stake in Barclays Africa Group in 2017 and in August 2022 sold its remaining stake in the rebranded ABSA, exiting a region it had first entered 90 years be-

fore. Credit Suisse and France's BNP Paribas also pulled out in 2022.

The reasons for exit, they said, was generally a need to refocus on core markets to achieve growth and scale due to the challenging African retail banking environment.

Many of the more than 1,000 financial industry players gathered in Lome, Togo in mid-November to debate how the industry can unlock a US\$1.5 trillion potential market by expanding banking, insurance and capital markets penetration, had a very different view. Many of the sessions were made public via the internet.

"There are still numerous opportunities out there including those presented by exit of international

financiers and we are poised to take advantage of that," said United Bank for Africa (UBA), Chief Executive Officer, Marufatu Abiola.

"Africa can only be developed by Africans. We need to increase our size, increase our capacities, we need to believe more and invest more in Africa."

Lagos-headquartered UBA, with a presence in 20 countries, said it is keen on expanding to all African countries either through organic growth or acquisitions.

"Both can be considered. Exit of international players presents a unique opportunity. If there is an opportunity to acquire, to merge or grow organically, I don't think any of those is off the table," said Abiola.

International Finance Corporation (IFC) Vice President Africa, Sergio Pimenta shared similar sentiments, painting a bigger picture of the rising demand for growth capital on the continent.

"The opportunities are very significant and the demand is very strong. We are also seeing shifts in these demands and one of them is regionalisation of the market, as companies, banks and other financial institutions in Africa look at the regional markets. And that's a very in-depth movement and trend that creates a lot of demand," Pimenta said.

He also singled out rapid urbanisation, climate change and digitalisation as drivers of key opportunities that financial firms should tap into

for growth.

In 2022, the IFC had a record year, with US\$43 billion of capital deployed across the world. US\$11.5 billion of that was deployed to Africa, the largest amount it has ever deployed on the continent.

Yet despite the positive prospects clearly identified by a wide range of bankers, Africa continues to be profiled as a risky playground.

African Guarantee Fund Group Chief Executive Officer, Jules Ngankam said one of the major challenges facing Africa is a huge gap between the real and perceived risk at the sovereign level and an even worse gap at the small and medium enterprise (SME) level.

"Of all the financial crises we have

had around the world, none of these came from Africa, but people still believe that it's the riskiest continent," posed Ngankam.

In a risk analysis of Africa's insurance industry, Namibia National Reinsurance Corporation, Managing Director, Patty Karuaihe-Martin said while the average loss ratio in Africa was 70%, Europe's ranged over 90% and would also cross 100% mark.

"Only about 3% of the world's largest losses occur in Africa. All this data shows Africa's portfolio is not risky. I must admit we have some challenges, we will not say it's easy to do business in Africa due to data inadequacy and low insurance penetration," she said.

PPRA says new procurement law to transform the sector, promote growth

By Guardian Correspondent, Dodoma

THE Public Procurement Regulatory Authority (PPRA) has expressed hope that the new procurement law is expected to transform the sector and promote growth of local companies after the inclusion of special sections to favour domestic companies in international tendering competitions.

PPRA director general, Eliakim Maswi said one of the key issues that the new law is going to address is to differentiate between procurement procedures of public institutions engaged in commercial activities and those that are not engaged in commercial activities.

In September this year, the parliament enacted a new Public Procurement Act as part of efforts to address bureaucratic encumbrances that arose with the implementation of the previous law passed in 2011.

"The new law will address complaints that locked the procurement process in the country as most of the sections have now been removed," he said.

He said there are sections in the new law which favours local enterprises in international tendering especially on products which have produced or extracted in Tan-

zania.

One of the directives of the new law includes ensuring that the companies should have not paid much of their earned profits to non-Tanzanian citizens.

He said the new law will help Tanzanians compete in international tenders on projects that are implemented in Tanzania and fully financed by domestic resources.

He said the new law will introduce price limit conditions for specific products and services in public procurement, helping to control costs and curb unnecessary expenditures.

He added that the new law is also set to address the absence of price limit conditions for certain products and services in public procurement, a lack of defined project value limits, insufficient monitoring of work quality, and the need to regulate the professional standards and experience of project implementers, particularly in construction projects utilising the force account procedure.

"The new law is set to strengthen contract management practices, ensuring that procurement projects are executed more efficiently and effectively and improving efficiency through electronic procurement," he added.



Sadaf Azam Bihan (2nd-R), wife of Pakistan's Deputy High Commissioner to Tanzania, receives a token of appreciation from an official with the Pakistan Women's Wing, Sana Asim (2nd-L) in Dar es Salaam at the weekend for her contribution to the strengthening of diplomatic links between Tanzania and Pakistan. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

PPPs needed to bridge Africa's infrastructure development gap

By Special Correspondent

PUBLIC-private partnerships (PPPs) are crucial to closing the financing gap for infrastructure development in Africa, governments and the private sector should work together to create effective PPPs.

Dr Robert Lisinge, Acting Director of the Private Sector Development and Finance Division at the UN Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) said this over the weekend when speaking at a plenary session of the African Economic Conference 2023 on Public-Private Partnerships to catalyse infrastructure development and innovative financing for industrialization in Africa.

"Financing Africa's infrastructure is still a big challenge faced by many countries on the continent. To bridge the infrastructure

gap, public-private partnerships are essential for infrastructure development in Africa," said Dr Lisinge.

He noted that the African Development Bank estimates that between \$130 and \$170 billion is needed for infrastructure development every year, leaving a substantial financing gap of \$68 to \$108 billion.

Traditionally, African governments and international partners like China have been primary investors in infrastructure. However, due to financial constraints, there is a growing need to explore public-private partnerships. These can harness private investment, technology and expertise, improving service delivery efficiency and cost-effectiveness.

According to Dr Lisinge, the PPP experience varies across countries due to GDP dif-

ferences, capital market size and depth. The ECA has been working with African countries to enhance their PPPs for infrastructure development, undertaking capacity building and helping them mobilize resources for infrastructure development.

Eniye Ogbobor, a Legal Expert at the World Association of PPP Units & Professionals (WAPPP-Africa) said infrastructure development is critical for sustainable development in various sectors, including green energy, clean water and sanitation, in order to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

"The infrastructure financing gap in Africa is around \$100 billion. To bridge the infrastructure gap there is a need to bring in the private sector," said Ms Ogbobor, noting that PPPs provide options to financing, and lev-

erage risk-sharing, including financial and technical risks.

Dr Arsene Honore Gideon Nkama, a PPP Expert at the Faculty of Economics, University of Yaoundé II, and Consultant on the UNECA project Yaoundé, Cameroon, said Cameroon, despite its many problems, has an economy that is still resilient enough to promote PPPs.

However, the current business environment should be improved to promote more PPPs, while capacity building is also necessary to help mobilize funds.

Mr Getahun Moges, an Energy Sector Expert and retired Power Sector Regulator in Ethiopia, said there is an urgent need to address the infrastructure financing gap in Africa.

"In Ethiopia's case, the pace of develop-

ment and engaging the private sector has been slow and sometimes results in unnecessary delays. Also, there is a big challenge of understanding the regulatory frameworks for PPPs, feasibility, and procurement regimes in the country," he said.

Moges noted that development partners support aspects of PPP development in Ethiopia through finance mobilization, technology transfer and capacity building.

The plenary session was held at the three-day African Economic Conference taking place in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Experts discussed how to attract private-sector investment to PPPs, promote collaboration among stakeholders, identify necessary legal reforms, build PPP competencies, and establish knowledge platforms for sustained support.

China reaffirms support for new nations joining BRICS

BEIJING

CHINA has reaffirmed its support for new countries joining the BRICS grouping of developing nations, even as Argentina's likely next foreign minister was quoted as saying that her country would no longer do so.

Argentina was among six countries invited to become new members of the BRICS at a summit held in South Africa in August, part of the grouping's push to reshuffle a Western-dominated world order it sees as outdated.

However, Russia's RIA news agency cited Diana Mondino, an economist tipped to become foreign minister in the administration of Argentina's newly-elected Javier Milei, as saying that her country would not now join the BRICS group.

Mao Ning, a Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson, told a press briefing that she was not aware of Mondino's reported comments.

"What I want to say is that the BRICS cooperation mechanism is an important platform for emerg-

ing markets and developing countries to strengthen solidarity and cooperation and uphold common interests," Mao said.

"BRICS is also an open platform and we welcome any interested country to become a member of the BRICS family."

Milei, a right-wing libertarian who has sharply criticised China and the China-led BRICS group, was elected Argentina's new president on Sunday.

Milei and Mondino had both opposed Argentina joining the bloc, which also includes Brazil, Russia, India and South Africa.

"We don't understand what the benefit (of joining BRICS) is for Argentina at the moment. If it later turns out that there is a benefit, we will analyze it," she said.

China and Russia are pushing for the expansion of the BRICS grouping as they seek to counter Western economic dominance.

Saudi Arabia, Iran, Ethiopia, Egypt and the United Arab Emirates are the other five countries invited at the August summit to join the BRICS grouping.



Mara regional commissioner Said Mtanda makes remarks at Butiama on Sunday shortly after inspecting the construction of Butiama Police Station. Right is Home Affairs deputy minister Butiama constituency legislator Jumanne Sagini. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

Regional network of public health laboratories advances in aiding health emergency readiness

By Guardian Reporter

EAST African regional experts have commended the role the project has played in strengthening the region's defense against health threats.

They made the remarks over the weekend when speaking at the just-ended eleventh meeting of the Regional Steering Committee of the EAC Regional Network of Public Health Reference Laboratories for Communicable Diseases (EAC RNPRL-CD).

The Regional Steering Committee, that met from 16th to 17th November, 2023 in Kigali, Rwanda reviewed progress made in the implementation of the pending activities under the first phase of the project, whose implementation was interrupted by the Covid-19 pandemic.

The meeting also reviewed and revised the roadmap for the implementation of the activities of the second phase of the project that was launched on 11th June, 2021 in Arusha.

Jonathan Kirabo, EAC Focal Per-

son, Ministry of EAC Affairs, Republic of Rwanda noted that the project had provided solutions and tangible results in addressing disease outbreaks in the region.

The ERNPHRL-CD project has been actively strengthening the capacity of Partner States in the region to detect and respond to pathogens of Biosafety Level 3 and 4. The project has successfully completed its Phase I, which focused on high-threat pathogens.

During Phase I, the project procured and deployed nine complete Mobile Laboratories in the EAC region, each fully equipped with portable PCR machines, ELISA machines, Glove boxes, mobile vehicles and electrical power supply system.

In addition to the critical role the Mobile Laboratories played in the mitigation of -19 in the region, they have also supported Partner States in response to other disease outbreaks. The Laboratories played a critical role in curbing the Ebola outbreak in Uganda in September 2022 and the Marburg outbreak in Tanzania in March 2023.

During deliberations, the Steering Committee noted that one significant accomplishment highlighted was the completion of 27 out of the planned 27 field missions under Phase I, demonstrating the region's readiness in confirming the causes of disease outbreaks, strengthened diagnostic preparedness, and capacity to undertake scientific research.

The meeting also noted that the project had embarked on various training programs to create, maintain and expand the pool of laboratory experts in the EAC Region, resulting in 405 trained laboratory experts in the region.

Transitioning into the second phase, the project will entail the procurement of six container-based mobile laboratory units and equipment for bacterial culture and mobile field sequencing/bioinformatics for rapid pathogen identification and Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) testing; consumables, test kits and high clearance all-terrain vehicles for transporting the container-based laboratory and

training of the EAC Partner States public health laboratory personnel to the required level of competency to operate the container-based mobile laboratories for Anti-Microbial Resistance (AMR) surveillance among others.

The misuse of antibiotics to treat bacterial infections without evidence-based antimicrobial resistance profiling of the pathogen is common practice. As outlined by the World Health Organisation's (WHO) Global Antimicrobial Resistance Surveillance System (GLASS) the development of antimicrobial resistance has reached alarming levels in many parts of the world, including the East African Community. Consequently, a lack of field laboratory diagnostic culture capabilities impairs both outbreak control and patient care in the region.

Chairing the meeting, Dr Marie-Noelle Uwizeza, Director of the National Reference Laboratory, Ministry of Health and Fight against AIDS, Republic of Burundi, noted that the meeting presented a valuable opportunity to derive recom-

mendations aimed at enhancing the health outcomes across the EAC region. In particular, she emphasized the significant benefits stemming from the EAC mobile labs project, underscoring its potential to revolutionize healthcare delivery.

"The mobile labs project not only facilitates prompt and accurate diagnostics but also plays a pivotal role in strengthening the region's overall health infrastructure," said Dr Uwizeza. "Leveraging the advancements in mobile laboratory technology will contribute to more effective disease surveillance, early detection, and ultimately, the improvement of public health in the EAC region," she added.

The Regional Steering Committee called for continued regional collaboration and the urgent need to integrate the Mobile Laboratories into the existing National Public Health Laboratories and Ministry of Health structures to ensure the sustainability of the Mobile Laboratories network.

The meeting also noted the need

to establish a regional framework for sharing test kits and other consumables procured for outbreaks among the Partner States in an effort to ensure efficiency. Further, the members of the Regional Steering Committee urged Partner States to embrace the publication of manuscripts. Noting that this collective effort will significantly boost the visibility of the Partner States' experts, showcasing their diverse skills and knowledge base to a broader audience, as well as an elevation of the project's overall profile.

By disseminating valuable insights and findings through published manuscripts, the Partner States can effectively contribute to the global discourse on pertinent issues regarding communicable diseases, while fostering collaboration and knowledge exchange. This proactive approach to sharing expertise is also anticipated to have a positive ripple effect, enhancing the collective reputation of the Partner States and fortifying the success and impact of the project as a whole.

China to become the world's largest automobile exporter in year 2023

GUANGZHOU

CHINA is certain to become the world's largest automobile exporter this year, as its auto exports in the first 10 months hit 3.9 million units, an official with the China Council for the Promotion of International Trade has said.

Wang Xia, head of the council's automotive sub-council, made the remarks at the 21st Guangzhou International Automobile Exhibition that opened on Friday.

China's automobile industry has taken a solid step toward internationalization, despite a complex and grave international environment, Wang said.

In the first quarter, China exported 1.07 million vehicles, surpassing Japan for the first time to become the world's largest automobile exporter. In the first 10 months, the export volume registered a year-on-year growth of 59.7 percent to 3.92 million units.

The per vehicle export price has also grown to 137,000 Yuan (about 19,100 U.S. dollars) in the first three quarters of 2023 from 85,000 Yuan in 2014.

"In 2001, the export value of China's automobile industry chain was only 1.56 billion U.S. dollars, taking up a global share of just 0.65 percent. In the first eight months of this year, this figure neared 122 billion dollars, accounting for 5.5 percent of the global total," Wang noted.

With the landing of a series of policies to stabilize the economy and promote consumption, and the gradual recovery of consumer confidence, China's automobile market will embrace new space of growth, Wang added.



Assistant Inspector of the Police Myeliyeli Athuman speaks at the launch of the global 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence held in Dar es Salaam yesterday. This is a key international moment meant to call for an end to violence against women and girls. It runs from November 25 (International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women) to December 10 (Human Rights Day). Kipunguni Community Voice Centre, a Dar es Salaam-based CSO, organised - and hosted - the event. Photo: Correspondent Sabato Kasika

The Guardian

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TUESDAY 21 NOVEMBER 2023

**Taking A New Look
At The News
ESTABLISHED IN 1995**

Land-linked rows a truly hard nut to crack we ought to crack

A presidential commission on issues linked to land use has recently made calls much similar made by a team formed in 1991.

In a very important way, it is on the basis of recommendations in the report by the previous team that two pieces of legislation related to land ownership and use were written.

While there is a point in looking again at the legislation in question with the formation of a commission, at times issues need to be resolved by learning from the effect or otherwise of other spheres of legislation.

The issue is whether the problem can be resolved merely by making policy alterations or by seeking revitalised legal provisions.

What can be done about resolving land-related problems is in part administrative as ACT/Wazalendo asserted at a recent rally in Kigoma Region, and it is with respect to these issues that the opposition party demanded the formation of a presidential commission.

While it appears that the intention of the party's proposition is to arrive at an alteration of statutes, a probable function of a land commission would be to convert it to an authority capable of resolving land-related issues in real time by combining the roles of land tribunals and law courts as well as the use of presidential powers.

Were it that it was the latter formula that was taken up, it would imply that the acts of such a body are countersigned by the country's President in like manner as applies to the issuance of death sentences, where such a signature is mandatory.

This manner of taking up the party's views into an administrative focus is helpful because there is no way in which legislation can be written that satisfies the claims of all parties "touched" by conflicts associated with land use from smallholder farmers, pastoralists and conservation communities. Taking the 1991 formation of a land commission and

earlier work as points of reference, it is possible to bring into comparison land legislation as completed in 1999 with the Law of Marriage Act of 1971.

Questions are being shot from a broad array of activists but, so far, it is the best compromise that can bring together the different parts of the population to the table, where their interests are taken care of.

Instead of seeking to abrogate the existing law to move with the pressure against child marriages, what the government did was to ensure that education continues up to 18 years of age. Similarly with the legislation on land, the distinction between village land, urban land and state land meets with the expectations of different groups and it indeed reflects political culture, as it prizes the communal ownership of land.

