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# 'Submit electoral reform views up to January 10'

*The bill also restricts sailing unopposed by a candidate as instead will have to campaign and be voted for with 'yes' and 'no' votes in the polling*

By Guardian Reporter, Dodoma

THE Constitutional and Legal Affairs standing committee of the National Assembly has started receiving views from stakeholders on the four bills recently tabled on reforms on the monitoring of political parties and electoral procedures.

A statement issued yesterday by the parliamentary secretariat said that the Clerk to the National Assembly was inviting stakeholders to set out their views for five days inclusive, from January 6 to 10.

The views need to be delivered to the parliamentary secretariat by that time, as the bills were read and published back in November and referred to the committee to hear the views of concerned sections of the public, as stipulated in standing orders 97(1), it said.

The relevant bills are the National Electoral Commission Bill 2023, the Political Parties Af-

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Songwe regional administrative secretary Happiness Seneda presents exercise books and school bags to Momba District pupils with special needs yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Yasin Ibrahim

## Sugarcane lows hitting factories, prices rise

By Guardian Correspondent, Babati

THE shortage of sugar affecting residents of the northern regions arose from shortfalls at the TPC Sugar Co. and Manyara Sugar, which halted production due to lack of raw materials. Dr Ashatu Kijaji, the Industry and Trade minister, made this affirmation yesterday after inspecting operations of the Manyara Sugar firm at Matufa village in Babati District, Manyara Region.

She said the factories face an acute shortage of raw materials thus failing to operate, affecting sugar availability in the nearby regions of Arusha, Kilimanjaro, Manyara and even Tanga.

With the shortfall, efforts are being undertaken to take the product from surplus regions to the northern zone, she said, meanwhile as shortages push sugar prices to a minimum of 3,200/- per kilo to upwards of 4,000/- in remote places, causing pain to residents.

John Jeu, the Manyara Sugar public relations officer, said that the factory had no other way than stopping production, appealing to regional administration to encourage farmers to increase production of sugarcane.

This way factories will have enough raw materials throughout the year, he said, elaborating that the government needs to come up with a long-term plan of building over 680 deep water wells for irrigation farming of the crop.

Peter Mallya, a trader at Babati town, said that shops are running out of sugar and traders find it difficult to obtain it from other places. The public authorities need to address the challenge, he added.

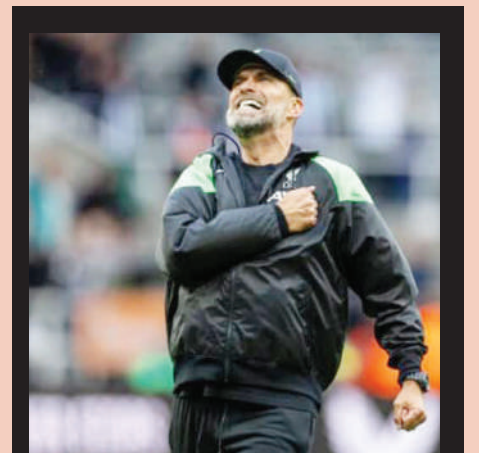
## SPORTS

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**Benchikha unhappy despite Simba SC's victory over JKU SC in Mapinduzi Cup**

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**Sir Jim Ratcliffe will have no honeymoon as he faces urgent problems at Manchester United**

# PM lauds Samia's leadership

## Kinana testifies to a new Ruangwa

By Guardian Reporter

THE Samia government has enabled the country to have political unity based on conducting clean, civilized politics that respects each other's ideas, Prime Minister Kassim Majaliwa has declared.

Addressing a rally at Likangara grounds in Ruangwa District, Lindi Region, with Abdulrahman Kinana, the Mainland CCM vice-chair-

man as the chief guest, the premier said that this situation had made the country calm with the 4Rs policy, namely reconciliation, resilience, reform and reconstruction.

He said the leadership of President Samia Suluhu Hassan is a great success, enabling the nation to maintain stability, harmony and accelerate the development effort with vision, direction and clear plans.

He said that Tanzanians and Ruangwa resi-

dents were proud of the president's leadership, citing approvals and facilitation of various development projects in the district and elsewhere.

As a bearer of the principles of leadership and good governance, the ruling party was moving forward in the confidence that the atmosphere will enable the party to win the local government elections this year and the

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Opposition Chadema Deputy Secretary General (Zanzibar) Salum Mwalimu (R), a member of the Leadership Committee of the Political Parties Council, airs his views in Dar es Salaam yesterday during preparations for a meeting of political party stakeholders expected to be held in the city today. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

## 'Z'bar rural power to generate growth'

By Guardian Reporter, Zanzibar

ZANZIBAR'S Tourism and Heritage minister, Simai Muhammed Said, has said that the rural electrification project in Isles will be a source of economic growth in the Isles.

He made the remarks on Monday during the launch of a rural electrification project at Upeja village, Chokwe in the northern district Unguja as part of the celebrations to mark 60 years of the revolution.

He said residents of the area have for a long time been missing energy services, a move which was causing delays in development projects including development of the energy sector.

He said in developing the agriculture sector, farmers decided to use generators which have been a source of losses saying the coming of the project will help them practice irrigation agriculture especially horticulture production.

He asked the residents to carefully manage the project to implement various projects including agriculture, agribusiness and others

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## 'Submit electoral reform views up to January 10'

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fairs Laws (Amendment) Bill 2023 and the Presidential, Parliamentary and Local Governments Elections Bill, 2023.

The bill on political parties' affairs proposes to amend the Election Expenses Act, Cap. 278 and the Political Parties Act, Cap. 258 to strengthen the role of the Registrar of Political Parties in monitoring activities of political parties as well as strengthening compliance with related laws and regulations.

It seeks to amend provisions on election expenses to remove the requirement for candidates to submit to executive directors, district administrative secretaries and ward executive officers notification on candidates' campaign teams and instead submit such forms to the returning officer or his assistant.