It is the premise of cohesion of villages not just as demarcations but as culturally cohesive spheres of life, although it is this communal attachment to land that is the source of all the woes. Communal ownership means that other people can enter and use land, and they will be questioned collectively as invaders, and they are thus in a way sheltered.

So the question in that regard is either to the political party or to the government as to what sphere of land problems they want to intervene. If they only wish to hand out administrative decisions in real time, where a superior tribunal sits and makes a decision that within days is signed in a way that binds the president, for instance if it is signed by the Chief Secretary, then they need to create a land authority.

But if they want to resolve land-related conflicts, they have in principle to abandon communal land law, give freehold or 99-year titles to all those legally occupying the land.

That would mean compelling livestock keepers to graze only on titled land - which they already know. But things are not that simple really.

Collective investment has a future even if it's rather slow

MANAGERS of the UTT-AMIS collective investment instrument at the Dar es Salaam Stock Exchange (DSE) say they are comfortable with the pace of growth of assets in the particular investment instrument.

They say that changes made to the investment tool over the past year have "midwifed" an increase of its total assets from 996.5bn/- to over 1.53trn/- with an opening up of its participation and beneficiary terms. This according to information released at an annual conference of the collective investment instrument and alluding to competitive benefits the unit's management had promised investors.

Any increase in cash committed to various funds or investment instruments at the DSE is a reflection of available surplus capital that can be alienated by an individual or an organisation to be committed for investment at an expected gain for a specific period of time.

In that case, a 50 per cent increase in funds available for UTT represents an increase in disposable funds from various quarters closely linked with such an instrument. It also points to denial by some potential destination of such funds in favour of the collective investment unit, implying that UTT-AMIS is indeed doing its work quite well while also possibly ringing alarm bells as to other claimants.

All sectors of economy need investment funds and when plenty of cash is directed, say, to bank deposits, the reason is less the services the bank provides but the security of the cash held by the depositors.

It implies that depositors aren't ready to commit their funds to this or that productive investment

amid policy or regulatory worries, non-predictability of governance, etc. That happened during the past decade such that bank deposits swelled while private sector investments stagnated.

It needs some foolproof knowledge or precise analysis of investment trends in this or that sector to make a point as to where the new 500bn/- was likely to have been directed, with UTT-AMIS having claimed just 53.5bn/- in new deposits during the period, which would still have been a relative success.

One guess is that the traditional fund pullers are now tired and no longer able to absorb new sources of disposable investment funds - for instance, being directed at real estate, etc. In the circumstances, the UTT-AMIS investment instrument's pleasure - or joy - in part reflects the fatigue and immobility at DSE, seeing some major public firms sitting outside its view.

This is at the same time a sobering moment for the usual DSE communication outlook where investing in DSE-listed products is considered a cultural attribute arising from awareness of such products. That may have been a perfectly valid position when DSE was established but, 29 years later, that outlook has to be modified.

Seeing a diverse stock purchasing agency like UTT-AMIS garners 553bn/- in a single year and large banks having trillions of shillings deposited there in the past decade is genuinely noteworthy.

It implies that if the stocks of major public firms are backed up by large investors and a portion put on DSE for commonplace buyers, the level of investments will likely shoot up appreciably.

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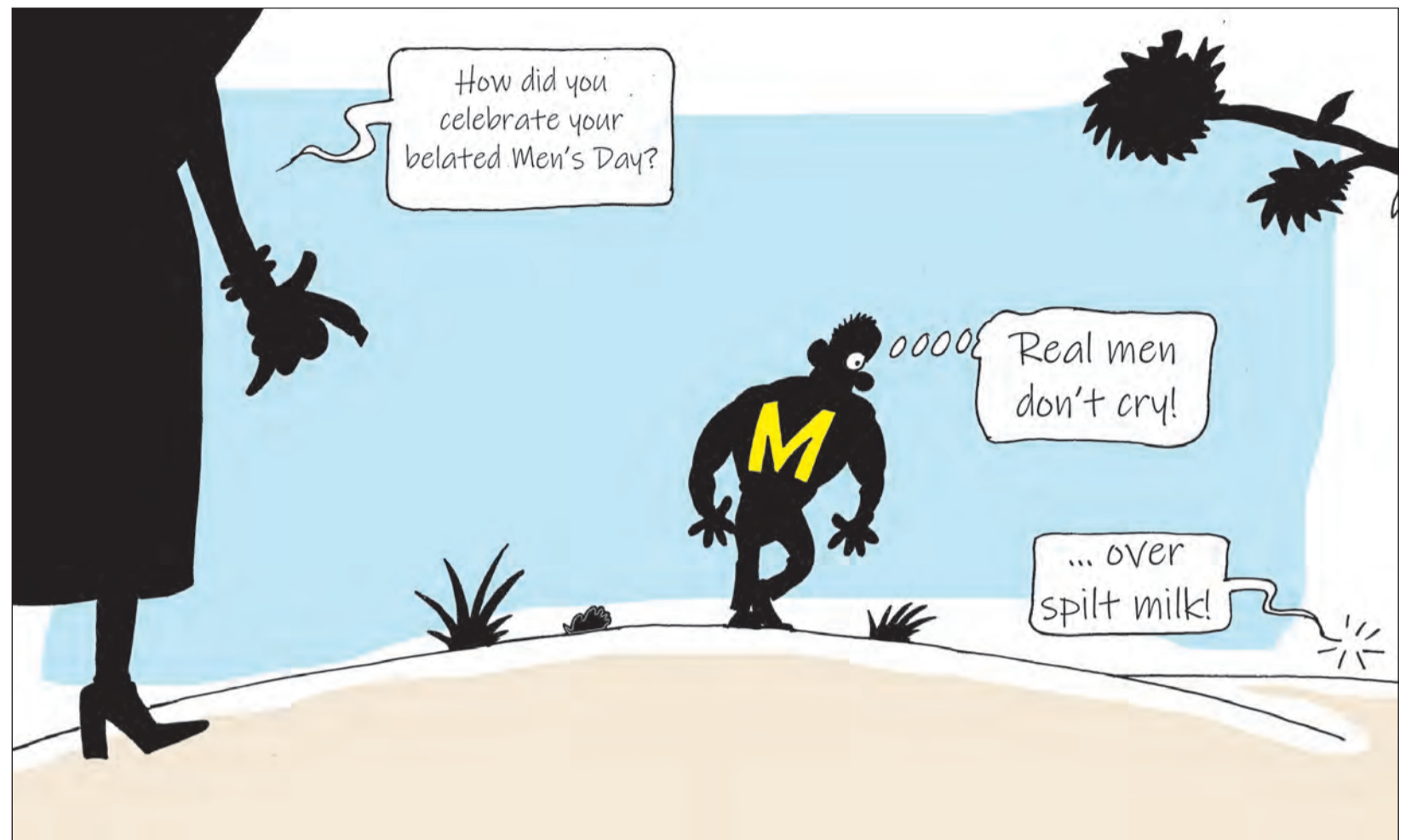
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Catching a cold might prevent a severe case of Covid-19

By George Citroner

SCIENTISTS have stood puzzled over why some people seem immune to Covid-19, even after exposure. Now, emerging evidence points to an intriguing explanation: prior run-ins with the common cold.

A new study investigated whether pre-existing antibodies from common cold viruses offer protection against Covid-19.

Researchers analysed blood samples from 94 unvaccinated hospitalised patients with varying severity of respiratory failure; 74 had tested positive for Covid-19, while 20 did not have the infection.

The researchers measured levels of antibodies from prior common cold coronavirus infections. The same analysis was done for non-Covid patients as controls.

There was a positive correlation between common cold antibody levels and Covid-specific antibodies. Higher common cold antibody levels in the control patients suggested a potentially protective effect against Covid severity.

'Original antigenic sin'

The concept of "original antigenic sin" (OAS) was first coined in the 1960s. It refers to how initial flu exposures shape immunity against later, related strains.

Since then, research has shown that these original imprints can influence susceptibility to other infections.

Dr Thomas Gut, an internal medicine doctor with the Post-Covid Recovery Centre at Staten Island University Hospital in the US, told *The Epoch Times* that this phenomenon may also apply to Covid-19 and common colds.

"It has been up for debate for quite some time whether pre-existing colds ... offer a protective effect for being exposed to Covid or whether it somehow makes it higher-risk when they are exposed to Covid," he said.

Dr Gut added that these latest findings suggest that any prior corona-type virus - the common cold or Covid - is unlikely to heighten susceptibility.

Childhood colds and Africa vis-à-vis Covid

There is an intense debate around whether endemic common colds impact susceptibility to severe Covid outcomes, according to a review of the study. But some speculate that childhood cold exposure partly explains Africa's milder pandemic impact through cross-protection.

A 2023 study in the *Journal of Clinical Virology* Plus analysed "robust" immune responses to Covid-19 in Lagos, Nigeria. Researchers examined two groups: healthcare workers and the general population across five areas.

Over 83 per cent of the 250 participants had prior exposure to common cold coronaviruses. The study found that their infection-fighting white blood cells cross-reacted to the Covid-19 virus.

This suggests that people who were previously exposed to these genetically related coronaviruses have immune responses that are protective against future SARS-CoV-2 infections.

Bobby Brooke Herrera, assistant professor of global health at Rutgers Global

Health Institute and lead author of the study, said this in a press statement. He noted the study's unique baseline data from early in the pandemic - before vaccination started.

Now that most people have existing Covid antibodies, either from vaccination or from infection, it is difficult to find an unexposed population for comparison - and this underscores the value of early pandemic data.

Exposures and Children's Defences

A 2023 study in *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* analysed pre-pandemic blood samples from children and adults, along with samples from Covid-19 recoverees.

The research found that children as young as 2 had already developed immunity to several viruses, including SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes Covid-19. However, these protective cells decreased with age.

"These reactions are especially strong early in life and grow much weaker as we get older," Annika Karlsson, study corresponding author and research group leader at the Department of Laboratory Medicine, Karolinska Institutet, said in a press statement. This may explain why children tend to get milder Covid-19 cases than adults.

Meanwhile, Naveen Athrappully reports that over half of Covid-19 vaccine recipients in a recent study were found to be suffering from some form of health complications one year after taking the shots.

The study, published at ScienceDirect on November 10, examined potential post-Covid-19 vaccination syndrome (PCVS) among vaccinated individuals and assessed their quality of life (QoL).

The study was conducted among adults aged 18 and above from India who had received either Bharat Biotech's COVAXIN or the AstraZeneca Covid-19 vaccines.

Among vaccine recipients, 52.8 per cent of individuals were found to have at least 1 PCVS a month after primary vaccination. At 12 months, 64.6 per cent reported at least 1 PCVS. Though the quality of life rose at six months following vaccination, it subsequently fell at 12 months.

The overall prevalence of PCVS among individuals vaccinated with AstraZeneca was 65.59 per cent compared to COVAXIN's 59.4 per cent.

Among individuals who took booster shots, over eight out of ten reported at least one PCVS, which is far higher than the five in ten people from the unvaccinated group who reported a similar syndrome.

The prevalence of PCVS "was similar to long-term Covid; it declined over time and increased following booster immunisation. Contrary to PCVS prevalence, QoL rises with time and falls after booster doses," the study concluded.

"There was a statistically significant difference in the prevalence of PCVS and QoL between booster dose recipients and no booster dose recipients," it showed. The study was conducted between September 2021 and May 2023.

The authors of the study pointed out that research on the effects of immunisation and its effects on people with long-term Covid have caused "debate as they gave rise to varying outcomes".

They further noted: "Some evidence indicates a change in, an improvement in, a continuation of, or even a worsening of long-term Covid symptoms following vaccination.

"The ratio of change in antibody titers was noticeably larger in the group of people whose illnesses became worse." Antibody titer is a lab test that measures the level of antibodies in a blood sample.

The study was funded by the Indian Council of Medical Research. The two authors of the study, Yogendra Shrestha and Rajesh Venkataraman, are from the Department of Pharmacy Practice of India's Sri Adichunchanagiri College of Pharmacy.

The authors reported "no financial or interpersonal conflicts" that may have affected the study results.

More new studies are giving further evidence linking Covid-19 shots with health complications. A March 2023 review published in the *National Library of Medicine* analysed 81 articles that confirmed cardiovascular complications in 17,636 individuals who had taken an mRNA shot. The articles also reported 284 deaths.

Out of the 17,636 individuals, 17,192 had taken Pfizer's Covid-19 shot, while the remaining 444 received Moderna jabs.

"Thrombosis was frequently reported with any mRNA vaccine, followed by stroke, myocarditis, myocardial infarction, pulmonary embolism, and arrhythmia," it said.

Thrombosis was found to be common among those who had taken the Pfizer vaccine. Stroke was common among Moderna vaccine recipients. While Pfizer reported 228 deaths, the Moderna group saw 56 deaths.

In a November 11 Substack post, cardiologist Peter A. McCullough claimed that the study pointed to "a cardiovascular safety disaster". He said that witnessing 50 or more deaths with a widely used, novel product usually "prompts a worldwide recall".

He elaborated: "To have 284 well-described deaths as a result of cardiovascular and/or thrombotic complications is a striking finding in the medical literature for products that are still on the market and promoted by public health agencies all over the world."

A preprint study published earlier this month at medRxiv found that the most common chronic symp-

toms among people who received a Covid-19 vaccine were excessive fatigue, brain fog, numbness, neuropathy and exercise intolerance.

At least half the participants also reported dizziness, burning sensations, tinnitus, headache, insomnia, palpitations, and myalgia (muscle pain and aches). Study participants reported a median of 22 symptoms.

The study was funded by the US National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the Howard Hughes Medical Institute Collaborative Covid-19 Initiative.

Concerns about the ill effects of Covid-19 vaccines have reached the US Congress. In a November 13 hearing in Washington convened by Republican Marjorie Taylor Greene, Dr Robert Malone testified that DNA fragments have been detected in the Pfizer vaccine.

Dr Malone helped invent the mRNA technology used in the mRNA Covid-19 vaccines like the one from Pfizer. He revealed that the vaccine contains a DNA sequence called SV40 and that this information was not disclosed to at least a few regulators.

The presence of SV40 in the vaccine is a "proven genotoxicity risk," he warned. Genotoxicity refers to the ability of harmful substances to damage the genetic information in cells.

He suggested that the unusual cancers that have been popping off since the rollout of the vaccines could be due to the presence of these DNA fragments.

"And by the way, these DNA fragments may also be shown to contribute to genetic anomalies in foetuses, which is one of the most prominent causes of premature abortion," he said.

Meanwhile, the US Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends the 2023-2024 updated Covid-19 vaccines from Pfizer, Moderna, and Novavax to children as young as six months old, insisting that these are necessary to "protect against serious illness from Covid-19."

Even with vaccination, there is no guarantee that a person would avoid infection. US government files recently obtained by *The Epoch Times* showed that more than 5 million Covid-19 infections in 2021 actually occurred among vaccinated individuals.

*** Dispatches by The Epoch Times. George Citroner reports on health and medicine, covering topics that include cancer, infectious diseases and neurodegenerative conditions. He was awarded the Media Orthopaedic Reporting Excellence (MORE) award in 2020 for a story on osteoporosis risk in men. Naveen Athrappully is a journalist covering business and world events at The Epoch Times.**

WORLD CHILDREN'S DAY

For every child, every right :Delivering psychosocial support for crisis-impacted children

NAIROBI
AS the global community marks World Children's Day, every child should be guaranteed their rights, including those in the Gaza Strip, where heavy bombardment and military operations by Israel have killed more than 11,000 people, 40 percent of them children.

"Under international humanitarian laws and the Safe Schools Declaration, civilians—in particular children, schools, and school personnel—must be protected. What we are seeing in this conflict are bombs pounding the most densely populated area on earth, schools and other civilian infrastructures being attacked, and an entire population being trapped in the most dire conditions, with no safe place to flee to.

Surviving children are maimed, orphaned, or have lost close and extended family. Horrors of unimaginable proportion are unfolding before our eyes," Yasmine Sherif, Executive Director of Education Cannot Wait, the UN global fund for education in emergencies and protracted crises, tells IPS.

"No child can or should have to be prepared for what is happening in Gaza. Children and adolescents are hurting and traumatized. According to UNRWA, initial assessments in October showed that at least 91 percent of children are demonstrating signs of acute stress and trauma and are in need of Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS)."

According to the UN, children account for nearly half of the population in Gaza. More than 625,000 students and 22,564 teachers have been affected as attacks continue. At least 86 percent of school buildings are either being used as shelters for the displaced population, catering for up to four times their capacity, or have been destroyed.

Camilla Lodi, Norwegian Refugee Council's (NRC) Global Psychosocial Support Head of the Better Learning Programme, told IPS the impact of war on children was devastating.

"When children experience conflict, war, and displacement, they go through personal, ongoing life threats—constantly witnessing violence and its effects. Prolonged exposure to such traumatic events increases the risk of complications in processing trauma.

When the fighting stops, the journey to recovery starts for children and adults who have gone through high levels of stress and trauma. Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) is not a luxury but a necessity. It helps regain a sense of normalcy," she said.

"NRC works specifically on a psychosocial support program within broader education in emergency interventions. Simply, children cannot learn unless they feel well and safe. MHPSS is an essential, necessary, and mandatory intervention that should be embedded in every education in emergency programs.

The Better Learning Programme (BLP) is NRC's signature non-specialized classroom-based psychosocial support intervention that helps restore learning capacities for children that have gone through trauma and high



Aya, a 5-year-old girl clutching her doll to ease her fear, gazes at Gaza's sky filled with warplanes from inside an UNRWA school in the Gaza Strip. Credit: UNRWA

levels of stress." The program has been at the forefront of providing immediate and long-term critical care and psychosocial support for more than a decade, investing in children's futures in 33 countries, such as Ukraine, Sudan, and Palestine. Lodi stresses that MHPSS is critical in crises and emergencies.

Sherif stresses that as homes and schools lie in ruin in this high-level stress cycle, surviving children are at risk of severe lifelong mental health problems. A life of debilitating chronic anxiety, depression, and various degrees of trauma now beckons for more than 224 million children and adolescents in conflict and crises globally. She adds that Education Cannot Wait, which supports education programs for children in over 40 countries affected by emergencies and protracted cri-

ses, has included MHPSS as a core component of all its country-level investments since 2020. This includes support for the NRC's Better Learning Programme.

"ECW has prioritized MHPSS to protect and promote students' and teachers' well-being, as mental health is the foundation of learning. We have a target to invest at least 10 percent of our resources for mental health and psychosocial support services," says Sherif.

ECW recently announced a \$10 million 12-month grant in support of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) and UNICEF to provide children in Gaza with life-saving mental health and psychosocial support.

"For Gaza specifically, it is a humanitarian catastrophe defined by a relentless cycle of violence. Past

research within the Better Learning Programme found that 1093 students (6-17 years of age) who sought help for nightmares and sleep disturbances reported recurrent traumatic nightmares on average 4.57 nights per week, with an average duration of 2.82 years," Lodi says.

"We always talk about the cost of inaction. Neglecting MHPSS can result in five significant risks, notably the perpetuation of cycles of violence and trauma. As a conflict concludes, the suffering and psychological impact on children commence and, if left unaddressed, can endure throughout their lives. This neglect also results in the loss of educational and developmental milestones, increasing susceptibility to mental health disorders. Additionally, the diminishing sense of community connectedness, a stabilizer for peace, is compromised. There is also an economic fallout, as increased

healthcare costs and long-term productivity losses contribute to a substantial financial and economic impact."

Lodi stresses that no child should pay the price of adults' conflict and that a ceasefire is urgent to help re-establish a sense of safety and predictability and for children to resume recreational play and education activities in a safe environment, which will allow a safe break for their body in "emergency, flight mode."

"The catastrophic humanitarian situation in Gaza cannot continue. All parties must respect the UN Charter, international humanitarian law, and universal human rights. I join my colleagues in the United Nations' call for an immediate humanitarian ceasefire now," says Sherif.

If soul-shattering human suffering is not halted and safety restored, Sherif says our moral standing as an international community will be questioned by the young generation today and for generations to come. How can we make promises to children in crisis during this World Children's Day, whose theme is For Every Child, Every Right? Children everywhere in the world, including more than 224 million crisis-affected children, deserve every right and promise delivered despite, and especially because, of their hardships.

IPS UN Bureau Report

We are failing in our constitutional obligation to South Africa's young ones

By Pieter Twine

IN South Africa, section 28 of the Bill of Rights in the Constitution proclaims that every child has a set of basic rights, over and above those afforded to all South Africans – those rights include nutrition, healthcare and social services, shelter, and protection from maltreatment, neglect, abuse or degradation.

But disparities in wealth and access mean that the worlds into which children in South Africa are born and the opportunities to which they have access are incredibly unequal. According to Unicef, more than half the children in the country live below the poverty line; one-third of girls experience some form of violence before the age of 18; and two-thirds of children eligible for early childhood development programmes do not have access to them.

Those numbers alone demonstrate that we are failing in our constitutional obligation to our children – the bare minimum we owe them as described by the founding document of our country. So how are we supposed to help them thrive in a deeply unequal society?

World Children's Day on 20 November – the anniversary of the day on which the UN General Assembly adopted the Declaration of the Rights of the Child in 1959 and the Convention



on the Rights of the Child in 1989 – is a reminder to consider the rights of children.

It's also an opportunity to give them the platform to speak out on the issues that matter to their generation and call for adults to create a better future. This year's theme is "For every child, every right" and serves as a rallying call to deliver all the rights children are guaranteed – and more.

Access to education

Early childhood development (ECD) centres are described as the "foundation phase" of children's education. The 2021 Early Childhood Development (ECD) Census showed that 42,420 early learning programmes (ELPs) in SA collectively had 1,660,316 children enrolled.

The Centre for Early Childhood Development estimates that each day in South Africa some 32,000 ECD centres provide education, care and wellbeing for around 2.5 million children.

The fact that the country can provide care and support for between 1.6 and 2.5 million young children every day is something of a miracle in the face of the Department of Basic Education's own figures that just 33% of these programmes receive a subsidy from the Department of Social Development.

More than two-thirds (68%) of ELPs are registered

as non-profit organisations and just under a third (31%) are part of a larger network or organisation comprising multiple ELPs, such as regional ECD forums.

Thousands of ECD centres are registered as beneficiaries of the MySchool MyVillage MyPlanet programme and we work with organisations like Grow Educare, Breadline Africa and Impande to improve ECD conditions.

Our own Dream2Teach Scholarship Fund – which MySchool supporters can also nominate as a beneficiary – gives students the chance to reach their teaching dreams, while also fighting youth unemployment, turning a challenge into an opportunity to create positive change.

Access to water and sanitation

Another of South Africa's major inequality pressure points is access to safe water and proper sanitation – and this has a major impact on education. More than half of the world's schools lack access to safe water and sanitation facilities.

The Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA) says that every child has the right to a quality education, which includes access to safe drinking water, sanitation and hygiene facilities at school. As children (should) spend a significant portion of

their daily lives at school, having access to clean water and sanitation is of vital importance.

In underprivileged, water-scarce areas many learners are unable to complete their education because of the lack of water and toilets at schools.

The DBSA's report explains that the lack of available clean water has serious negative effects on learners' academic performance and attendance rates due to the fact that without access to clean drinking water, learners contract water-borne diseases, are unable to concentrate for long periods of time due to dehydration and fail to maintain proper hygiene standards.

The Woolies Water Fund, a partnership between Woolworths and MySchool MyVillage MyPlanet, has successfully implemented water intervention solutions worth R7.3-million in schools. These include more than 600 hand-washing stations and 172 water tanks in four provinces, as well as providing the capacity to store more than one million litres of rainwater at more than 100 schools, ensuring ongoing access to safe water.

The water collected in the rainwater tanks can be used for handwashing stations and toilets to support schools and prevent the disruption of learning caused by water outages. The aim is also to help schools to grow sustainable food gardens of veg-

etables and fruit for school lunches and to share the produce with their communities.

Access to nutritious food

Unicef's The State of the World's Children 2019: Children, Food and Nutrition report found that, in South Africa, 27% (1.7 million) of children under five are too short for their age, more than 2.5% (143,349) are wasted, 61% (3.7 million) suffer from anaemia, and 13% (762,615) are overweight. South Africa has the highest percentage of overweight children under five in east and southern Africa.

Poor eating and feeding practices start from the earliest days of a child's life – not necessarily through parental neglect, but because of poverty and lack of access to healthy foods.

Worldwide, close to 45% of children between six months and two years of age are not fed any fruits or vegetables and nearly 60% do not eat any eggs, dairy, fish or meat, according to the Unicef report.

The report says, "As children grow older, their exposure to unhealthy food becomes alarming, driven largely by inappropriate marketing and advertising, the abundance of ultra-processed foods in cities but also in remote areas, and increasing access to fast food and highly sweetened beverages. 42% of school-going adolescents in low- and middle-income countries consume carbonated sugary soft drinks at least once a day and 46% eat fast food at least once a week."

MySchool MyVillage MyPlanet beneficiaries do plenty of work around food security, like The Sprightly Seed, which delivers kitchen and food-garden infrastructure projects to child-focused projects. The African Children's Feeding Scheme distributes food parcels, hosts volunteer events to work in its gardens and helps communities establish small vegetable gardens which can provide food for families throughout the year and create an opportunity for income generation by selling any excess.

We need to work harder to give our children more than they're constitutionally or legally entitled to. Delivering on the basics will help them survive – doing better for them will help them thrive. **DM**

The 300-year-old Ghanaian tree that was so threatening it had to die

By Phillip van Niekerk

THE men who chopped down a sacred kola tree on the road near Kumasi in Ghana in the early hours of 7 November, under instructions from their pastor, could not have cared much for history.

The tree is said to have grown from a kola nut spat on to the ground sometime around 1700 by the great priest Komfo Anokye, cofounder of the Ashanti confederacy after the Ashanti defeated a rival kingdom at the battle of Feyiase.

Komfo Anokye was a medium between the spirit world and the living, and for 300 years until its demise last week, the tree was revered, its seeds believed to contain healing powers. When a dual carriageway was constructed between Kumasi and Lake Bosomtwe, the road was diverted to spare the tree.

The tree apparently had to die because church leaders saw it as a fetish, a totem of traditional religions still (barely) practised in the area.

The desecration of the tree was met with outrage in Ghanaian media, indicating that respect for tradition remains high despite the explosion in recent years of charismatic Christianity.

There were heated exchanges in the comments section of the publication Ghana Web: "Idiot empty-headed illiterate pastors creating problems everywhere in Ghana," wrote one. "From sleeping with people's wives to forecasting fake lotto numbers.

"They are nothing but psychopathic egoistic maniacs who want control over others as they cunningly enrich themselves. But can you blame them? We can only blame the fools who flock to their churches."

More than 70% of Ghanaians are Christian, according to the 2021 census, and one-third identify as Pentecostal or evangelical. Only three percent are officially "traditional."

But traditional religions live on in other ways. Belief in the spirit world and the ancestors - the mysticism of these religions - has been absorbed in Christian religious practices and, as in South Africa, people who attend church still go to the sangoma when they are ill or experiencing financial or relationship difficulties.

The existence of secret societies and spirit shrines indicates that the old religions have many more followers than are prepared to admit on a census form.

Devout society

Ghana is an exceptionally devout society. There are an estimated 10 churches per square kilometre in the capital Accra, and its residents get cranky at the constant noise of street preachers blaring out religious messages through loud hailers.

Government offices, banks, businesses and schools, and even the president's office, kick off every morning with prayer.

Minister of Finance Ken Ofori-Atta always wears white robes to signify his purity and his speeches are punctuated with verses from the Bible. As election campaign manager for his cousin, the president, Ofori-Atta sponsored kids standing in traffic holding up billboards with quotations from the Bible.

Ofori-Atta has also presided over Ghana's worst economic crisis in a generation, and rising levels of corruption and inflation, and has had to go cap in hand to the International Monetary Fund for emergency funding while seeking debt relief from creditors.

President Nana Akufo-Addo, an Anglican, remains intent on building a controversial interdenominational cathedral whose costs have ballooned. Lack of funds has stalled the project for now, leaving a massive scar in the ground near Parliament which the opposition has described as "the most expensive hole in the world."

Africa's contribution to the revival of Christianity could soon be rewarded. Ghana's Cardinal Peter Turkson and Nigeria's Cardinal Francis Arinze are both in the frame to become the first Pope from Africa in 1,500 years.

Peaceful coexistence alongside violent intolerance Compared with Ghana, Nigeria's demographics - a 50/50 split between Christians and Muslims - can produce lethal outcomes.

Conflict between Muslim herdsmen and mostly Christian farmers has led to almost 20,000 deaths in recent years, and Boko Haram insurgents have burnt down dozens of churches and targeted Christian communities in the northeast.

Saudi and Iranian religious ideas have, over the past 40 years, radicalised parts of northern Nigeria.

And yet the country of 213 million remains one of the world's best functioning cheek-by-cheek multireligious societies.



The trunk of a sacred kola tree near Kumasi in Ghana, chopped down by men under the instruction of a pastor. (Photo: Flickr)



A 300-year-old kola tree that Komfo Anokye planted around 1700 in Feyiase, Kumasi, along the Lake Bosomtwe route, was cut down. (Photo: X, formerly known as Twitter/ @anything_ghana)

This is exemplified by President Bola Tinubu, who is a Muslim, while his wife, Remi Tinubu, is an ordained pastor of the Redeemed Christian Church of God.

"She sleeps with the Bible on her side, and I have the Quran next to me," Tinubu once explained. However, that tolerance does not always extend to traditional religions.

In July, the Emir of Ilorin, Ibrahim Gambari, banned the priestess of Isese, the traditional religion of the Yoruba, from holding a religious festival because Ilorin is supposedly "an Islamic city".

Since then, the quarrel has worsened and the author and Nobel laureate Wole Soyinka, himself an adherent of traditional Yoruba religion, chimed in to accuse the Emir of turning "the turban of enlightenment into a crown of bigotry".

"Your Royal Highness, it is conduct like this that has bred Boko Haram, Isis, Iswap and other religious malformations that currently plague this nation... It is action of this nature... that turns a young generation into mindless monsters, ever ready to swarm out and kill for the thrill of it, but under presumption of religious immunity."

Ilorin is a particularly sensitive venue because it was a Yoruba outpost that was taken over by Fulani Muslims in the 19th century and turned into a staging ground for the spread of Islam.

Traditional Yoruba religion has proved resilient even as it exists side by side with Christianity and Islam.

Yoruba spiritual culture did not die during the Atlantic slave trade. It travelled with Nigerian slaves to Brazil, Cuba and other parts of the Caribbean, where it flourishes to this day.

The traditional Yoruba mode of worship is inclusive and tolerant. It is not a religion, a practitioner explained, but a complete philosophy; a metaphysical universe inhabited by 201 gods. Adherents believe that life, the religious centre of the Yoruba, was where humankind originated.

Like other traditional religions, it doesn't claim superiority or proselytise or believe that the world is headed towards an apocalypse.

For some Nigerians, this is an attractive alternative in a time of worldwide ethnic, cultural, racial and religious tribalism, in which some religionists are party to tearing the world apart.

Soyinka describes his beliefs as a mixture of Western modernism, Yoruba religion and bits of Buddhism and Christianity.

He is a radical humanist who has written about how African traditional religions promote religious tolerance and "the fostering of an ethics of care and relationality" - ideas that in an angry age of division are so threatening that they are being banned or chopped down.

DM

CAPITAL RADIO

RATIBA YA VIPINDI JUMATATU - JUMAPILI

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

Tembelea mitandao ya kijamii ya CAPITAL RADIO



CAPITAL RADIO

Sustainable Abalone farming in S. Africa

By Afolake Oyinloye

THE global demand for seafood has led to innovative approaches to aquaculture, and abalone farming is emerging as a sustainable solution. In a recent interview, Bertus van Oordt, CEO of HIK Abalone Farm, shed light on the natural characteristics of their abalone and the focus on sustainable farming practices.

According to van Oordt, the abalone cultivated at HIK Abalone Farm possesses robust qualities, making them resilient and capable of growing to a significant size. The primary goal of the farm is to optimize growth rates, ensuring a quicker maturation process, increased yield, and meeting the diverse preferences of consumers in terms of taste and color.

The emphasis on sustainability is not limited to South Africa, where HIK Abalone Farm is located. Raphael Fisher, a fisherman, highlighted the importance of such aquaculture initiatives in sustaining local communities. For individuals like Fisher, whose livelihood depends on successful harvests, the transition to alternative work would be challenging. He pointed out that the success of abalone farming provides not only economic stability for individuals in places like Hawston but also a viable option for those seeking alternative employment in the absence of traditional opportunities.

Wendy Chan, Managing Director of Lamma Rainbow Seafood Restaurant, expressed confidence in the sustainability of abalone sourced from South Africa. While Chan may not have in-depth knowledge of the South African abalone industry, she acknowledged the stable supply and pricing of abalone from the region. Her observation of regular abalone sizes indicated a well-managed farming process, where consistency is a key factor.

The global perspective on abalone farming is increasingly positive, with a growing recognition of its potential to meet the demands of seafood enthusiasts while minimizing the impact on wild populations.

It takes a moment to realize many are out of action, grass sprouting through holes in hulls that haven't touched water for years. They are relics of another time, when people fished for their livelihood and the ocean provided more than enough.

Few places have been so impacted by the South African abalone, a curious fist-sized sea snail that is a highly prized morsel in East Asia and the unwitting instigator of 30 years of trouble for Hawston and many other fishing communities along Africa's southern coast. Abalone here was abundant and especially tasty, yet the demand largely put the village and its traditional fishers out of business, or made them criminals overnight.

Raphael Fisher was born into fishing, as just about everyone was in Hawston. He grew up diving for the abalone that South Africans call *perlemoen* – or, affectionately, *perly* – in the rocky coves. He was learning to work his father's boat in his late teens. Every boy wanted to be a perly fisher in Hawston, he said. It was the thing.

But over the last three decades, poachers have swept in and swept up every snail they could find – every sackful a fat payday. They can get \$50 a kilogram. It's reduced the endangered South African abalone to unprecedented low levels, wildlife groups say.

At first, the South African government banned abalone fishing completely. Now, strict quotas give Fisher and other small operators lucky enough to get them the rights to catch 120 kilograms a year. Hardly anything.

It's why a different poaching – not for big profits, but to put food on the table – has also ensnared so many traditional fishers up and down this coast. Fisher faced that temptation.

"There's no other work in Hawston, so what other option would I take? I would also take a wetsuit and go dive, because I've got a family to feed," he said.