This amendment is intended to rectify where notification is submitted, namely a regulatory official rather than

the government as such, while also seeking that political parties be included in the gender and social inclusion policy. This will increase the participation of women and special groups in programmes and candidacy selection in political activities, the bill indicated.

It also proposes that the chairman and vice chairman of the electoral commission be appointed from justices of Court of Appeal and High Court judges, with a preliminary requirement of a practising advocate for not less than 15 years.

Other commissioners will be required to be citizens by birth, trustworthy, competent in leadership and any other qualities the recruitment committee will consider essential for those functions.

The bill also restricts sailing unopposed by a candidate as instead will have to campaign and be voted for with 'yes' and 'no' votes in the polling.

## 'Z'bar rural power to generate growth'

FROM PAGE 1

which will be beneficial economically.

Acting General Manager of the Zanzibar Electricity Corporation (ZECO) Khamis Ahmada Fakihi, said the implementation of the project is to ensure that the electricity service reaches the areas that until today it has not reached and to make improvements in the areas that receive little electricity.

He said more than 250m/- will be used to complete the project by setting up distribution channels which are large electricity 33 kilowatts where you have a height of 3 meters, to put a transformer with a size of 200 kilowatts.

In addition, he said that there are many applications in agricultural areas, so their mission is to deliver the service to all citizens.

Northern Unguja Region Regional Commissioner Rashid Hadid Rashid, said that the project is the implementation of the CCM Manifesto 2020-2025 which calls for ensuring that all citizens get electricity service in their areas.

He said the government has made major steps in bringing development to many villages including Chokwe to provide them with the service adding that efforts will continue for the remaining 42 villages in the region so that all villages can access the service.

## Fresh restrictions on international students bringing family to the UK spark controversy

LONDON

THE British government's recent implementation of rules restricting international students from bringing their families to the country has stirred controversy, exacerbating internal divisions within the ruling party led by Prime Minister Rishi Sunak.

Effective immediately, the regulations apply to most international students, except those enrolled in post-graduate research courses or holding government-funded scholarships.

Initially announced in May as part of the government's strategy to curb visa system misuse, the decision is projected to result in approximately 140,000 fewer individuals entering the UK annually.

Recent statistics indicate a surge in student visas issued, reaching 486,000 in the year ending December 2022, compared to 269,000 in 2019. Dependent visas also experienced a significant increase, reaching 136,000 last year, and an eight-fold rise from 2019's figure of 16,000.

Expressing support for the rule changes, Home Secretary James Cleverly emphasized the government's commitment to reducing immigration numbers and securing borders. He stated, "This will see migration falling rapidly by the tens of thousands and contribute to our overall strategy to prevent 300,000 people from coming to the UK."

However, opposition voices, including Shadow Home Secretary Yvette Cooper, argue that the measures are insufficient and merely address the surface issues.

While supporting restrictions on dependents for students on shorter courses, Cooper criticized the government's failure to address broader skill and labour market challenges, accusing the Tories of undermining growth and exacerbating migration.

In a related development, the government's efforts to implement a more stringent family visa threshold

encountered criticism for backtracking on a commitment to raise it from £18,600 to £38,700 in the spring.

The revised timeline now plans for the higher threshold to be implemented in early 2025. Critics, including some within Sunak's own party, have accused him of "weakness" for the altered approach.

As the immigration debate rages on, Sunak faces internal party strife over pursuing the controversial Rwanda scheme. Designed to curb small boat crossings in the English Channel, the scheme faced legal challenges, leading to emergency legislation after being deemed unlawful by the Supreme Court in November. Despite passing its second reading in the Commons in early December, the initiative remains a point of contention within the party.

While the provisional annual total for Channel crossings in 2023 reflects a 36 percent reduction from the record set in 2022, Prime Minister Boris Johnson continues to encounter resistance within his party regarding the overall effectiveness and ethical considerations of the Rwanda scheme. The divisive nature of these policy changes underscores the broader challenges the government faces in navigating the complex landscape of immigration reform.



**This will see migration falling rapidly by the tens of thousands and contribute to our overall strategy to prevent 300,000 people from coming to the UK**



Traders in Mwanza move to clear rainwater from their premises along the city's Lumumba Street shortly after a downpour yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Thomas Wandiba (SAUT)

## PM lauds Samia's leadership

FROM PAGE 1

General Election next year.

He cited the pursuit of strategic projects since President Samia came into office, pointing at the Julius Nyerere Hydropower Project (JNHPP), the standard gauge railway (SGR) and the Kigongo-Busisi Bridge.

These projects will promote the economy, increase employment opportunities and achieve the goals intended in the 2020/2025 election manifesto, he said, praising the way the president has worked to restore Tanzania's image in the international

arena, also strengthening economic diplomacy.

This has opened up various opportunities for investments, capital flows, markets of our products and an increase in tourist flows, promoting Kiswahili and removing trade barriers with neighbouring countries, the premier explained.

Ruangwa District successes during the sixth phase government relate to social services delivery in health, education, water, roads and agriculture, enabling the people to initiate activities to improve their livelihoods.

The government has built a district hospital, four health centres in Malolo, Nangurugai, Narungombe and Namichiga wards, nine dispensaries in Namungo, Mbangara, Muhuru, Namkatila, Mkaranga, Mihewe, Lipande, Mkutingome and Mtakuja villages, enabling people to access services close to their homes, he said.

The party vice chairman affirmed that the speedy achievements made in Ruangwa are exemplary, thus people need to foster unity and solidarity in enabling real development, citing the good work of the Ruangwa MP who doubles up as premier, as

having been a close link uniting the people, CCM and the government.