A 2022 report by the Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime estimated the illegal trade heading to the hub of Hong Kong was



One of the largest abalone farm in South Africa

worth nearly \$1 billion between 2000 and 2016, and growing.

The total legal abalone fishing quota in South Africa is set at a maximum of 100 metric tons a year. Hong Kong is importing between 2,000-3,000 metric tons of illegal South African abalone a year, the report estimated. Some is moved on to other big markets in China, Japan and Taiwan.

Organized crime and turf battles over illegal abalone that are sometimes marked by brutal gang killings have overwhelmed South African coastal communities. Thousands of poor young men have been drawn in as foot soldiers.

Hawston and its troubles are likely unknown in Hong Kong, where the high-class Forum restaurant offers cooked South African abalone at \$190 a can for customers to take away. Abalone is more than a delicious treat for millions of Chinese, said Wendy Chan, managing director at the Lamma Rainbow, a local seafood restaurant on Hong Kong's Lamma Island.

"Ancient emperors were particularly fond of it,"

Chan said. "Abalone is a symbol of wealth and prestige."

Chan also rates South African abalone highly, as so many do, with its rich taste and slightly chewy texture.

The International Union for Conservation of Nature says nearly half of all abalone shellfish species around the world are threatened with extinction, many affected by pollution and climate change and part of the larger story of devastation of marine wildlife.

The demand has spurred an alternative to wild abalone – farmed abalone. HIK Abalone has a total of around 13 million abalone at any one time at their two south coast farms.

Abalone as far as the eye can see – from tiny specks to as big as your hand – in rows and rows of open-top tanks. None have felt the ocean or a rock. Here, they cruise surprisingly quickly under black plastic cones they have for underwater hiding places. They are bred, fed and set to be killed at the farm to be shipped, dried or canned, to Hong Kong, a few

exported live for high-end customers.

Farms are tinkering with the abalone life cycle by selective breeding to get them to grow to a size they can be sold and eaten as fast as possible, said HIK CEO Bertus van Oordt.

But the farms that have sprouted up have no role in conservation. Van Oordt said he would like to do something, but it's unclear what effect the tank-bred abalone may have in the wild. Van Oordt said he is also unwilling to put abalone in the sea to fatten the supply for poaching.

"If the government comes up with a plan so we can protect what we put back in, we'll be in," van Oordt said. "We'll give the abalone for free."

Officially, authorities are sticking to fishing quotas for now, but there are signs of change after a government-led meeting of all players early this year, said Markus Burgener, a senior program coordinator at TRAFFIC. It was "the most positive development I've seen for years and years," Burgener said.

The key, Burgener said, must be involving communities like Hawston instead of shutting them out.

EAC to develop health data governance to nurture digital transformation in EA

By Guardian Reporter

THE East African Community (EAC) has expressed its commitment towards fostering stronger and health data governance to drive digital transformation and innovations in the health sector in the region.

Dr. Eric Nzeyimana, the EAC Principal Health Officer made the remarks when wrapping up the two-day Consultative Forum on Health Data Governance in Kigali, Rwanda, that was aimed to sensitise members of the East African Legislative Assembly (EALA) and the Pan African Health Informatics Association (HELINA).

The forum was meant to inform EALA members on the importance of developing the EAC Regional Health Data Governance (HDG) framework and similar initiatives for the African Union with a view to building consensus through the African Common Position that is part of the Africa Centre for Disease Control's digital transformation flagship project on HDG.

Dr. Nzeyimana said that the EAC is keen on developing the EAC Regional Data Governance Framework in order to implement the directive of the 23rd Sectoral Council of Ministers of Health, which was held in February 2023 that directed the EAC Secretariat to develop the regional Data Governance Framework.

He said the process of developing the framework on Health Data Governance is already underway, adding that EALA has become the first EAC Organ to be consulted on the process.

"I assure you honourable Members that the fully-fledged EAC Health Data Governance Framework is expected to be in place within six months," he said, noting that in order to fully realize the benefits of digital transformation in the region, it is essential to



establish robust and effective governance frameworks for the health data that is being shared.

"The Health Data Governance framework is key in managing risks, safeguarding individual rights, and so forth," he said, informing the legislators that the EAC Health Data Governance Framework is expected to be approved by the forthcoming 24th EAC Sectoral Council of Ministers of Health that is expected to take place in early 2024.

Dr. Nzeyimana thanked Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA)-funded Integrated Health Programme (EIHP) and the USAID-funded Local Health System Sustainability (LHSS) project for their financial support towards the development of the EAC Health Data Governance framework.

He also hailed HELINA as EAC's newest strategic partner, adding that the two will continue collaborating to transform the health sector in the EAC region with digital technologies.

"To achieve this, we must, among other things, establish a Memorandum of Understanding and define areas of mutual cooperation in digital transformation among the two parties," said Dr. Nzeyimana.

Dr. Kennedy Mukulia, Chairperson of the EALA General Purpose Committee said that the Committee, through its legislative, oversight and representative mandate, has a crucial role in advancing the digital health agenda and strengthening health data governance in the EAC region.

"As EALA, we are committed to taking a leadership role in shaping the EAC's digital health future and ensuring that the benefits of digital health reach all citizens of the Community," said Dr. Mukulia.

Steven Wanyee, the president of HELINA, emphasised HELINA's determination through Transform Health in its commitment to realise Africa CDC's flagship Initiative on Health Data Governance in Africa.

Wanyee called upon Partner States' governments to strengthen their health data governance approaches, while also improving harmonisation across national borders to support cross-border data flows.

"I believe that by collaborating with EALA and the EAC Secretariat, HELINA can harness digitalization's potential to address challenges, create opportunities, and build a more sustainable and prosperous future for all Africans," he said, challenging EAC Partner States to harmonise regulations and build capacity for data governance and standards in general.

"These efforts will significantly contribute to the development of an African Common Position on the governance of health data," added the HELINA President.

Eng. Andrew Charles Kajeguka, EAC Secretariat's senior e-Health and Informatics Officer, disclosed that plans are underway to get rid of vertical siloed applications that are financed by different donors and government programmes at regional and

national levels.

"Fragmentation of digital health systems at EAC regional level will be resolved as the EAC Health department is planning to deploy an enterprise architecture by developing the EAC Health Enterprise Architecture blueprint once the EAC Health Data Governance Framework is approved by the EAC Sectoral Council of Ministers of Health," said Eng. Kajeguka.

The Forum identified key strategic areas of engagement in health data governance by aligning with the globally accepted "health data governance principles", which seek to expedite digital transformation to achieve global goals such as the Universal Health Coverage (UHC) and SDGs by protecting people, promoting health value and prioritising equity.

The EAC Regional Health Data Governance is expected to build confidence among EAC Partner States as they keep on seamless and secure sharing of health data as part of efforts to improve regional cooperation on health.

The Forum further underscored the importance of launching the EAC Annual Inter-parliamentarian Forum on Health and called upon the EAC Secretariat to invite key stakeholders from regional and national parliaments as soon as possible.



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TCRA outlines achievements it has registered in few years

By Guardian Reporter

TANZANIA Communications Regulatory Authority (TCRA) has outlined successes in the country's communications sector in the past few years, including remarkable reduction in the cost of phone connectivity.

Dr. Jabiri Bakari, TCRA director general unveiled this yesterday in Dar es Salaam when addressing members of Communications, Lands and Energy committee of the Zanzibar House of Representatives.

Led by its chairman Yahya Rashid Abdulla, the committee visited the TCRA headquarters to learn and get experiences on how the authority carries out its responsibilities, its achievements as well as plans for solving the challenges of the communication sector.

The seven committee members were received by Dr Bakari, who presented a paper on a number of TCRA issues—including success and challenges facing the communications sector in Tanzania and ways to address them.

Dr Bakari said that availability



TCRA director general Dr. Jabiri Bakari presenting a topic to the members of the Communications, Land and Energy Committee of the Zanzibar House of Representatives when they visited the authority's headquarters in Dar es Salaam yesterday on a business visit. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

of mobile phones and internet services, and strengthening communication security in the country as another milestone achieved by the authority.

TCRA also boast with a significant increase in the number of mobile phone lines, rising from 64.01 million in June 2023 to 67.12 million in September 2023.

According to TCRA reports,

there has been a remarkable reduction in the cost of phone connectivity, dropping from 30.58/- in 2015 to 1.86/- per minute in 2023.

The visiting committee members lauded TCRA for the job well done in managing the telecommunications sector in the country. They pledged to continue to support TCRA in its efforts to improve the telecom-

munications sector.

Committee chairman Yahya Rashid Abdallah, instructed the authority's experts to ensure that they are always at the forefront of receiving new technologies in the communication sector to ensure that the nation is ahead and is not left behind by the changes that are happening rapidly in the world.

Programme due for training 1000 active angel investors in Tanzania by 2026

By Correspondent James Kandoya

SERENGETI Business Angels Network (SBAN), Ennovate Ventures, and United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) Tanzania has launched a training programme dubbed: Tanzania Business Angel Investors Accelerator, to revolutionize tech investment in the country.

Speaking at the launching yesterday in Dar es Salaam, Rodrigue Msechu, Co-founder and Network Manager of SBAN said that the plan is to groom 1000 active angel investors in Tanzania and the diaspora by 2026, to unlock local capital to scale Tanzanian startups.

He said also Tanzania Business Angel Investors Accelerator will train 50 tech startup enthusiasts in Tanzania to become angel investors, equipping them with knowledge, mentorship, and hands-on support to kick-start their angel investing journey.

"Tanzania has a vibrant startup ecosystem, but access to capital remains a major challenge. We are confident that the programme will play a vital role in boosting the growth of Tanzania's startup ecosystem." He said.

Msechu said the program will cover a wide range of topics, including: identifying and evaluating investment opportunities, due diligence and deal structuring.

Others are mentoring and supporting startups, risk management and exit strategies and hands-on support in closing their first angel investment deal.

He said further that the participants will also receive mentorship from experienced angel investors from Tanzania and across Africa and gain opportunities for networking with other entrepreneurs and investors.

Francis Omorojie, CEO of Ennovate Ventures said that

"We are excited to partner with Serengeti Business Angels Network and UNCDF Tanzania to launch the Tanzania Business Angels Accelerator Programme," he said

"This program is a critical step in building a strong and supportive angel investor community in Tanzania. We are confident that the program will help to unlock the potential of Tanzania's startup ecosystem." He added.

The programme dubbed: Tanzania Business Angel Investors Accelerator (TAA), will train 50 tech startup enthusiasts in Tanzania to become angel investors, equipping them with knowledge, mentorship, and hands-on support to kickstart their angel investing journey.

Innovations Analyst at UNCDF Edgar Masatu, said that the project objective is to create a connected community of angel investors in Tanzania, providing mentorship, knowledge, and capital to early-stage startups, particularly in fetch, to stimulate entrepreneurship, job creation, and innovative solutions for underserved populations in the Tanzanian startup ecosystem."

"In response to a growing interest in angel investment in Tanzania, the establishment of a national resource center is essential to empower local angel investors and foster digital economy growth," he said.

Funding Partner-Programme Manager, European Union Delegation in Tanzania Jose-Luis Gonzalez said "The European Union is committed to fostering collaboration with all relevant stakeholders across Tanzania, the project endeavors to strengthen the digital economy and promote the widespread adoption of e-services and to support the startup ecosystem".

Hope remains high with modern workshop launched at ARU, industrial park at Kwala

By Guardian Reporter

STAKEHOLDERS in the engineering sector have expressed hope that the recently inaugurated modern workshop at Ardhi University in Dar es Salaam and Kwala Sino Industrial Park will transform proper training of engineers in the country.

Construction of the workshop was irked in July 2022, targeting to benefit 100,000 engineers through capacity building to enable them handle huge projects being implemented in the country.

Besides, Tanzania and China have also agreed to engage in exchange of lectures and students through Ardhi University and the Chong Ching Vocational Institute of Engineering.

Inaugurating the workshop at Ardhi University, Education, Science and Technology minister, Prof Adolph Mwendapole said the workshops were a huge transformation in the engineering sector.

He said students taking engineering subjects would improve practical learning through modern equipment available in the workshops.

"Tanzania becomes the 10th country to build a Lubani workshop which is a dream unveiled in 2018 by China's President Xi Jinping in Beijing. The dream aims at increasing the capacity of engineering experts in Africa," he said.

Prof Mwendapole said the purpose of capacity building to engineers was to meet increasing demands brought by technological changes and the labour market outlined by industries and companies in those countries.

At the Kwala Sino Industrial Park's



Kwala Sino Industrial Park in Kibaha District, Coast Region

inauguration, Ardhi University's director of buildings research, Dr Godwin Maro, said the workshop would bring a huge transformation in the sector.

"Students who will use the workshops should aim at becoming innovative as installed equipment is very modern such that their understanding will greatly increase," he said.

"The workshops have been constructed locally in order to increase

the value chain and employment opportunities as well as the number of expertise working abroad," he added.

Sino Tan industrial chairman Jensen Huen called on engineering students to use the workshops for building and strengthening their experience in the profession.

"China and Tanzania have historical relations coined by the founding fathers of the two nations, Mwalimu

Julius Nyerere and Mao TseTong. We are ready to sponsor lecturers and students wishing to build their capacity at the Chong Ching Vocational Institute of Engineering and bring acquired experience to the country," he said.

Tanzania is among 14 African countries that signed an agreement in China for the construction of modern workshops in their respective countries.

CBE to build students' capacity in accounting and finance areas

By Correspondent Joseph

Mwendapole

THE College of Business Education (CBE) has entered into partnership with RSM Eastern Africa Consulting Limited to build the capacity of students in the areas of accounting and financial education.

Through the collaboration, RSM will train students in three areas including auditing, finance, tax education and transaction advisory and consultancy.

Speaking during the opening of the training yesterday, Acting Rector of the College, Planning, Finance and Administration, Prof Emmanuel Munishi said that apart from CBE, the training will also be provided to students at other colleges.

"CBE will be the only hub for such training for all higher learning institutions in Tanzania. The program is expected to benefit 3,000 students undertaking Degrees courses in accounting, finance and banking," he said.

He said the training will help in

achieving goal number 4 of the sustainable development goals (SDG) of the United Nations which talks about quality education and more especially technical education and financial education.

Prof Munishi said RSM has been conducting CBE financial audits for the past six years whereas the college has maintained a clean sheet throughout the period.

"The training is important for our students and it will be given by people who are experts in auditing; Students participating in this program

are lucky and will help the international development agenda," said Prof Munishi. He said the government has made great improvements in improving curriculum and one of the areas that it has emphasized is students to study practically.

"Students who are studying accountings, finance, banking and businesses are in a good position to be employed and employ themselves because the world is now prioritizing the particular fields," he said.

Jovin Bhoke, who is the Tax Man-

ager at RSM Eastern Africa Consulting Limited, said that every year they celebrate customer service by doing various activities to help the community.

He said the activities look at agendas of the government and those of the world, whereas currently they are focusing on helping the government to achieve the SDG 4.

"We have chosen to come to CBE because it is the oldest college in providing business, tax and financial education and we will share with them what we do for students

to learn practically," said Bhoke.

"We will show students that what they are studying in theory exists and works in the commercial world. They will be practically taught on what is auditing for them to get a clear picture of what they have studied in the classroom," he added.

RSM is an international institution involved in auditing financial accounts, provision of tax education and professional advice. It has an experience of working in more than 120 countries in the world in Africa, Asia, Europe and America.

With digital marketing: It pays to be nice to your competitor

By Alley Mtatya

OVER many decades we have seen brands go to war just to prove they are the best. They often leave us with lasting impressions as customers looking from the outside in. Brand wars can get so competitive to the point of driving each other out of the market, as previously seen in the past with the mobile phone market. We have also observed a market share war in the mobile network market. When you observe this one can only assume that you need to be aggressive and provocative to lead in your market segment or better yet terminate your opponent to gain a complete share of the market.

What if I told you that, it also pays as a brand to be nice to your competitor? Research has proved this. Secondly, but why is that not many brands use this approach? Let us dive a little deep to understand.

Well in truth, brands are not known for being kind or nice to each other. Think of the most common decades long "ad wars" like the ones between



Coke and Pepsi, Nike and Adidas, or McDonalds and Burger King.

But try and imagine what would happen if brands were nice with each other moreover on all the campaigns and specially on social media? A research was done around 2022 by a group of students and professors from the University of Wisconsin and Duke University. This was triggered by the researchers at the universities when they noticed social media tweets/posts by Xbox and PlayStation, congratulating Nintendo on the launch of new products. Nintendo in the beginning was one of the first gaming consoles

to enter the market in 1983 and held the most market share for many years, but as time passed Xbox and PlayStation entered the market in 2004 and 1994 respectively and they took over leaving Nintendo barely surviving.

In a study that was done and also published in the Journal of Marketing, the findings created a buzz in the marketing world. The teams from both universities ran a dozen experiments that showed that when a brand compliments a competitor on social media, it boosts the brand's reputation and also its sales. Benefits go to the brand dishing out the

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praise, but it does not affect the brand on the receiving end, as reported in the research findings. In one of the experiments that was included in the study, participants received one of two fictitious tweets/posts: One in which KitKat (a popular chocolate brand) complimented a top competitor, Twix (another popular chocolate brand). This is what the tweet/post said, ("@twix, Competitor or not, congrats on your 54 years in business! Even we can admit - Twix are delicious"). In another tweet, KitKat mentioned only its own product ("Start your day off with a tasty treat!").

It days later or after the tweet/post participants reported: candy purchases since the time they completed the study. Results were as follows; those who saw the tweet from KitKat that had complimented Twix purchased the KitKat product 34% more frequently compared to those who saw the self-promoting tweet from KitKat. On the other hand (the competitor) Twix sales did not increase, even though KitKat called Twix delicious. We can call this marketing reverse psychology.

It Pays to be Nice to your competitor works for the praiser because consumers' views of brands will be based on two components which are warmth and competence, as elaborated by the team from Duke University. Warmth is one of the first thing that consumers judge a brand by and how we also judge other people by. The researchers from both Wisconsin and Duke Universities contribution looked at how brands can interact to create that perception. But what is important is for the praising brand to initiate the interaction and to appear authentic.

But why does it not work for the brand that is praised?

What they concluded was that consumers recognize that it's an uncom-

mon and potentially risky action for the praiser brand, given that there are no obvious benefits for them. Brand-to-brand praise works best for organizations that are not traditionally seen as warm or caring or nice. On the consumers side, the most skeptical were the ones who experienced the greatest effect. The doubtful consumers aren't very trusting of brands to begin with, well aren't we all, and so when they see this type of interaction it disarms them and allows them to change their perceptions of the praising brand. It is like a boss who is always serious and feared in the office but one day he "the boss" compliments employees or shows a gesture of kindness which is unusual. This will leave you as an employee stunned or shocked and in the back of your mind your boss has a glimmer of goodwill (warmth) which will disarm your harsh perception of him.

The study was published earlier this year in the Journal of Marketing, which included around 4,000 participants and a collection of tens of thousands of real tweets. The study suggests that marketers and brands can profit by publicly showcasing a positive image of their competitors through this radical idea.

It is an uphill battle to get marketer's or brands to believe that this brand-to-brand praise works. That's why there's so much data on this study because the burden for evidence is really high.

Ask yourself, as a marketer, a leader or brand that you represent. Would you complement your competitor, as a strategic move or would fear engulf your ego in this epitome of reverse psychology. This is what the term "thinking out of the box" is all about in the marketing world.

Alley Mtatya
(Founder - Eyeland Advertising and Analytics)

Dollar remains decisive despite growth in demand for currency diversifications

By Massimiliano Castelli

SINCE 2010, a period marked by economic, financial and geopolitical shocks, the dollar has steadily appreciated relative to most other currencies. The dollar's real effective exchange rate has increased by nearly 40% from the end of the 2008 financial crisis and remains the ultimate safe haven for investors.

Most of the calls for a demise of the dollar as the dominant currency in the global financial architecture rest on the changed structure of the global economy, particularly the rise of China. Over the last few decades, the US economy's share of global gross domestic product has declined, while China's and other emerging markets' have increased. The dollar's share of global foreign reserves has declined - falling from a peak in the early 2000s of around 65% to well below 60% in the second quarter of 2023.

The euro remains the second-largest reserve currency with a stable share of around 20%. After the euro, the most obvious contender to dollar dominance is the renminbi. The renminbi's share has increased to more than 3% since the middle of the last decade, but remains well below the share of other 'secondary' reserve currencies such as sterling or yen.

When the Chinese currency was included in the special drawing rights basket, expectations for a rapid rise in the global financial architecture were high. In the 2023 UBS Reserve Management Survey, investors favoured the renminbi as a means for diversifying away from the dollar - largely due to its strong economy and positive interest rate differential with the dollar.

However, the disclosed average long-term allocation of reserves to the renminbi did not increase significantly in subsequent surveys. The recent rise in US interest rates, coupled with a slowing Chinese economy and negative interest rate differential, appears to have slowed this down. According to the 2023 RMS survey, the average long-term (10-year) target allocation of reserves to the Chinese currency has fallen from 5.8% to 5.2%.

If the world has been moving to a so-called 'multipolar currency system', the pace of this shift has been glacial. The dollar's share of global reserves might continue falling slowly but this is hardly a demise of its dominant position.

Geopolitical impact



Most recent calls for the demise of dollar dominance have rested on geopolitical developments. Following the invasion of Ukraine, the US and its allies targeted reserves held by the Central Bank of Russia, raising concerns among central banks about sanction risks stemming from foreign exchange reserves and whether they can continue to be perceived as a 'safe' asset.

Respondents were split on whether the impact of the US-China confrontation on the internationalisation of the renminbi will be positive or negative. The currencies that are expected to benefit the most from geopolitical developments were the euro and

dollar, followed by the renminbi and the yen. Geopolitical developments matter for reserve management but so far there is no broad consensus on what we can expect going forward.

Some of the recent calls on the 'imminent' demise of the dollar also rest on the growing importance of the renminbi as an invoicing currency in international transactions and the debate about whether a Brics (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) shared currency offers a feasible alternative. The renminbi is currently the fifth-largest currency in international payments, constituting 3.7% of the global share as of Septem-

ber 2023. The Chinese currency has good momentum as more countries - including Brazil and Russia - switch to the renminbi for international payments. However, the Chinese currency still lags sterling and yen and is well below the dollar and the euro.

The Brics currency discussion is very much about politics, not economics, and appears to be a non-starter given the lack of a regional integration among the member countries. The 'cohesion' problems that surround the euro more than 20 years after its launch act as a reminder of the difficulties with creating a common currency.

What would need to happen for there to be a significant decrease in the use of the dollar as either a transaction currency or as a store of value in global reserves? There are several factors to watch in the years to come.

De-pegging from the dollar

While most currencies are free floating or managed, there are notable exceptions. First, Gulf Co-operation Council currencies are de facto pegged to the dollar and their oil exports are largely invoiced in dollars. The often-rumoured shift away from dollar invoicing, particularly for exports to China and other Asian countries, would only be a realistic assumption once the GCC currencies are de-pegged from the dollar and managed against a basket of currencies. Until this happens, it is very unlikely that GCC countries will shift away from the dollar either as an invoicing currency or as a means for accumulating wealth in global markets via central banks or sovereign funds.

This year will mark the 40th anniversary of the dollar peg for the Hong Kong dollar. The Hong Kong Monetary Authority has already made it clear that it has no intention of de-pegging the currency. The dollar peg has been a pillar of macroeconomic stability for GCC countries and Hong Kong over the years. A shift to another foreign exchange regime would mark a more serious challenge to the dollar-dominated global financial system.

US debt

The demise of a reserve currency can be self-inflicted. The dominant role of a currency not only rests with the positive network externalities generated by its widespread use in international transactions, but also on its ability to act as a store of value.

Demand for US dollar denominated assets - stocks and bonds - is still strong given the performance of the US corporate sector and

the interest rate differential in favour of the greenback. This demand could however be dented in the future by unsustainable public debt dynamics and domestic political tensions. The euro's challenge to dollar dominance came to an end following the euro fiscal crisis in the early 2010s.

China

The internationalisation of the renminbi is a strategic priority for China and shows no signs of changing in the future. However, the lack of convertibility is still a factor preventing the currency from competing at par with the dollar and the euro. Geopolitical tensions and sanction risk have somehow dented the appetite of central banks for onshore renminbi assets but there is no consensus among central banks. Many central banks remain fully committed to Chinese bonds and, should geopolitical tensions reduce in the future and the renminbi be made convertible, the internationalisation of the renminbi would accelerate significantly.

CDBC's

Central bank digital currencies are often mentioned as a potential game changer for the global financial architecture and progress has been made across multiple jurisdictions. However, their launch does not appear imminent as several issues - above all the interoperability across borders - still need to be addressed.

Demand for diversification of reserves away from the dollar is growing, driven by geopolitical, economic and financial dynamics. So far this process has been slow as the US economy - and its currency - outperforms expectations. The dollar is and will remain for the foreseeable future the main store of value for global investors, including reserve managers. Geopolitical tensions favour the dollar as investors search for a haven and further escalations do not necessarily point to an imminent weakening of its dominant position.

A more radical departure from current exchange rate and commodity pricing arrangements across Asia and the Middle East, dramatic US domestic political developments and an acceleration in the issuance and cross-border movement of CDBC's would significantly accelerate the diversification process.

Massimiliano Castelli (pictured) is Head of Strategy and Advice, Sovereign Institutions, UBS Asset Management.

ACCA head highlights accountants' critical role in African SME growth

NAIROBI

ACCOUNTANTS play an indispensable role in the growth and sustainability of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) across Africa, George Njari, Head of Eastern Africa for the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA), has said.

"ACCA is dedicated to preparing accountants to become trusted advisors for SMEs, a role that is crucial for Africa's economic transformation. We focus on guiding them in key areas such as sustainability, technology, and financial growth," Njari stated.

In a media interview discussing the upcoming 4th Africa Members Convention of the ACCA to be held in Johannesburg, South Africa, Njari emphasized the critical role of accountants in fostering the growth and sustainability of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) across Africa.

The convention, which is set to take place from December 6th to 8th, 2023, will gather over 1,000 ACCA members and partners from across Africa and key global stakeholders. This year's event also marks the 2nd edition of the Africa Chief Financial Officer (CFO) Awards.

He noted that the upcoming convention holds paramount importance for Africa's business and finance sectors. At its core, finance functions serve as the backbone of organizations, and professional accountants have a pivotal role in driving meaningful, impactful change towards more socially just and environmentally sustainable economies.

The conference theme, "Empowering Finance Professionals for Sustainable Development in Africa," precisely encapsulates the essence of what sustainable development entails for the accountancy profession. It's not just about being adept at handling today's challenges but also being prepared for the future. Accountants must continuously evolve, enhancing their capabilities to remain relevant in a rapidly changing world, he noted.

"Accountants need to be fit for today and tomorrow's future, building capability to stay relevant, and providing broader support to business, society, and the environment," he said.

When asked about the current state of the accountancy profession in Africa and its crucial role in fulfilling Africa's Agenda 2063, Njari, provided a comprehensive perspective.

"The accountancy profession in Africa is distinctively hyper-connected and integral to a networked community," explained Njari.

"It's pivotal for accountants to step out of silos and engage actively within an ecosystem that includes not just their peers but also spans private and public sector organizations, SMEs, educational institutions, and government bodies."

Njari emphasized the profession's consciousness of current challenges, including skill shortages and the need for upskilling in Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) aspects. However, he also highlighted a sense of optimism that permeates the profession. "There's an eagerness to expand, to demonstrate the significant value that accountants can bring to the table across Africa," he said.

Expressing enthusiasm about the future, Njari encouraged more young people to consider a career in accountancy.

"It's an exciting era for the profession. We're at a juncture where amplifying the value and impact of accountants in Africa is crucial for the continent's advancement towards the goals set in Agenda 2063."

Regarding the upcoming convention's coincidence with the COP 28 conference in UAE, the importance of this alignment was emphasized. "COP 28 represents a significant global event, and our convention aims to complement its agenda," Njari stated.

The role of professional accountants in Africa in transitioning to a more sustainable world is highlighted as crucial. In the journey towards a greener, fairer, and sustainable future, accountants play a central role. They are pivotal in ensuring that economic growth and environmental sustainability are not mutually exclusive but go hand in hand.

One of the key contributions of accountants is in aiding organizations to effectively measure and report their environmental impact, ensuring that business decisions align with broader sustainability goals. Beyond this, accountants are also crucial in identifying paths for resource optimization, cost reduction, and promoting responsible investment strategies. These actions are vital in addressing the urgent demands of the climate crisis, he said.

The necessity of equipping the accounting profession with the skills to manage the complexities of sustainability reporting, green finance, and ethical investment is underscored. "This upskilling is essential to expedite the global transition towards an economy that is both environmentally conscious and equitable," Mr. Njari indicated. Professional accountants, as the financial stewards of a sustainable future, hold indispensable expertise in this critical global endeavour.

Addressing the role of accountancy in facilitating regional integration and promoting cross-border trade and investment in Africa, Njari, referred to a significant research undertaking. "We posed this very question to over 1,600 accountancy professionals across Africa as part of our collaboration with PAFA for the 'Journey to AU2063: Professional accountants empowering AfCFTA' report," Njari remarked.

The findings of this research underscore the unique position of accountancy and finance professionals in optimizing the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) through their roles as super-connectors. However, the study also highlighted a notable gap: a low level of awareness and involvement in the AfCFTA among accounting professionals. To address this, the ACCA recommended a series of actions aimed at integrating various ecosystems, including professional services, institutions, businesses, finance, and political policies.

In response to the question on how ACCA and its members are contributing to the sustainable development and transformation of sectors facing sustainability challenges in Africa, Njari offered a comprehensive perspective.

"Africa is grappling with a range of sustainability challenges, including environmental issues and social inequalities in sectors like health, education, agriculture, infrastructure, technology, and energy," Njari began.

"At ACCA, we recognize our purpose as being a force for public good, which fundamentally involves playing an active role in creating a better world for today and future generations."

He elaborated that ACCA sees professional accountants as essential to supporting economies in their sustainable growth and prosperity. "Our strategy is closely aligned with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), reflecting our commitment to these global objectives," he added.

Njari highlighted the key approach of ACCA in fostering sustainable development: "Our members and students are active across all the sectors mentioned. We primarily support sustainable development by providing them with comprehensive education and training. This empowers them to integrate and champion sustainable practices within their organizations and to influence policy, regulation, and standards in their respective fields."

He emphasises the broader impact of this approach. "By equipping our members and students with the necessary skills and knowledge, we enable them to contribute directly to the sustainable transformation of



Head of Eastern Africa for the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA) George Njari

these sectors. It's about embedding sustainability at the core of their professional roles, ensuring they can effectively address the unique challenges and opportunities presented in their industries."

In discussing the role of accountants in supporting the development of a robust SME sector in line with Agenda 2063's vision, Njari of ACCA offered valuable insights into their contribution to this critical area.

"SMEs are integral to the fabric of every economy, and this is particularly true in Africa," Njari stated. "Professional accountants, including those from ACCA, are often the first port of call and trusted advisors for these SMEs, especially when navigating financial challenges."

He elaborated on the support provided by ACCA to empower these enterprises: "We ensure that our members are well-equipped with the necessary knowledge to advise SMEs effectively. This includes guidance on managing cash flow, integrating sustainability practices, and leveraging new technologies like AI. Our aim is to provide comprehensive support that addresses the multifaceted needs of SMEs."

Njari also highlighted ACCA's proactive initiatives in this regard. "Last July, ACCA played a pivotal role in facilitating a virtual roundtable involving over 160 SMEs, in collaboration with the Federal Reporting Council of Nigeria and other key partners. This event was instrumental in collectively submitting a comment letter in response to the ISSB exposure drafts IFRS S1 and IFRS S2, which focus on sustainability-related and climate-related disclosures, respectively. This letter was a reflection of a united regional response, incorporating ACCA's global stance as well as the unique perspectives of small businesses across Africa."

VIEW FROM THE TOP

Banking sector in Zimbabwe sees 75 percent job decrease since 2000

HARARE

THE Zimbabwe Banks and Allied Workers Union (ZIBAWU) have reported that 75% of jobs in the sector have been lost since the beginning of the millennium. This decline is attributed to a combination of accelerated digitization and socio-political challenges facing the nation over the past two decades.

In discussions with NewZimbabwe.com about the outcomes of a high-level convention that brought together workers from the country's banking sector, trade unionist Peter Mutasa expressed concern about the diminishing workforce.

He remarked, "The congress coincided with extremely difficult operating conditions, which have constrained our ability to effectively serve our members. The economy, experiencing stagnation for decades, has taken a significant toll on trade unionism."

Mutasa highlighted the decline in membership from a peak of 12,000 in the late 1990s to approximately 3,000 at present. He pointed out significant transformations in the banking sector, such as digitalization and automation, as the main culprits.

The unionist noted that high unemployment has adversely affected collective bargaining, with traditional methods like strikes becoming less effective. Mutasa criticized the restrictive nature of labour laws, further complicated by a toxic political environment in which the government views every union with suspicion, treating them as enemies of the state.

Mutasa shared that the convention revealed bankers facing various mental health problems due to economic and social crises, work demands, and interpersonal conflicts at both work and in society. Additionally, the convention shed light on the inadequate social security in the country, with many workers retiring without meaningful financial security and pensions.

"We noted that most of the problems we face are not emanating from the labour market but from politics. We agreed that we have a governance crisis affecting the economy, society, and public services. Therefore, we resolved to build an active citizenry through massive civic and political education for our members and communities," he concluded.

WORLD

Biden turns 81 as age worries weigh on reelection prospects

WASHINGTON

US President Joe Biden turned 81 yesterday, a milestone likely to draw attention to his status as the oldest person to ever occupy the Oval Office, with opinion polls showing Americans worried he is too old for the post he is seeking reelection to.

Biden has addressed those who worry that he is too old for the rigors of the White House with humor and an attempt to convince voters that his age

and experience over a half-century in public life is an asset in tackling America's problems. "I know I'm 198 years old," Biden joked back in June.

If re-elected, Biden would be 86 by the end of his second term in office. Republican Ronald Reagan, who had the prior record as oldest US president, ended his second four-year term at age 77 in 1989.

Trump, the frontrunner for the Republican nomination to challenge Biden in the 2024 election, is 77.



In a mid-September Reuters/Ipsos poll, voters expressed concern over Biden's age and his fitness for office. Seventy-seven percent of respondents, including 65 percent of Democrats, said Biden is too old to be president, while just 39 percent said Biden was

mentally sharp enough for the presidency.