"I will be a witness to narrate the good development work being done in Ruangwa. I often walk across the country, I passed by Ruangwa in the 1980s and 2000s, but today's Ruangwa is completely different from the Ruangwa I saw in the past. I congratulate the people of Ruangwa for your unity and solidarity," he told the gathering.

Delivery of development in the district breaks records in the use of development funds compared to district councils countrywide, he added.



Shinyanga CCM regional chairman Mabala Mlulwa pictured on Monday speaking at the burial of Rachel William (19), who is said to have succumbed to childbirth complications at Kahama Hospital last Wednesday. Photo: Correspondent Shaban Njia





Tanzanian professional long-distance runner Gabriel Geay (C), who is Tanzania National Parks "ambassador", Serengeti National Park chief conservator Moronda Moronda (R) and Serengeti National Park conservator Upendo Massawe pictured in the park on Saturday holding the African Leading National Parks 2023 trophy recently presented to the park by the World Travel Awards Website. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

## Conservancy carries out regular patrols to keep encroachers away

By Beatrice Philemon

UGALLA River National Park has started carrying out regular patrols to keep out encroachers who invade the park and protect wildlife and other natural resources.

The conservancy is a home to wildlife, bird and fish species, but threatened by poaching and over grazing.

Erick Kimario, park's conservator said yesterday that in the past three years, 216 poachers and 2,052 cattle were arrested inside the park and cases for the victims are in different stages in various courts.

He said that in a bid to combat poaching and cattle invaded the park, so far the park has been able to improve security by conducting patrols inside the park using the aircraft, vehicles and on foot patrol security in all areas of the park.

Kimario who heads the park's security department said: "We've embarked on a programme to provide training on conservation education to local communities living close to the park to conserve and protect wildlife resources and other natural resources at the community level and improve natural resources governance."

Lomi Ole Meikasi, park assistant deputy conservation commissioner said that tourists keen to visit the area, the park is home to hippopotamus, buffalo, lion, elephant, giraffe, impala, zebra, Miombo woodlands, sable antelope, waterbuck, bhor reedbeek, topi, greater kudu, duk-dik, bushbuck, hyena, hartebeest, eland and warthog.

The park also houses helmeted guinea fowl,

francolins, greater egret, doves, hippos and biggest crocodiles ever seen in Africa, different tree species, rivers, enough rainfall and best ecological system connecting Ugalla- Moyowosi-Kigosi wildlife corridors, Ruangwa Forest Reserve, Rukwa and Luganzo-Tongwe Forest Reserve and Katavi National Park for wildlife movement.

Tourists keen to visit the area, the park can be accessed by road, flight and train going to Kigoma through Tabora route at Usoke and Kaliua stations and through Mpanda-Kaliua route at Lumbe and Ugalla stations.

The conservancy also improves infrastructure and constructs a total of 496 km of road to ease transport services and facilitate transport for tourists visiting inside the park.

He called upon tourists from different countries across the world, Tanzanians and other people from East Africa Community (EAC) to visit the park because it is endowed with diverse flora and fauna species making the area very potential for tourism activities such as walking safaris, bird watching, camping site and best place for professional filming and others.

The fee charged for local tourists keen to visit the area is 4720 per adult, children 2,360/-, 1 ton vehicle 23,600/- 3 tonne vehicle 59,000/- while special campsite 11,800/- per adult while children 5,900/-

While the fee charged for foreigners is \$23.6 for adults, children \$23.6, 2 tonne vehicle \$ 59, 3 tonne vehicle \$117.

Special campsite fee charged for foreigners is \$59 per adult and \$11.8 for children

By Guardian Correspondent, Pemba

## Speaker: Zanzibar to have 25 storey school buildings to improve education

ZANZIBAR'S House of Representatives Speaker Zuberi Ali Maulid has said that the Isles government is committed to construct 25 storey schools in the 2023/24 financial year in efforts aimed to improve education services.

He made the statement here when laying a foundation stone for the construction of a two-storey Mwambe school in Mkoani Region, Pemba as part of the celebrations of the 60th anniversary of Zanzibar Revolution.

He commended the efforts saying that the construction of the schools was an implementation of promises of the 8th phase government led by President Dr Hussein Ali Mwinyi.

He wanted citizens in the Mwambe

area to honour and protect the Revolution as this is the liberator which enabled access to various services, including education.

He said that before the Revolution, the colonial rulers provided these services in discriminatory manners leaving children of the poor out of various services including education and health care.

He explained that the situation and other issues made the founders of the Revolution decide to make every effort to ensure that they eradicate the regime and restore the honour of the nationalists.

He wanted teachers and the com-

munity to cooperate in order to ensure that the school produced competent experts of various fields for the country's development.

The Speaker said that the government has spent a lot of funds to facilitate construction of the school in order to improve the learning and teaching environment attracting children to love studying.

According to him, completion of the school later this month is going to address crowding of pupils in classrooms while also enrolling new pupils from various parts.

"I have been told that within the 60 years of the Revolution, we have con-

structed three storey schools including Mwambe and Kiwani, so our major role as residents here is to protect these schools for them to benefit more generations," he said.

Mwanakhamis Adam Ameir, the Deputy permanent secretary, Ministry of Education and Vocational Training, Zanzibar said construction of the school was one of the government's strategies in bringing transformation in the education sector.

"Construction of the storey schools is aimed to address overcrowding of pupils in classes as well as remove studying in shifts, this will greatly help improve comfort in teaching and

learning thus improving performance in exams,' she said.

The deputy PS further said that Mwambe area has three primary schools with a total of 4,658 and 68 classrooms.

Deputy Minister for Education and Vocational Training, Ali Abdull-gulam Hussein explained that construction of the schools was the real fruits of the Revolution.

"The government is committed to address challenges in the education sector, so far a total of 21 storey schools have been constructed in Unguja and Pemba," he said.

Mkoani Regional Commissioner,

Khatib Juma Mjaja said the Zanzibar Revolution was conducted in order to bring liberation to the citizens whose rights were being deprived by the colonial rulers.

He said that in the past 60 years, children from poor families have been accessing their right to quality education, health services, clean water and other social services.

He said the Mwambe school which its construction commenced in May last year and expected to be completed this month has 29 classrooms, 25 toilets, four officers, computer room and a library where upon completion, it will spend 4.6bn/-.



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**2022-2024**



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REQUEST FOR TENDER

North Mara Gold Mine, a fully owned subsidiary of Twiga Minerals Corporation, which is ultimately owned by Barrick Gold Corporation and the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania requests the submission of Tenders from reputable, experienced, certified and qualified parties to provide the following goods:

**Installation of HDPE Liners 2mm and 1.5mm, GSE Fabrinet and Geo Textile at North Mara Gold Mine**  
**Tender Ref: NM037/2023**

**Pre-qualification Criteria**

No	Reference no	Description of work	Pre-Qualification Criteria
1	NM037/2023	Installation of HDPE Liner 2mm, 1.5mm, GSE Fabrinet and Geo textile for PAF dump and Ponds construction at Gena Pit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Applicant to submit company profile with proven experience in installation of HDPE liners.</li> <li>ii. Information required to include a list of relevant projects undertaken in last 5 years. For each project provide: description and relevance to the tendered project.</li> <li>iii. Applicant to submit list and specifications of Equipment's, including facilities and intellectual property.</li> <li>iv. Applicant to submit organizational structure, list of experienced personnel and resource schedule.</li> <li>v. Method statement for installation of HDPE Liners</li> <li>vi. Local content compliance</li> <li>vii. HSE policy &amp; procedures</li> <li>viii. CRB registration</li> <li>ix. Applicant should provide proof to its statements as necessary regarding its financial stability, engineering capabilities, documents complying with Tanzanian laws and Regulations</li> </ul>

**Expression of interest**  
If your company meets the pre-qualification criteria and would like to be considered to receive the invitation to tender (ITT), an expression of interest (EOI) including your company profile and evidence of compliance with pre-qualification criteria may be submitted to [nm.proposal@barrick.com](mailto:nm.proposal@barrick.com)

Applicants must quote the tender description (s) and the respective package reference no. (s) in the subject line of the email.

**NB:** The Company reserves the right to invite any other supplier(s) who did not submit an EOI through this advertisement.

Pre-qualification of any company submitting an "Expression of Interest" shall be at the sole discretion of NMGM.

**Key Dates**  
• Last date to submit EOI

**8<sup>th</sup> January 2024**

North Mara Gold Mine Limited



## Police talk of people with machetes behind panic in Z'bar suburbs

By Guardian Reporter, Zanzibar

FEAR has engulfed Zanzibar residents after several incidents of machete attacks blamed on a group of assailants yet to be identified.

According to West Urban region police commander Richard Tadei Mchomvu, four people have been attacked while in their homes at Dole and Mwanyanya in the region.

He said the police had launched a manhunt for the suspects adding that it has arrested six people in connection to the matter.

He said the assailants are believed to be men aged between 13 to 30 who walk in groups and attack people by breaking doors in homesteads.

He said during the exercise they also managed to recover a television set which is believed to have been stolen by the assailants during one of their raids.

"The suspects enter into houses, break and steal whatever they see in their way and in this case they broke into six houses, attacked owners and stole various items including a computer, phones and money amounting to 85,000/-," he said.

He said during the incident four people were seriously injured with Machetes in their various parts of the body where two have been released and two are still nursing injuries at Mnazi Mmoja referral hospital in the Isles.

RPC Mchomvu said efforts to search for the other suspects are ongoing adding that by the time investigations are completed they will be taken to court in accordance with the law.

"The Police Force has already

created a task force involving two regions to work together to search for the assailants," he said.

He hailed the public for the support they have accorded the police and asked them to continue to cooperate with the security and defense agencies to provide prompt information on the whereabouts of the suspects.

One of the victims of the attacks, Salum Kemani (45) said that at night on December 30, while they were sleeping, they heard voices of a group of people shouting and breaking the door and instantly started attacking them.

"Me and my 24-year-old brother-in-law seriously injured us after they ordered us to give them money even though we don't have any and that's when they attacked us," he said.

"My brother-in-law's condition was the worst after he arrived at the hospital, he was rushed to a referral hospital for further treatment," he said.

He commended the police for acting swiftly on the incidents saying such kind of people derail development activities.



**The Police Force has already created a task force involving two regions to work together to search for the assailants**



Barrick Bulyanulu Gold Mine acting manager Everjoy Ngomamiti (2nd-R, foreground) presents a New Year gift to Beatha Alistide, a medical officer with Msalala Council's Bugarama health centre in Shinyanga Region. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

## STPU investigates suspected cattle rustlers in Ngorongoro

By Guardian Reporter, Ngorongoro

THE Police Force through the Stock Theft Preventive Unit (STPU) has said that it has a long list of people who are alleged to steal livestock and it is now preparing to overcome them.

According to STPU Commander, Assistant Commissioner of Police (ACP) Simon Pasua said that the force is currently investigating and monitoring the movements of the suspected thieves who have been disturbing herdsmen leaving them in

sorrow.

Commander Pasua was speaking to residents who have agreed to voluntary move from the Ngorongoro Conservation Area (NCA) to Msomera village in Tanga Region.

"We are warning those who have been engaging in the crime acts and those who are planning to do so, to stop immediately as the Force is well prepared and it will not spare anyone once the operation commences," he said.

He said that for many years, the

thieves have been bringing sorrow to the pastoral communities but the government has heightened efforts to ensure that livestock and the people are protected.

"We have received a long list of the suspected thieves and we are now preparing to begin a special operation to fight the cases," he said.