By comparison, 56 percent of poll respondents said Trump is too old for the office, while 54 percent said he was mentally sharp enough to handle the challenges of the presidency. **Agencies**

Russia urges Britain to avoid involvement in Ukraine crisis

MOSCOW

MOSCOW urged Britain to stop its involvement in the Ukraine crisis, local media reported yesterday.

"The British leadership continues to demonstrate its focus on comprehensive support for Ukraine. The British have a thesis about the need to inflict 'defeat on the battlefield' on Russia," said Sergei Belyaev, director of the Second European Department at the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

He said that since the start of the Ukraine crisis, London has sent military equipment to Ukraine totaling approximately 6.6 billion pounds (\$8.23 billion), ranking second in NATO after the United States.

"However, London's involvement in the Ukrainian conflict goes beyond arms supplies



Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy (right) meets with British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak during the European Political Community summit in Granada, Spain, Oct 5, 2023. (PHOTO / POOL VIA AP)

and training Ukrainian Armed Forces fighters on the UK's territory. More than 30,000 individuals are already involved in these activities," Belyaev said.

"British military instructors are engaged in training and supplying units of Ukraine's special operations forces directly within Ukraine. This includes conducting sabotage operations in the Black and Azov Seas, as well as targeting critically important civilian infrastructure facilities in our country," he added.

While urging Britain to stop its citizens from getting involved in military activities in Ukraine, he noted that Western mercenaries are not combatants under international humanitarian law and do not have the right to the status of prisoners of war. **Xinhua**

India-US committed to safeguard 'open, inclusive' Indo-Pacific, says Garcetti

NEW DELHI

STATING that India and the United States have made important steps towards strengthening their defence partnership, US Ambassador to India, Eric Garcetti said the two countries are committed to promoting resilient and rules-based international order to safeguard "free open and inclusive" Indo-Pacific.

He further said that during the India-US 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue, the ministers of both countries discussed the ongoing conflicts in Ukraine and the Middle-East.

Speaking at an event in the national capital, Garcetti said, "I think the joint statement (2+2 Dialogue) reflects both countries' resolve to promote resilient rules-based international order to safeguard

free open and inclusive Indo-Pacific through the Quad and other metrics, global issues.

The ministers discussed the tragic humanitarian consequences to the conflict in Ukraine and the Middle East, reiterating their stance with Israel against terrorism, but also seeking to alleviate civilian suffering and adherence to international humanitarian law.

The US envoy further said that the US is looking forward to welcoming more visitors in December, and January and many major investments in Indian technology by US private sector companies as well. As government-to-government conversations, expanding round space, defence, and production well.

"We made important steps toward strengthening our major defence partnership which continues to grow, increasing the acceleration that we have seen through initiatives like the roadmap US-India in industrial cooperation and defence".

He further stressed that New Delhi and Washington should deepen their



Artificial Intelligence (AI) conversation.

"India-US collaboration and cooperation in emerging domains, and also more importantly, because we sometimes just focus on weapons and what's being sold, or potentially co-developed.

But the operational level of our militaries, which I think is as critical as any equipment, and our countries discuss ways to deepen our science and our technology partnerships to harness technology with the global good instead of technology that harms us than divides us, technology that can

connect us and protect us," he said.

Garcetti also informed that the US administration is in conversation with the Indian government to get more staff at consulates and is also speeding up visas.

The India-US 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue was held in the national capital last week. External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and Defence Minister Rajnath Singh participated in the meeting with their US counterparts; Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Secretary of Defence Lloyd Austin.

The dialogue provides a platform for top-level discussions between the US and India, where the leaders of the US and India discuss critical bilateral and global matters, with special emphasis on developments unfolding in the Indo-Pacific region. **ANI**

CHINESE President Xi Jinping delivered a written speech at the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) CEO Summit in San Francisco on Nov. 16, local time. He reviewed the remarkable journey of Asia-Pacific cooperation, summarized the historical experience of Asia-Pacific development, and answered a new question of the times where will Asia-Pacific cooperation be headed in the next 30 years.

Xi's remarks mirrored China's firm confidence in promoting high-quality economic development and bringing new impetus and opportunities to the world with China's new development, charting the course and injecting momentum for the Asia Pacific region to rise up to the challenges of the times and write new chapters of cooperation.

To draw wisdom from history for new chapters of cooperation

APEC's birth and growth followed the trend toward peace and development. Three decades ago, where humanity should be headed in the post-Cold War era was the question of the world, of history and of the times in front of Asia-Pacific leaders. In response, they convened the inaugural APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting.

They agreed unanimously to rise above the outdated mentality of bloc confrontation and zero-sum game, deepen economic cooperation and integration in the region, and build a dynamic, harmonious and prosperous Asia-Pacific community.

This major decision enabled Asia-Pacific development and

economic globalization to embark on a fast track of growth, turning the region into a powerhouse for world economic growth, an anchor of stability for global development, and a pacesetter for international cooperation.

The world has entered a new period of turbulence and change. The momentum of world economic growth is sluggish. Destabilizing, uncertain and unpredictable factors are increasing.

To find the direction of future Asia-Pacific cooperation, regional countries need to draw wisdom from history, stay true to their original aspiration, seize the opportunities, and ride the momentum.

With a deep understanding of the development trend in the Asia-Pacific region and the progress of the times, Xi summarized the profound insights brought by the remarkable journey of Asia-Pacific cooperation.

He stressed that openness and inclusiveness are the defining feature of Asia-Pacific cooperation, development for all is the overarching goal of Asia-Pacific cooperation, and seeking common ground while shelving differences is the best practice of Asia-Pacific cooperation.

Development in the Asia-Pacific region has been achieved not through provoking antagonism and confrontation, pursuing a beggar-thy-neighbor

policy, or erecting high fences around a small yard, but by staying open and inclusive and drawing on each other's strengths.

Development is an eternal pursuit of the region. Regional countries have stayed focused on development and continually deepened economic and technical cooperation, thus strengthening the ability of developing members to achieve self-development.

Over the past three decades, per capita income in the Asia-Pacific has more than quadrupled, and one billion people have been lifted out of poverty. This is an important contribution to human progress and

global sustainable development.

Economies in the region have different histories and cultures and are in different stages of development.

Forcing uniformity will not advance cooperation in the region; seeking common ground while shelving differences is the right way forward. This can enable regional countries to turn diversity in membership into momentum for cooperation and make collective progress through tapping into complementarity.

At present, the Asia-Pacific region is seeing both new opportunities for development as well as new challenges and risks.

Xi pointed out that regional countries should stay committed to APEC's founding mission, never forget their mission bestowed by history, and move to relaunch Asia-Pacific cooperation.

Peace is an important prerequisite for development. The Asia-Pacific region cannot and should not be an arena for geopolitical rivalry, still less should it be plunged into a new cold war or camp-based confrontation. This is a common aspiration of all parties in the region.

The story of Asia-Pacific prosperity and development shows that development is only possible with cooperation, absence of cooperation is the biggest risk, and that decoupling and supply-chain disruption are not in anyone's interests. **People's Daily**

Indian Community members in US flock to waterfronts to celebrate Chhath

NEW YORK

HUNDREDS of people of Indian origin from New Jersey and New York flocked to waterfronts in the United States as they celebrated the auspicious festival of Chhath on Sunday.

The festival was celebrated by members of the Indian community, who gathered on both Saturday and Sunday for the festivities.

Notably, they flocked to the waterfronts to celebrate Chhath Pooja at Papaiani Park, Edison, New Jersey.

Flower decorations were seen at the park, where women decked in Indian attire carried out the traditional rituals.

The Chhath Pooja is a festival dedicated to the sun that sees devotees worshipping and making offerings to the setting and rising sun. Yesterday morning, the fasting devotees would make offerings to the rising sun and break the fast.

Meanwhile, the devotees in Kathmandu also thronged to nearby holy water bodies on Sunday evening, offering Arghya to Lord Sun as they prepared to stay awake for the whole night as the arduous fasting of Chhath entered the third day.

Devotees especially take the fast and worship the sun for the long lives and well-being of their family members, also praying for their expectations and attempts to come true. **ANI**



The Chhath Pooja is a festival dedicated to the sun that sees devotees worshipping and making offerings to the setting and rising sun

Former US First lady Rosalynn Carter passes away at 96

WASHINGTON

FORMER US First Lady as well as mental health activist Rosalynn Carter passed away at the age of 96, CNN reported, citing the Carter Centre, on Sunday.

According to the Carter Centre, Rosalynn (pictured) worked tirelessly for reforms regarding mental health and professionalised the role of the US president's spouse.

"Rosalynn was my equal partner in everything I ever accomplished," her husband, former US President Jimmy Carter, said in a statement, as per CNN.

"She gave me wise guidance and encouragement when I needed it. As long as Rosalynn was in the world, I always knew somebody loved and supported me," he said.

The Carters, the longest-married US presidential couple, celebrated their 77th wedding anniversary in July. Rosalynn Carter, a humanitarian and mental health advocate, co-founded the Carter Centre with her husband in his post-presidency to advance world peace and health.

Together, they travelled to hotspots worldwide, including visits to Cuba, Sudan, and North Korea, monitoring elections and working to eradicate Guinea worm disease and other neglected tropical diseases. Jimmy Carter was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2002.

As a significant and influential figure in the White House during her husband's presidency from 1977 to 1981, Rosalynn Carter played a key role in helping restore the nation's trust in the presidency following the Watergate scandal, according to CNN.

The former first lady Rosalynn Carter had entered hospice care at home in Plains, Georgia, CNN reported, citing the Carter Centre recently.

In a statement released by the Centre, Jason Carter, the Carters' grandson, said, "She and (former) President Carter are spending time with each other and their family. The Carter family continues to ask for privacy and remains grateful for the outpouring of love and support."

In May, the Centre announced that the former first lady was diagnosed with dementia. Other details about the 96-year-old's health were not immediately provided on Friday.

Former President Jimmy Carter, 99, began home hospice care in February after a series of short hospital stays. **ANI**



Zimbabwe's cholera outbreak ignites calls for hygienic practices

HARARE

A CHOLERA outbreak in Harare, Zimbabwe's capital, has ignited calls for increased hygienic practices to prevent its spread as the city battles a shortage of clean water.

The epicenter of the outbreak is the high-density suburb of Kuwadzana, which registered nearly half of the reported cases, according to Michael Vere, Harare City Council's head of epidemiology and disease control. Patrick Mutisi, a Kuwadzana resident, said the situation on the ground was alarming.

"This very week, several people we interacted with were infected with cholera. We are deeply pained, we are deeply saddened, this is an easily preventable disease," Mutisi told Xinhua on Sunday.

He said hygienic conditions, which are a necessity for the prevention of the disease, are not possible due to the scarcity of clean water in the suburb.

The city of Harare has been struggling to provide adequate tap water to the growing population, which has resulted in residents resorting to unclean sources.

"We only produce around a third of the required water supply in the city," Vere told Xinhua on Sunday.

The water that the city is getting from Lake Chivero, Harare's main source, is heavily contaminated and requires a lot of chemicals to treat it, he said. "We also need to make sure that our sewer system is rehabilitated because the sewer system that we have in Harare is no longer able to cope with the population," Vere said.

Douglas Mombeshora, Zimbabwe's Minister of Health and Child Care, said that at least 12 lives have been lost with seven from Kuwadzana, which prompted a swift response from the government.

"There is a lot of movement of people to all areas of the country from Harare. That's why we are mounting a huge response to this cholera outbreak so that we suppress the cases in Harare," Mombeshora told reporters in Kuwadzana on Sunday.

To address the scourge of cholera, the government announced that it had approved a 12 million U.S. dollars budget for the national cholera outbreak response.

"We hope the government will intervene and supply



In this file photo dated Sept 19, 2018, a young boy pumps water from a borehole as a woman collects water into buckets in Glen View, a suburb of Zimbabwe's capital Harare where the cholera outbreak was first detected. AFP

us with water bowsers with treated water considering that we are affected by cholera, so that we can get clean water because we cannot afford to buy water," said Gladys Masara, a street vendor in Kuwadzana.

Angeline Formoza, another Kuwadzana resident, said water has become a luxury in the suburb. "Sometimes we can go for

two weeks or three weeks without water, and in that case, we can't flush toilets, that's where the disease is originating," she said.

Georgina Musiyazviriyo, another Kuwadzana resident, said the outbreak has invoked memories of a deadly outbreak in 2008 when more than 4,000 people succumbed to the pandemic. "We witnessed people who were infected, some of them passed away, it's very frightening, so we always try by all means to protect our health by drinking treated water, eating washed fruits, that's what we are doing to protect our health," she said.

The authorities are advising the public against going to unauthorized marketplaces, or public gatherings.

The authorities are advising the public against going to unauthorized marketplaces, or public gatherings.

China-Russia relations withstand test of complex international situation, says Xi Jinping

MOSCOW

SINO-RUSSIAN relations have withstood the test of the complex international situation, Beijing intends to develop them, Chinese President Xi Jinping said.

"The world has entered a new period of turbulence and transformation. China-Russia relations have withstood the test of rapid changes in the international environment," he said in a message to the participants of the 10th dialogue between the United Russia and the Communist Party of China.

The Chinese leader pointed out that next year, the two countries will celebrate the 75th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations. "We are ready to firmly develop bilateral relations with the Russian side in the spirit of eternal good-neighborliness and comprehensive strategic cooperation for the development of the two countries," he pointed out.

Contacts and cooperation between the Communist Party of China and the United Russia party are an important part of Russia-China relations in the new era, the Chinese leader pointed out.

"The dialogue mechanism between the ruling parties of China and Russia has already become a unique channel and platform for deepening political mutual trust, strategic cooperation and promoting mutually beneficial cooperation," Xi Jinping concluded.



African countries urged to speed up efforts in enhancing agricultural development

ADDIS ABABA

AFRICAN countries have made tangible progress in enhancing agricultural productivity, promoting sustainable farming practices and addressing food security and rural poverty, but more efforts are needed to mitigate food-related challenges, African Union (AU) Commissioner

for Rural Economy and Agriculture Josefa Sacko said.

"Through initiatives such as the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Program (CAADP), investment in agricultural infrastructure, and the promotion of sustainable farming practices, we have seen positive impacts on the lives of millions of smallholder farmers and

rural households across the continent," Sacko told a meeting of agricultural ministers on Friday at the AU headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

He cautioned that the countries are lagging behind in fulfilling the seven broad commitments of the CAADP, a flagship program aimed to enhance agricultural development on the African continent.

African countries passed the Malabo Declaration in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea in June 2014, committing themselves to upholding the CAADP principles and values; enhancing investment in agriculture; ending hunger and halving poverty by 2025; boosting intra-African agricultural trade and enhancing resilience to climate variability, among others, as means to im-

plement the CAADP. "Two years remaining before the Malabo Declaration period lapses, there is urgency for member states to accelerate CAADP implementation, including through the provision of the financing required to achieve the aspirations of CAADP in order to build resilient African food system," the commissioner said.

Xinhua

China, US advance practical cooperation, promote communication, mutual understanding

THE practical cooperation between China and the United States in recent years in trade, clean energy, and culture just demonstrates the close economic and social ties between the two countries and the aspirations of the two peoples.

Strengthening cooperation in various fields between China and the United States is in the interests of both countries and will also benefit the rest of the world.

Wines, almonds, cranberry sauce, cheese... Recently, these agricultural products from the United States attracted a lot of attention at the American Food and Agriculture pavilion, set up for the first time by the U.S. government at the China International Import Expo.

The CIEE this year witnessed an unprecedented level of participation from the United States - over 200 American companies engaged in agriculture, automotive, technology, pharmaceuticals, and healthcare industries joined the event.

The California pavilion has attended the expo for six consecutive years, which, in the view of Jim Sutter, CEO of the U.S. Soybean Export Council, was a great signal.

"We value our partnership with China," Sutter said.

China and the U.S., as the world's top two economies, account for over 1/3 of the global economy, nearly 1/4 of the world's population, and approximately 1/5 of global bilateral trade. Bilateral trade between the two countries hit \$760 billion last year, setting a record high.

Craig Allen, president of the U.S.-China Business Council, said that American companies are eagerly looking forward to further expanding into the Chinese market. He believes that the



The California Cooperation Forum is held during the sixth China International Import Expo, Nov. 6, 2023 (Photo by Wang Shanhu)

economies of the United States and China should not decouple, and strengthening cooperation is beneficial for both peoples.

Located in Southern California, Lancaster is featured by sparse vegetation and exposed sand dunes. In 2013, Chinese new energy vehicle giant BYD established an electric bus factory in Lancaster, which was put into operation in the following year. BYD's arrival has brought vitality to this small city. The factory has employed nearly 1,000 local workers, with only a few engineers coming from China.

According to statistics, approximately 75 percent of the parts used for production at the Lancaster plant are sourced from American suppliers. Through investments in facilities, equipment, and other resources, BYD has brought opportunities for the development of the entire industrial chain. In 2020, BYD opened a forklift center in Rancho Dominguez, California, and established a service network across the United States, further enriching the diversity of its products and strengthening its services.

Recently, a group of local students who learn Chinese visited a subsidiary of China-based company Fuyao Glass Industry Group Co., Ltd. in Moraine, Dayton, Ohio. After the visit, they hailed the working environment and the mix of American and Chinese cul-

tures at the facility. One student said that he hopes to get an opportunity to work in a Chinese company in the future and gain a deeper understanding of Chinese culture.

According to statistics, the automotive glass produced by this subsidiary takes 30 percent of the market share in the United States. It directly creates nearly 2,000 jobs for local communities and offers 6,000 jobs indirectly. Currently, the construction of a new factory by the subsidiary in Dayton has begun, and it is expected to be put into production by the third quarter of 2024.

Michael Davis, the city manager of Moraine, said that this will provide excellent employment opportunities for the workforce in Moraine and surrounding areas.

Chinese Consul General in New York Huang Ping noted that the economic structures of China and the United States are highly complementary, with closely intertwined interests.

The economic and trade cooperation between the two countries is unstoppable and inseparable, he added.

The development of Fuyao in the United States demonstrates that "Made in China" and "Made in America" can promote and complement each other, making greater contributions to bilateral cooperation and local development.

In addition to economic and trade coop-

eration, cultural exchanges between China and the United States are also continuing to advance. This month, the 19th Chinese American Film Festival and the Chinese American Television Festival have presented a series of exciting activities. Excellent Chinese films and TV shows are also hitting the screens in the United States.

The festival, which began in 2005, has become a highly anticipated film and television exchange event between the two countries after nearly 20 years of development. This year's festival featured over 30 offline screenings, with more than 100 Chinese and American film and television companies participating in film promotion meetings and virtual marketplaces, and over 1,000 film and television professionals from both countries attending the activities.

James Su, chairman of the Chinese American Film Festival and the Chinese American Television Festival, noted that this year's activities aimed to promote exchange and cooperation in the film and television industry between China and the United States and build a bridge for communication and understanding with a more inclusive and open mindset.

This event showcases creativity and cultural diversity, proving the power of film to bring people together, said Mark Viane, Paramount's president of international theatrical distribution. He emphasized that the festival has played a significant role in promoting film industry collaboration between the two countries, facilitating the exchange of talent, ideas, and experiences.

People's Daily

Israeli forces eliminate three Hamas commanders as Gaza operations continue

TEL AVIV

THREE Hamas commanders were killed during overnight combat in Gaza, Israel Defense Forces announced on Monday morning.

According to the IDF, the soldiers identified a squad of terrorists as they entered a munitions warehouse. The soldiers called in an airstrike, killing the terrorists and destroying the building and its weapons.

On Thursday evening, IDF presented CCTV footage of at least three hostages being brought into Shifa Hospital, under which Hamas has built terror infrastructure.

IDF Spokesperson Rear Adm. Daniel Hagari said intelligence confirmed that Hamas terrorists "quickly" murdered Cpl. Noa Marciano at Shifa, after she was taken there with non-life-threatening injuries sustained during her captivity.

Marciano, a resident of Modi'in in central Israel, was abducted from Kibbutz Nahal Oz, where she served as a lookout.

On Friday, the IDF said it recovered her body from a building adjacent to Shifa. A day earlier, the military announced that soldiers had located and recovered the body of Yehudit Weiss, 65, from a nearby

building.

In addition to Marciano, two hostages from Nepal and Thailand were hidden at Shifa Hospital in the immediate aftermath of the Oct. 7 massacre, said Hagari.

"The evidence I will share was sent by Israel through diplomatic channels to the countries of these civilians... Hamas was hiding hostages and murdering hostages inside Shifa Hospital. Hamas was building tunnels under hospitals."

Hagari proceeded to show footage of Hamas terrorists bringing two non-Israeli captives into the hospital by military jeep. "We have not yet located these hostages and have not rescued them," he noted.

"The world must remember: Hamas is holding hostage the elderly, men, women, children and babies. The Israel Defense Forces has a moral obligation to bring everyone home. We will not rest until we do," added Hagari.

At least 1,200 people were killed in Hamas's attacks on Israeli communities near the Gaza border on Oct. 7. Another 240 men, women, children and soldiers were taken back to Gaza as hostages. Some people remain unaccounted for as Israeli authorities continue to identify bodies and search for human remains.

ANI





Tarimba Abbas, the chairman of the Board of Directors of SportPesa, speaks during the introduction of the USSD service through SportPesa to users of Halotel, Tigo and Airtel networks in Dar es Salaam yesterday. PHOTO: CORRESPONDENT

SportPesa now introduces easy way for their customers to bet

By Guardian Correspondent

THE entertainment and sports betting company SportPesa Tanzania has introduced to its Halotel, Tigo and Airtel customers the opportunity to play without deducting their balances from their account by using the USSD service.

Speaking yesterday during the event, the chairman of the Board of Directors of SportPesa, Tarimba Abbas, said the service is an important step aimed at improving the experience for customers and making it easier for them to participate in gaming.

He said by using the USSD service *150*87#, customers using Halotel, Tigo and Airtel networks can enjoy SportPesa services without additional costs.

"This is a simple and fast system that guarantees customers to have a good experience without having to worry about deductions that may exceed the amount they intended to play," he said.

This feature allows customers to check their balance easily by dialing *150*87#.

The service enables the customer to know the balance in their SportPesa account and, in addition, it also allows customers to check transaction history. The feature increases transparency and enables customers to track their previous transactions.

He said one of the main features of *150*87# it allows customers to place bets directly through the service and makes it easier for customers who don't have a smartphone to continue playing without any difficulties.

According to Tarimba, SportPesa has special promotions for its users. The service is used to allow customers who do not have a smartphone to participate in the promotions offered.

For Customers who want to check

their balance, they need to dial *150*87# press 5, then press 1, to get transaction history press 2, to place a bet press 1, and to play Jackpot press 3.

The USSD service from SportPesa places great importance on transparency and security. Customers can be sure they are enjoying gaming without worrying about running out of data.

The USSD service is convenient because it allows customers to enjoy playing with SportPesa without requiring them to download an application or have an internet connection.

For customers who do not have a smartphone, the USSD service also gives them the ability to bet with SportPesa.

Through the USSD Service, customers can monitor their transaction history, and predict what they have played.

One of the main advantages is the ability to place bets directly via USSD, even for those with limited-capacity phones.

The service is secure as it ensures customers are worry-free about the security of their data, as the communication is done directly with the company.

Another good thing about the service, it can be accessed anywhere, even in challenging internet areas. It is a great benefit for customers living in remote areas.

Tarimba added that the service is a good step for SportPesa to continue to provide a better experience as it gives its customers the opportunity to participate in gaming with ease and confidence.

The service also enables SportPesa to continue to be a leader in the industry and strives to revolutionise and delight its customers and meet their needs for better winning opportunities.

Taifa Stars off to a fine and superlative start

By Lloyd Elipokea

ENCOURAGINGLY, Taifa Stars have gotten off to an auspicious start in the consequential 2026 World Cup qualifiers as their slim 1-0 win against Niger last Saturday distinctly demonstrates.

Indeed, although Niger may be veritable lightweights on paper, the sheer unpredictability of African football meant that a defeat for Taifa Stars was definitely not beyond the bounds of possibility.

Thankfully though, Stars displayed few signs of braggadocio as they took the game to Niger in an effort to gain victory, which ultimately proved to be successful.

After beginning the 2026 World Cup qualifiers on a positive note, the monumental challenge now facing Taifa Stars is sticking to winning ways in their remaining qualifiers.

Unquestionably, this will be difficult especially when one considers that heavyweights like Morocco and Zambia are in our pool, which is the undeniably tricky Group E.

Nevertheless, this should take nothing away from the Stars' laudable exertions last Saturday and it is hoped that our national team will head into future football battles in Group E with confidence and an iron-will, which both constitute a recipe for success.

Let us now train our eyes on the continental club football landscape which is expected to be a bee-hive of activity this weekend when the 2023-24 CAF



Taifa Stars captain Mbwana Samatta (C) fights for the ball surrounded by Niger players during their 2026 FIFA World Cup African qualifiers Group E match against Niger at the Stade de Marrakech in Morocco on Saturday. PHOTO: COURTESY OF TFF

Champions League group stage kicks off. Indeed, in what was an enormous coup, both Simba SC and Yanga SC came through the preliminary rounds unscathed to admirably progress to the CAF Champions League group stage.

Unfortunately, both Tanzanian giants have been drawn in especially challenging groups, which are full of perils and potent dangers.

For example, let us mull over Group D, which consists of: Egyptian juggernauts Al Ahly, Algerian side CR Belouizdad, Ghanaian contenders Medeama, and Yanga SC, who will be making their first appearance in the prestigious group stage since 1998.

And it is hoped that Yanga

SC will hit the ground running when their group stage campaign commences this Friday against CR Belouizdad at the Stade du Juillet Stadium in Algeria.

Granted, although Algeria is an immensely respected football powerhouse, Yanga SC should not be fazed by the prospect of taking on CR Belouizdad as this would be an act of self-destruction.

Instead, this writer would like to call upon the Jangwani Street side to draw encouragement from their sublime displays in the CAF Confederations Cup last season when they reached the final but lost by the skin of their teeth to another Algerian team USM Alger.

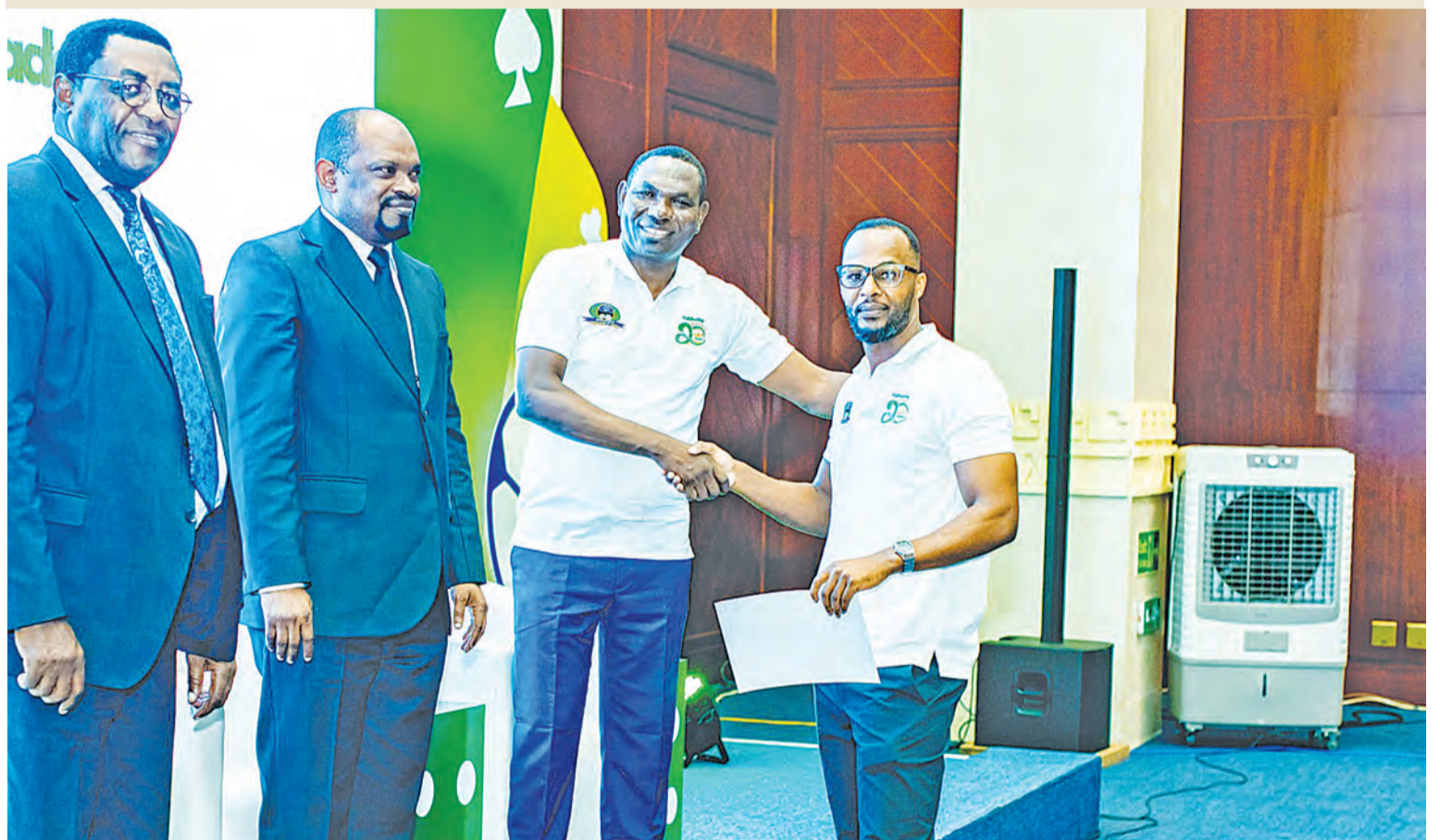
As for Simba SC, the Msim-

bazi Street outfit has also been drawn in a group which is laden with various threats to their campaign in the competition.

Indeed, Simba SC has been drawn in Group B which is made up of: Wydad AC of Morocco, erstwhile titans ASEC Mimosas and the small fry, Jwaneng Galaxy of Botswana.

Interestingly, Simba's opening clash of the championship takes place this Saturday when they will host the visiting ASEC Mimosas at the grand Benjamin Mkapa Stadium.

Thus, as both clubs apply the finishing touches to their preparations for the CAF Champions League group stage, it is hoped that they will be able to produce the goods in this revered competition.



Betway Tanzania's Operations Manager, Jimmy Masaoe (R) shakes hands with the Director of the Gaming Board of Tanzania, James Mbalwe, after receiving the certificate of recognition as the most compliant betting company in Tanzania during the celebration of 20 years of the board held in Dar es Salaam recently. PHOTO: CORRESPONDENT

Gaming Board recognizes Betway as the most compliant betting company

By Guardian Correspondent

THE Gaming Board of Tanzania, the authoritative body overseeing gaming and betting activities in the nation, marked its 20th year of operation with a distinguished celebration attended by industry stakeholders recently.

During the event, the board bestowed certificates of excellence upon outstanding contributors in the sector.

Among the recipients of this prestigious recognition was Betway Tanzania, the global online betting brand, which was lauded as the most compliant betting

company in Tanzania and presented with a certificate of commendation. Despite only two years of operations within the Tanzanian market, Betway has emerged as a standout example of regulatory adherence.

Expressing his gratitude for the accolade, Jimmy Masaoe, the Country Operations Manager for Betway Tanzania, emphasized the alignment between this recognition and Betway's core business philosophy of championing responsible gambling across all markets of operation.

"We take immense pride in being designated as the most compliant company by the es-

teemed Gaming Board of Tanzania, especially given our relatively brief presence in the Tanzanian market compared to other longstanding entities. This is a testament to our unwavering commitment to responsible gambling," stated Masaoe.

He further underscored that this distinction validates the brand's dedication to fostering a culture of responsible gambling.

As the Gaming Board of Tanzania commemorates two decades of regulating the gaming and gambling industry, it underscores its substantial contributions to the national economy. The board has played a pivotal

role in elevating tax revenues, which have surged from a modest 2.8 billion Tanzanian Shillings in 2006/07 to an impressive 170.43 billion Tanzanian Shillings in 2022/23. Moreover, the board has significantly bolstered youth employment and attracted 67 investor companies.

Through the recognition of conscientious efforts exhibited by companies like Betway Tanzania, the Gaming Board of Tanzania is actively fostering an environment conducive to the positive impact of the gaming and betting industry on the nation.

Son issues warning as S. Korea travel to China in World Cup qualifier

SHENZHEN, China

SOUTH Korea travel to China today for 2026 World Cup qualifying, with Son Heung-min warning his side they must keep their cool in front of a sell-out crowd.

The clash in Shenzhen, just over the border from Hong Kong, is the pick of the second round of games in the second phase of qualifying for the World Cup in North America.

Among other notable matches, Australia face Palestine in Kuwait, Japan travel to Jeddah to play Syria, Iran are away at Uzbekistan and India host Qatar.

South Korea thrashed Singapore 5-0 on Thursday to begin their qualifying campaign, with skipper and Tottenham Hotspur forward Son scoring a screamer from outside the box.

The Koreans are top of Group C in the early standings with China, who scored 16 minutes from time for a 2-1 win in Thailand.

Jurgen Klinsmann's South Korea are favourites in Shenzhen, but Son warned: "I think Asian teams will try to be physical against us, and getting under our skin will perhaps be a part of their strategy."

"We just have to make sure we don't get dragged into that kind of thing and stick to our own game plan," Yonhap quoted him as saying following the thumping of Singapore in Seoul.

More than 40,000 will pack out the Shenzhen Universiade Sports Centre stadium for the game.

President Xi Jinping has big ambitions for Chinese football, including hosting and even winning the World Cup one day, but they have only reached the tournament once, back in 2002.

And following the victory over Thailand, Xi -- in an unusually unguarded moment -- was seen on video telling Thai Prime Minister Srettha Thavisin that China had been "lucky".

No matter the result on Tuesday, South Korea and China will be expected to qualify out of Group C when the second round wraps up in June.

The top two from each of the nine groups go through to the final Asian qualifying round.

Australia and Japan, who like South Korea both reached the last 16 at the 2022 World Cup in Qatar, also made fast starts to their qualifying campaigns.

The Soccerroos smashed Bangladesh 7-0 in Group I, with substitute Jamie Maclaren hitting a second-half hat-trick in Melbourne.