ACP Pasua said in order to ensure the country's resources are safeguarded, the police in the country will continue to conduct a number of operations to arrest the

thieves.

He said the police, through STPU, will continue with the operations as well as providing education to herders and farmers in order to combat criminal activities and livestock theft in remote areas of Tanzania mainland and islands.

He further asked the Masai communities to continue to cooperate with the Police Force, especially the STPU by providing information of people involved in the theft for legal measures to be taken.

## Kenyans usher in 2024 with hopes for improved economic fortunes

NAIROBI

SOME Kenyans crowded entertainment spots, while others gathered at places of worship and attended various concerts organized across the East African nation on Sunday, all in celebration of ushering in the New Year.

Regardless of their chosen location to conclude 2023, two thoughts prevailed among them. The first was bidding farewell to a challenging 2023, while the second was eagerly embracing 2024 with hopes for improved economic prospects.

The year 2023 was the one many Kenyans would not want to remember -- thanks to the many economic challenges during the period. They included the fall of the shilling, the local currency, by about 24 percent year on year against the US dollar and other major world currencies, pushing up the cost of imports; inflation rising to a high of 9 percent due to a surge in costs of basic items such as fuel, food and electricity; and higher taxation as the government sought to shore up revenues.

Furthermore, the country witnessed the worst drought and El Nino rains a few months apart, experiencing deaths and destruction.

As many Kenyans sang, danced, cracked fireworks and prayed for the New Year, they were glad that 2023 was over.

"2023 was a bad one because many of us struggled to make ends meet," said Sylvia Muchemi, a businesswoman in Nairobi, Kenya's capital.

In 2023, Muchemi kept her clothes business open every day but still struggled to stay afloat, she said on New Year's Eve.

"I am lucky the business didn't collapse like many others," she said while admitting the sales "were too low because of the hard economic times which cut the spending power."

Similar sentiments were shared by commuter bus driver David Kyalo, who noted that business was bad in 2023 due to the high cost of fuel.

"The fuel kept on rising during the year, but we couldn't pass the cost to consumers, many who reduced travel in 2023," said Kyalo, who works for Rembo Shuttle, a Sacco that plies the Kitengela route, in southern Nairobi.

President William Ruto, in his New Year address to the nation,

acknowledged that 2023 was a tough year for the country, but stressed that his government had instituted various policies to revive the economy.

"The choices we have made over the last year were neither easy, populist, nor convenient. They were however meaningful, appropriate and necessary... in the short term painful, but in the long term gainful," he said.

Ruto noted that Kenya's economy had also been impacted by the global economic dynamics that include the conflict in Europe, the hiking of interest rates in the developed world, as well as climate change that caused the most severe drought in 40 years.

The president, however, assured Kenyans that his government had embarked on a fiscal consolidation program that has seen it cut expenditure by up to 2.5 billion U.S. dollars to reduce borrowing and enhance tax revenues by 3.8 billion dollars to fund development.

Kenya's economy grew at an average of 5 percent in 2023, according to the World Bank. The global lender attributed the improved performance, from 4.8 percent in 2022, to a strong rebound in the agriculture sector.

The recovery of agriculture led to improved food supply which helped reduce inflationary pressures, with inflation nearing a two-year low of 6.6 percent at the close of 2023.

The World Bank also noted that the tourism sector continued to expand, credit to the private sector is improving and manufacturing activity is expected to rebound going forward.

These prospects for better times have given Kenyans hopes of improved economic conditions in 2024.

Sylvia Munyendo, a fashion designer, said that she was looking forward to lower inflation in 2024 so that people can have more spending power to drive up business.

Tony Watima, an economist, noted that the anticipated cutting of the benchmark rate by the U.S. Federal Reserve in 2024 would be a positive step for emerging markets, with the hikes in the last two years having been unprecedented.

Kenya's National Treasury projected that the country's economy would grow 5.5 percent in 2024, supported by the continued growth of the services sectors, the rebound in agriculture, and the ongoing implementation of measures to boost economic activities.



Children in Muheza town compete in blowing balloons in celebrating the advent of Year 2024. Photo: Correspondent Steven William





Alliance One spokesman John Magoti (R) pictured on Monday presenting blankets to Hanang district executive director Francis Namaumbo as part of the firm's assistance of a consignment of items worth a total of 25m/- meant for residents of parts of Katesh township recently hit by mudslides. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

# TanESCO embarks on repairs of worn-out power infrastructure across Singida Region

By Guardian Correspondent, Singida

THE Tanzania Electric Supply Company (TANESCO) has embarked on a repairs of worn-out infrastructure to address blackouts in Singida Region.

Power utility firm regional Manager Mwamvita Ally made the remarks early this week when inspecting the exercise which is being done in Ikungi, Manyoni and Itigi districts.

He said the move to launch the exercise was a result of requests from clients who are being served by the electricity line who have expressed experiencing blackouts derailing their economic activities.

"After receiving the requests, a team of experts from Tanesco in collaboration with others from the headquarters conducted a survey to see the extent of the problem," she said.

She said due to the challenges, the company had set aside short-term plans which involves repairing worn-out infrastructure including cups saying that since last week, the exercise has seen 3000 cups being changed.

She added that during the exercise they also been changing electricity poles saying they were confident that the challenge will come to an end after the end of the exercise.

The manager said they are implementing the exercise as part of a plan by the agency and the

government at large to ensure that the public gets the service.

In addition, Ally said that in addition to working on the challenge, there is another major damage to the infrastructure that is done by the people in their activities while cleaning their fields that are on the power line, causing the poles to burn and causing losses to the organization.

The manager used the opportunity to warn the people to protect the organization's infrastructure saying the responsibility belongs to everyone.

Member of Parliament for Manyoni East Dr. Pius Chaya said power outages has been the biggest challenge in the country saying the exercise will help address the challenges in Singida.

Dr. Chaya said the line carries electricity for three whole region adding that any damage to it makes the services a problem.

The Chairman of the ruling Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM) in Manyoni District, Jumanne Mkhanda hailed the government through the organization for ensuring that the people get reliable electricity following the ongoing improvements to the electricity line.

"After receiving the requests, a team of experts from Tanesco in collaboration with others from the headquarters conducted a survey to see the extent of the problem"

# 363 kg of cocaine from sub-Saharan Africa seized in Morocco

CASABLANCA

A JOINT security operation between elements of the Sûreté Nationale and Customs at the El Guergarat border post, south of the town of Dakhla, resulted in the seizure of 362 kg and

950 grams of cocaine destined for Morocco from abroad.

Control operations and a meticulous search led to the discovery of this cargo of hard drugs in the form of 16 bundles concealed meticulously in the cab and bodywork of an

international goods lorry registered in Morocco.

The truck was searched immediately after it arrived at the El Guergarat border post from a sub-Saharan African country, according to a press release from the Directorate

General of National Security (DGSN), which reported the arrest of the truck driver and his assistant.

This security operation is part of the intensive efforts being made by the DGSN to combat international drug trafficking, particularly the illegal

trade in hard drugs and psychotropic substances from outside Morocco.

In recent weeks, the kingdom has been rocked by a sulphurous case of international trafficking in hard drugs.

The "revelations" of a drug trafficker are shaking up the worlds of sport

and politics, notes the daily Le Monde in its edition of 30 December 2023.

Around twenty individuals, including the head of the country's most successful football club and a regional president, have been remanded in custody in Casablanca.

# X now worth 71pc less than when Musk bought it, Fidelity estimates

SAN FRANCISCO

X, formerly known as Twitter, has seen its value fall by a staggering 71 percent since Elon Musk's acquisition in late 2022.

Fidelity, a leading investment group, evaluated on Monday (January 1), marking the second instance of X's devaluation in 2023, as reported by Axios. Musk had initially acquired the social media giant for \$44 billion.

Fidelity played a pivotal role in Musk's takeover of Twitter, contributing to a \$33.5 billion equity investment, with the remaining funds sourced through debt financing. The deal, finalized in October 2022, transitioned Twitter into a privately held company.

Despite requests for comment from FOX Business, both Twitter and Fidelity have yet to respond to the latest valuation.

Musk, a vocal critic of Twitter before the acquisition, expressed concerns about its impact on democracy and civilization. He attributed these concerns to what he deemed a left-wing "mind virus" propagated by the platform's leadership and employee base.

In the early stages of Musk's leadership at X, he made headlines by terminating a substantial number of employees. Additionally, he maintained a bold stance toward advertisers, dismissing their concerns and threatening to distance the platform from them.

In a late November

incident, Musk responded to advertisers leaving the platform with a defiant message, stating, "What this advertising boycott is going to do is, it is going to kill the company. And the whole world will know that those advertisers killed the company." He also bluntly told advertisers to "go f--- yourself."

Furthermore, Musk addressed Disney CEO Bob Iger's discussion of pulling advertising from the platform, responding with a similar brashness. "Don't advertise. If someone is going to try and blackmail me with

advertising? Blackmail me with money? Go f--- yourself," Musk asserted, emphasizing his firm stance on the matter.

During an interview, Musk took the opportunity to apologize for endorsing an anti-Semitic conspiracy theory on X, acknowledging its role in fuelling an advertiser exodus.

These developments unfolded shortly after Musk visited Israel, where he toured a kibbutz attacked by Hamas terrorists and engaged in discussions with top leaders



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THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA  
TANZANIA INVESTMENT CENTRE  
(TIC)



## PUBLIC NOTICE

### ESTABLISHMENT OF DATABASE FOR TANZANIAN PRIVATE SECTOR INVESTMENTS OUTSIDE THE COUNTRY

Tanzania Investment Centre (TIC) was established under the Act of Parliament as the primary agency of the government to coordinate, encourage, promote, and facilitate investment in Tanzania and to advise the Government on investment policy and related matters.

To perform this mandate TIC has established One Stop Facilitation Centre where all the key investment facilitation Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) have been placed under one roof to facilitate all investors in one place in respect with permits, licenses and registrations

In-line with the newly enacted Investment Act of 2022, TIC would like to inform you that in addition to its original functions, TIC has been given responsibility to establish and maintain database for Tanzanian Private Sector Investments outside the country. This mandate reflects the government's commitment to recognizing its citizens' investments abroad with a view to providing support, whenever necessary.

Following tremendous performance of Tanzania private sector and regional integration, many have ventured to invest in the EAC, SADC and beyond. These investment range from manufacturing, tourism, logistics, real estates and other services. The intent of the database is to reflect the actual growth, magnitude and contribution of outward investment in our investment growth statistics.

TIC therefore invites all Tanzanians with private investments outside the country to contact TIC with a purpose to record their investments in the Tanzania National Investment Database for outward investments. This will be an ongoing exercise. Please contact Ms. Marcela Anton at Email [info@tic.go.tz](mailto:info@tic.go.tz) with copy to [marcela.kimario@tic.go.tz](mailto:marcela.kimario@tic.go.tz) or mobile No +255 715 070800 or visit our offices located at 1st Floor, Golden Jubilee Towers, Dar es Salaam or any nearby TIC Zonal offices for further clarification

Issued By:  
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P.O. Box 938  
DAR ES SALAAM  
06<sup>th</sup> December, 2023



# 'Our small-scale miners need to clasp climate-smart mining'

By Beatrice Philemon

ARTISANAL miners need to be equipped with better understanding on how to conduct climate-smart mining that minimizes the environmental and climate footprint.

Climate-smart mining helps ensure miners benefit from their mineral resources and manage them in a sustainable manner, while fostering economic growth and development.