They will face a sterner test against Palestine in Kuwait City and coach Graham Arnold said that preparations were "quite stressful" given the backdrop of the Israel-Hamas conflict.

But his message was clear -- focus on the football -- and Australia chartered a flight direct to Kuwait from Melbourne to give themselves as much time as possible to get ready.

Palestine began their campaign with a 0-0 draw against Lebanon.

In Group B, Ayase Ueda also scored a hat-trick as Japan got their bid to reach an eighth straight World Cup off to an emphatic start with a 5-0 win over Myanmar.

They too can expect a much stiffer challenge against Syria, who defeated North Korea 1-0.

AFP

Portugal notch 10th straight win, Serbia qualify for Euro 2024

LONDON

PORTUGAL finished their Euro 2024 qualifying campaign with a 100-percent record by beating Iceland 2-0 on Sunday, after Serbia booked their place at next year's finals in Germany and Romelu Lukaku scored four goals for Belgium.

Bruno Fernandes and Ricardo Horta netted the goals for Roberto Martinez's Portugal, with Cristiano Ronaldo not on the scoresheet, to end with 10 wins from 10 matches in Group J.

The 2016 winners will be among the favourites for the title in what could be the 38-year-old Ronaldo's last major tournament.

Slovakia finished eight points behind Portugal in the second qualifying place after a 2-1 win over Bosnia and Herzegovina in Zenica.

Luxembourg, who will head into the play-offs, were a further five points adrift after closing out an impressive group-stage showing with a 1-0 success in Liechtenstein.

Earlier Sunday, Serbia qualified for the first time as an independent nation, after four previous failures to get to the main event, with a 2-2 draw against Bulgaria.

The Serbs finish second in Group G behind Hungary who snuffed out any hopes Montenegro had of progressing by beating them 3-1 in Budapest.

"The players showed a mentality of not giving up, believing in themselves," said Serbia coach Dragan Stojkovic. "It's a big day for Serbian football. Serbia is finally at the European Championship."

Centre-back Milos Veljkovic put Serbia ahead in the 17th minute before substitute Georgi Rusev levelled for Bulgaria in the 59th.

AFP

World Cup 2026 African qualifiers: Egypt win but Nigeria draw again



Egypt midfielder Trezeguet (right) has three goals in 2026 World Cup qualifying after adding to his strike against Djibouti. Agencies

JOHANNESBURG

EGYPT kept up their perfect start in qualifying for the 2026 Fifa World Cup but Nigeria dropped points once again.

A goal in either half from former Aston Villa midfielder Trezeguet gave Egypt a 2-0 win over nine-man Sierra Leone.

Meanwhile, Nigeria drew 1-1 away against Zimbabwe after Leicester City forward Kelechi Iheanacho steered in a second-half equaliser for the visitors.

Elsewhere, Algeria and Gabon extended their 100% records, while Sudan registered a shock win over DR Congo.

Africa has a guaranteed nine qualifiers for the 2026 finals in Canada, Mexico and the United States, with all group winners booking a spot at the tournament.

"Mixed fortunes for big names Egypt had cruised to a 6-0 home win over Djibouti in their Group A opener, with Mohamed Salah scoring four

times, and the Liverpool forward had a hand in both Pharaohs goals against Sierra Leone.

Mostafa Mohamed flicked on a ball from Salah and Trezeguet was on hand inside the area to chest down and slide home in the 18th minute.

Sullay Kaikai almost levelled when he hit the outside of the post but Sierra Leone's task was made harder when Derby County midfielder Tyrese Fornah was shown a straight red card seven minutes before half-time for a high boot on Hamdi Fathi.

Trezeguet, who now plays in Turkey for Trabzonspor, made it 2-0 just after the hour mark in Monrovia, Liberia, when he latched on to a through ball from Salah and his effort deflected off a defender before looping in over the goalkeeper.

And the Leone Stars finished with nine men when defender Abdul Kabia was shown a second yellow card for a cynical foul on Omar Marmoush deep into injury time.

Nigeria were held to a draw by min-

nows Lesotho in their first game in Group C on Thursday and once again failed to find inspiration in attack against Zimbabwe.

The Super Eagles were stunned in the 26th minute in Butare, Rwanda, when Walter Musona sent a brilliant 35-yard free-kick flying past Francis Uzoho and into the top right-hand corner.

But the West Africans were almost gifted an equaliser when Zimbabwe goalkeeper Bernard Donovan was penalised for picking up a back pass, but Southampton's Joe Aribio saw his effort from the resulting indirect free-kick cleared off the line.

Nigeria did equalise midway through the second half when Iheanacho slid in a cut-back from Moses Simon, but Zimbabwe had the better chances to win it as Teenage Hadebe hooked over, Divine Lunga headed wide and Tanaka Shandirwa blasted off target.

Pressure may grow on boss Jose Peseiro with Nigeria on just two points after two games, a point behind Group C leaders South Africa, who travel to

Rwanda on Tuesday.

*Algeria and Gabon register second wins

Algeria beat an enterprising and attacking Mozambique side 2-0 in Maputo, with second half goals from Fares Chaibi and Ramiz Zerrouki seeing off the hosts, who had had the better of proceedings before the break.

Stanley Ratifo and Mexer both had good chances before Algeria forward Amine Gouiri had a curling effort tipped onto the right-hand upright on the stroke of half-time.

Chaibi calmly drilled in the opener in the 69th minute after Mohamed Amoura had struck the woodwork, and a clinical finish across goal from Ramiz Zerrouki with 10 minutes left sent the North Africans three points clear at the top of Group G.

Gabon also made it two wins from two with a 2-1 Group F victory away against Burundi in neutral Dar es Salaam.

Jim Allevinah set the Panthers on their way in the 35th minute by guiding in a cut-back, before Denis Bouanga made it 2-0 with seven minutes remaining when he slotted into an empty net from 45 yards out after an attempted clearance by goalkeeper Jonathan Nahimana fell to him.

Abedi Bigirimana volleyed in to pull one back with three minutes left but Gabon held on to move top of Group F.

Meanwhile, an own goal meant Sudan extended their unbeaten start in Group B as they upset DR Congo 1-0 in Benghazi, Libya.

The only goal came with 11 minutes left when Leopards goalkeeper Lionel Mpasu miscued his clearing punch from a corner and the ball rebounded back off midfielder Charles Pickel and into the net.

Africa's qualifiers continue on Monday, with Ivory Coast and Mali among the 12 sides in action.

BBC

Declan Rice: I felt the pressure of my £105 mil. Arsenal price tag - but now I'm flying

LONDON

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draw against Bulgaria.

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"The players showed a mentality of not giving up, believing in themselves," said Serbia coach Dragan Stojkovic. "It's a big day for Serbian football. Serbia is finally at the European Championship."

"I congratulate my boys, who fought until the end and believed. We are happy and satisfied."

Centre-back Milos Veljkovic put Serbia ahead in the 17th minute before substitute Georgi Rusev levelled for Bulgaria in the 59th.

Ten minutes later Kiril Despodov put the visitors ahead but Srdjan Babic equalised eight minutes from time to ensure Serbia would become the 17th team to qualify for Euro 2024.

Montenegro needed Serbia to lose to have any hope of taking their place in Germany but also needed to win against the Hungarians who have eased impressively through qualifying.

Slobodan Rubezic put Montenegro ahead on 36 minutes but Hungary

hit back in the second half with two goals in three minutes from Liverpool midfielder Dominik Szoboszlai before Zsolt Nagy rounded off the win in added time.

Lukaku scored four goals as Belgium finished with a 5-0 thrashing of Azerbaijan.

Roma striker Lukaku extended his record tally of international goals for Belgium to 83, with all of his goals coming in a remarkable first half in Brussels.

He opened the scoring in the 17th minute by converting a Jeremy Doku cross, before Eddy Israfilov was shown a second yellow card seven minutes later to leave the Azeris with a moun-

tain to climb.

Lukaku fired home shortly afterwards and then headed in Wout Faes' delivery to complete a hat-trick. He rounded off his scoring spree of four goals in 20 minutes before being replaced by Lois Openda at half-time.

The Belgians took their foot off the gas in the second period but Leandro Trossard added a fifth in the 90th minute from another Doku assist.

Belgium finished top of Group F, one point clear of Austria, with both having wrapped up qualification with matches to spare.

Sweden ended a miserable campaign,

in which they failed to qualify for a European Championship for the first time since 1996, with a 2-0 win over Estonia in the other game in the group.

Barcelona star Gavi limped off with a nasty knee injury in Spain's 3-1 victory against Georgia which secured top spot in Group A above Scotland.

The 19-year-old was tackled from behind in the first half, buckling the knee that had his weight on it, before leaving the pitch in tears.

"This is a very tough and very difficult moment," said Spain coach Luis de la Fuente. "For the (Spanish football) federation, for me, for

his friends. But above all for him and for his club.

"We're destroyed. Football is a risk sport and this is the ugly part of our sport."

Goals from Robin Le Normand and Ferran Torres and a Luka Lochoshvili own goal helped Spain past a spirited Georgia, who drew level at 1-1 early on through Napoli star Khvicha Kvaratskhelia.

Already-qualified Scotland needed to beat Norway and hope for Spain to slip up to snatch first place, but were held to a dramatic 3-3 draw at Hampden Park.

THE TELEGRAPH

Gwiji by David Chikoko



TFF happy with its contribution to sports tourism in the country

By Correspondent Joseph Mchekadona

THE Tanzania Football Federation (TFF) says modern stadiums and infrastructure in the country are contributing to the growth of the sports tourism industry.

This was revealed by TFF president Wallace Karia who disclosed that the federation is happy that football is contributing to sports tourism in the country.

Karia said recently the country has witnessed a number of top footballing nations and foreign clubs coming to play their home matches at the Benjamin Mkapa Stadium and Azam Complex.

The TFF president noted that the matches bring together local and international football enthusiasts and contribute significantly to the local economy.

"Now Tanzania is a destination of football where many top teams are coming to play. We are now among the top three nations that are doing well in sports tourism, especially in the football sector. In the past, it was Morocco and South Africa who were the hub for football tourism. As I am speaking to you tomorrow (yesterday) Ivory Coast national football team with all its top players is in the country to face Gambia which has also top players.

The two teams will play at Benjamin Mkapa Stadium. Many people will watch that game (Gambia vs Ivory Coast) on TV, while others through other mediums. Last week Burundi also hosted Gabon, and many people around the world followed that match.

"We have had many top African clubs with top players coming to play at Benjamin Mkapa and Azam Complex. This is very great for our nation's economic development. The country has a lot to offer and gain from the fast-growing sector of sports tourism. Visitors - whether participants or spectators at a sporting event or activity - contribute directly and indirectly to the economy of the local host destination," he said

Some of the clubs that have camped in the country include Sudanese giants Al Hilal and Arta Solar 7 of Djibouti which boosted former top players like Solomon Kalou and Alex Song

He went on to say that while exploring the sporting attractions in the country, visitors can also immerse themselves in the vibrant local culture, and nearby attractions, and sample traditional and temporary arts, crafts, and performances.

Also in May this year, the government signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the United States of America (USA) Major Soccer League (MSL) National Football League (NFL) and National Basketball Association (NBA) clubs to promote the country's tourism and investment opportunities

The clubs that signed the MOU with the government are Seattle Sounders (MSL), Seattle Seahawks (NFL), and NBA's Portland Trailblazers.

Also this year, the local tennis governing body (TTA) disclosed that former world Tennis Champion John McEnroe is expected in the country next month.

McEnroe, who, among his numerous titles, won 155 ATP, will be accompanied by his brother Patrick and other 120 tourists, and they will be in the country for eight days.

TTA said while in the country, the two will play the game in Serengeti National Park and other tourist attraction areas and also support growth and awareness with other charitable initiatives.

"The coming of John McEnroe and his brother Patrick is a great opportunity to promote and growth of the game in the country. We thank Inside Expeditions, who are behind his coming, and the government of Tanzania for the coming of the two and the company. Their coming is part of the Royal Tour," said TTA president Francis Thomas.

Plucky Taifa Stars host group favourites Morocco



Taifa Stars squad during their 2026 FIFA World Cup African qualifiers Group E match against Niger at the Stade de Marrakech in Morocco on Saturday. Stars won 1-0. PHOTO: COURTESY OF TFF

By Correspondent Michael Mwebi

HOPEFUL Tanzania go in search of a second victory in a row as they welcome Morocco to the Benjamin Mkapa National Stadium in a CAF World Cup qualifier tonight. Kick off at 10 PM.

Tanzania claimed a hard-fought 1-0 win over Niger at the Stade de Marrakech on Saturday to kick off their 2026 World Cup qualifying on a positive note.

Despite having their backs against the wall in the second half, Adel Amrouche's men broke the deadlock through Charles M'Mombwa and held on for all three points.

Since suffering 1-0 against Uganda back in March, Taifa Stars are unbeaten in the subsequent three matches across all competitions.

Having recently picked up a first home win in three outings with a 1-0 victory over Niger in June, Taifa Stars now seek consecutive victories in front of their fans for the first time in 2021.

Coach Amrouche is expected to resist making changes to the squad that beat Niger, meaning Young Africans' duo of Ibrahim Bacca and Bakari Mwamnyeto will start in central defence.

Aishi Manula between the goalposts and Dickson Job and Novatus Miroshi will complete the rest of the backline.

Aldershot Town's Haji Mnoga was the single defensive midfielder against Niger but given the calibre of opposition in this encounter, Sospeter Bajana might team up with him in a double pivot role.

With Taifa Stars defending their lead in the second

period against Niger, Feisal Salum was brought off to make room for defensive midfielder Himid Mao, but the 26-year-old Zanzibari should retain his spot from the start.

Australian-based M'Mombwa opened his goal account for Taifa Stars on his debut on Saturday and should retain his role on the left wing while flanked by Simon Msuva on the right.

Captain Mbwana Samatta will be expected to lead the line once again, having scored twenty times for his country.

The Greek-based forward assisted last time out and will be looking to cut the

three-goal gap in Tanzania's all-time goal-scoring race with Mrisho Ngassa at the top.

Morocco are yet to kick off their quest to feature at the next World Cup. They were scheduled to play Eritrea earlier in this international window to start the Group E matches, but the Horn of Africa nation decided to withdraw from the qualification process due to worries that some players would seek political asylum after leaving the country.

The Atlas Lions hold the trump card when it comes to head-to-head meetings with Tanzania.

In four previous games,

they have won three and lost one.

The first confrontation dates back to October 9, 2010, in Dar es Salam, as part of the qualifiers for the 2012 African Cup of Nations.

On the day, Morocco won 1-0 before doing it again a year later, in Marrakech (3-1).

The Lions lost their only match against Tanzania (3-1), on March 24, 2013, for the 2014 World Cup qualifiers.

The fourth match as part of the same qualifiers for the Brazilian World Cup turned to the advantage of the North Africans (2-1), on June 8, 2013, in Marrakech.

Bakari Shime blames pitch conditions for Nigeria defeat

By Correspondent Michael Mwebi



Nigeria and Tanzania U20 women's national team players in action during the second leg of their 2024 U-20 Women's World Cup African qualifying series second-round fixture at the Moshood Abiola Stadium, Abuja, on Sunday. PHOTO: COURTESY OF TFF

TANZANIA U20 Women's national team head coach Bakari Shime expressed his disappointment with the pitch conditions, suggesting that it played a role in their defeat to Nigeria.

Tanzanite Queens lost 2-1 in the second leg of their 2024 U-20 Women's World Cup African qualifying series second-round fixture at the Moshood Abiola Stadium, Abuja, on Sunday to bow out of the competition on a 3-2 aggregate.

Both sides battled to a 1-1 draw in the first leg at Chamazi Stadium.

Nigeria's Falcons edged their counterparts 2-1 as goals from Janet Akekoromowi and Comfort Folorunsho ensured that Tanzania's wait for World Cup Qualification goes on.

Akekoromowi's goal came in the 16th minute but Jamila Mnuuduka levelled scores for Tanzanite Queens just five minutes later.

However, on the hour mark, Nigeria restored the advantage as Folorunsho leaped highest to head home a cross after a couple of touches from a corner kick.

Reflecting on the game, Shime said the pitch condition did not allow smooth movement of the ball forcing them to resort to long balls which is not their usual style of play.

"First of all, let me congratulate our players for the way they played. They

have tried to follow the instructions and played well. I should also congratulate the winners because with their plans they have achieved good results that have secured progress to the next round.

"All in all, the match was very competitive. It was a contest throughout the game. We have played well in the sense of playing according to our plans even though we had to change the style of play. The pitch was challenging, it was difficult for the ball to move. We had to play long balls which unfortunately is not our style."

"We conceded the first goal through the same pitch issues. We tried to keep the ball down, made an easy mistake to concede the first goal but we equalized. We went to the break tied at 1-1 goals. In the second half, we continued to play well, believing that we could create a good chance to score the second goal and kill the tie. Unluckily again, we made a mistake as a team and allowed the second goal through a corner," he said.

Nigeria, who have never missed any edition of the competition, will take on Burundi in the final round of the qualifiers, which is scheduled for January 2024.

Four teams will represent Africa at the next year's FIFA U-20 Women's World Cup. Colombia will host the tournament from August 31 to September 22.

Flexibles by David Chikoko

I DON'T KNOW EXACTLY HIS TIES' SIZE. BUT, IF I SQUEEZE TIGHT YOUR NECK, I MIGHT TELL!