Groty Mlaki, programme coordinator, Women Action on Eco-Health and Legal Rights made the advice over the weekend when speaking to Women Human Rights Defenders Coalition, members of the Coalition for Gender and Climate Change Tanzania, Indigenous Women Led organizations, media experts, youth, experts from Ardh University who attended training on feminist principles and climate change.

"We need to support them because a research that was conducted by Women Action Towards Economic Development (WATED)'s staff in collaboration with other consultants in Geita District indicates that deforestation was mentioned as one of the challenges facing small-scale mining and is a major contributor to greenhouse gas emissions which are responsible for climate change," she said.

She tasked civil society organisations (CSOs) and universities to train them on the best ways of mining that cannot harm the environment, taking into account that most of them don't use modern mining equipment.

The main goal of the research was to explore the impacts of climate change on small-scale mining, examine the barriers they encounter in accessing financial resources, and highlight potential strategies for a just and sustainable transformation.

The research shows that women in the scale mining sector are among the most vulnerable groups to climate change, especially linked to increasing extreme weather events (floods and droughts). Yet efforts to support their adaptation measures are still low.

## Zanzibar govt wins praise for taking devt closer to its people

By Guardian Reporter, Zanzibar

JENISTA Mhagama, Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office (Policy, Coordination, and Parliament) has said that within the past 60 years of revolution, Zanzibar has made a great step in bringing development to its people both in urban and rural areas.

She made the remarks yesterday when laying foundation stone for the construction of a storey school in Mwera area, Urban West Region.

According to her, before revolution, there were no opportunities for all with availability of social services also being a great challenge.

"Things were not good at all as before revolution, even schools were very few making education accessible to few people, many children denied right to education, only well-off families were able to send their children to school," she said.

She noted that discrimination continued until January 1964, when the Zanzibaris united and decided to eradicate the humiliation and all forms of abuse they were subjected to by the colonial administration.

"We are now living peacefully enjoying all the rights because of our brothers who devoted and fought to rescue the land from the abusers. We all need to know this history and not to forget as this is what brought change and transformation of Zanzibar," she said.

Mhagama said that before the revolution, Zanzibar had one early school which had 60 pupils and 60 primary schools which had 24,334 students.

They have limited access to weather and climate information and services and no access to climate finance. Technologically, this group is still backward as well.

On the level of awareness and understanding of climate change, it was revealed that about 97 percent have ever observed and experienced climate change events, especially droughts and floods.

The rising temperature and unpredictable rainfall were mentioned to be affecting their mining activities, water access and food insecurity.

Equally, agricultural activities practised by the majority of women in rural areas face extreme weather events especially droughts.

The same has become a less dependable livelihood option, forcing more women and children into small-scale mining.

On climate finance, about 87 percent of the respondents have never received climate change-related training and had no clue about climate finance.

The reasons are linked to no programmes and projects being developed to support these sectors.

This indicates that there is less work that links climate change adaptation and climate finance with the small-scale mining sector.

So far it has been recommended to promote more climate-smart mining that does not lead to deforestation instead reduces climate-related risks and embraces resilience among women mining groups.

Proactively enhance discussion and dialogue at national and local levels on the need for climate finance to reduce vulnerability among women working as small-scale miners.

The debate should go further to include access to and use of climate finance. The role of the private sector should be brought up.

Build and strengthen capacity to enhance adaptation amongst women small-scale miners. The entry point should include understanding the impacts and how frequent shall be and agree on local and community-owned interventions.



Simanjoro district commissioner Dr Suleiman Serera (R) makes remarks shortly after inspecting Endiamtu Primary School yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Gift Thadey

## Nzega allots 10m/- yearly to purchase sanitary pads

By Guardian Correspondent, Nzega

NZEGA District Council in Tabora Region has set aside 10m/- from its internal revenues to purchase sanitary pads for distribution in schools.

Ajali Marumwengu, district primary education officer unveiled this new development yesterday when speaking to this paper saying the move is aimed at facilitating proper learning to girls.

He said the pads are being bought

every year and being distributed in schools with an aim of addressing absenteeism among girls especially during menstruation.

"The pads are being distributed to girls in all the 35 primary schools in the area and 16 secondary school students in our municipal council to have interest in school," he said.

District Council Executive Director, Shomari Mndolwa said in 2022/24 the council received 4.8bn/- for the

construction of new classrooms, toilets, teachers houses and new schools.

"For the first time we have constructed a classroom with an upstairs building at a cost of 561m/- at the old airport," he said.

Mndolwa noted that the school with 16 classrooms, an administration building and 28 modern toilets is 100 percent complete and is ready to receive students in January 2024.

He added that the school will help reduce the overcrowding of children in Mapromoko primary school with more than 2000 children and to begin with 450 children in the school have been transferred to the new school.

He also appealed to parents and guardians to ensure that their children who are selected to start form one to report to school without fail while asking teachers to protect the infrastructure of those schools.



Agape director John Myola (R) briefs Shinyanga Press Club coordinator Estormine Henry in Shinyanga municipality at the weekend on the agency's plans to engage more in commercial poultry keeping in an effort to help needy girls fulfil their dreams by fighting poverty. Photo: Correspondent Marco Maduhu

## Relief as Salare villagers in Kondoa get dispensary

By Guardian Correspondent, Kondoa

SALARE villagers in Kondoa District have been relieved from walking long distances looking for health services in the neighbouring villages following the launch of the well-furnished dispensary.

The modern dispensary is fitted with modern medical equipment and has been built by Qatar Charity Organization at the tune of 100m/-.

Launching the health facility, Kondoa MP, Dr Ashatu Kijaji, said the help has come at the right time as the residents have been facing the problem for a long time.

"These residents have been

following health services far away, a situation that was endangering their health, especially pregnant women, where they have been relieved as they'll be getting healthcare services within their localities," said Dr Kijaji, who is also the Minister for Industry and Trade.

She said that the support from the organization is the result of President Samia Suluhu Hassan's efforts to build good relations with other countries, a situation that has helped such stakeholders come to help in the health sector.

"We're very grateful to the respected President for establishing good diplomatic relations with many

countries and this has helped us to get the help of this clinic which is going to answer the problem that has lasted in this village for a long time," she said.

Dr Kijaji said that along with the help, the organization has also helped in other sectors including the construction of mosques and other social aids.

Abubakari Rajabu, a representative of the Qatar Charity Organization said that the help was based on the requests of the residents of the village to be given a clinic due to the hardship of walking long distances to seek health services.

"Today we've handed over this

dispensary to the leadership of the Kondoa district. The dispensary building cost 70m/- and medical facilities cost 30m/-," he said.

Tabu Maulidi, resident of the village, thanked the government and the stakeholders for helping them find the clinic, which is going to answer their long-term problem of walking long distances to get health services.

"Before this clinic, we had to go to distant villages to seek health services, a situation that sometimes led to the death of pregnant women on the way to seek care, but children are not sent to the clinic due to the distance," he said.





With most schools in the country reopening next week for the new academic year, parents and guardians in Muheza town shop for their children's uniforms yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Steven William

## Somalia calls Ethiopia-Somaliland agreement act of aggression

MOGADISHU

SOMALIA has described an agreement that landlocked Ethiopia made with the self-declared republic of Somaliland over sea access as an act of "aggression."

Somaliland seceded from Somalia more than 30 years ago, but is not recognised internationally.

It said that Ethiopia agreed to recognise its independence at some point in the future in exchange for military access to the coast.

Ethiopia has not confirmed this aspect of Monday's contentious deal.

Instead, the office of Ethiopia's Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed said it signed what is known as a memorandum of understanding (MoU) "to secure access to the sea and diversify its access to

seaports."

Abiy had previously described sea access as an "existential issue" for his country.

His national security adviser, Redwan Hussein, also said on X that the arrangement could enable Ethiopia to access a "leased military base" on the sea, but gave no further details.

A MoU is regarded as a statement of intent and can lead to a legally binding treaty.

The development is being portrayed by both sides as a major diplomatic step.

Somalia, however, has reacted angrily to the MoU as it sees Somaliland as part of its territory. It said it was recalling its ambassador to Ethiopia.

The government said the agreement was "null and void" and a violation of

its sovereignty.

In a statement it added that it "considers this action as an aggression and... is an impediment to the good neighbourliness, peace and stability of the region which [is] already struggling with many challenges."

Somalia's Prime Minister Hamza Abdi Bare urged people to remain calm.

"I want to assure them that we are committed to the defence of the country. A part of our land, our sea and our air cannot be violated and I will defend it in every legal way," he said at a hastily arranged press conference.

Somalia has also said it wanted the UN Security Council and the African Union to discuss the issue.

The exact details of Monday's agreement that was signed by Prime

Minister Abiy and Somaliland's President Muse Bihi Abdi in the Ethiopian capital, Addis Ababa, are not known.

Abdi said the agreement included a section stating that Ethiopia would at some point in the future recognise Somaliland as an independent country.

Somaliland's foreign ministry said in a statement later that the "historic agreement ensures Ethiopia's access to the sea for their naval forces, reciprocated by formal recognition of the Republic of Somaliland, marking this as a significant diplomatic milestone for our country."

It quoted the president as saying that recognition would be in "exchange for 20km (12 miles) sea access for the Ethiopian naval forces, leased for a period of 50 years."

## Youth find novel ways to fight environment crisis

By Otiato Opali

DURING my formative years in Kisumu town, western Kenya, the shores of Lake Victoria significantly shaped my early experiences and memories.

As the world's largest tropical and second-largest freshwater lake, it offered plentiful fish for consumption and served as a source of income for local fishers selling their catch in the markets.

As primary school students, we would visit the lake's beach after school, basking in the cooling water for a refreshing swim. On weekends, armed with our improvised hooks, lines, rods and worms, we would troop to the lake's shores for light hearted fishing escapades.

However, climate change has affected the mother lake for many Africans.

In the early 1990s, the majestic lake fell victim to an invasion by the intrusive water hyacinth plant, which cast a suffocating green cloak across its surface. Following the complete occupation by this invasive aquatic weed, the previously blue lake turned to a field of green. The leaves of the floating plant extended like an immense green carpet, blown gently into the horizon by the wind.

The absence of natural predators for the weed, coupled with the perfect temperature conditions of the lake, facilitated rapid spread of the plant. It thrived by gorging on open space, cutting off fishing routes and creating a conducive environment for disease-carrying mosquitoes.

At the dawn of the hyacinth problem in Kenya, the government was at a loss on how to tackle the pervasive floating weed. The spread of this invasive species, challenging to manage and reverse, posed a significant threat to biodiversity, economic development and human well-being.

The government's early efforts to control the weeds included chemical methods, namely the use of herbicides.

Physical methods were also deployed, including the manual removal of the weeds and the employment of machines such as weed harvesters.

Despite showing initial success, these methods proved to be unsustainable because the use of chemicals might degrade water quality and put aquatic life at risk, and the deployment of crusher and destruction boats turned out to be expensive.

While working on an environmental protection assignment for China Daily, I came to admire the ingenious attitude of Africa's youth in developing sustainable solutions for environmental challenges.

During the assignment, I interacted with Rahmina Paulette, a young Kenyan who had started a venture of turning water hyacinth into fiber for making baskets, bags and printing paper.

To widen my sources, the assignment led me to other inventive biological methods devised by Kenyan youth to fight the pervasive weed. One such venture was set up by Biogas International, a Kenyan energy technology company. It has invented a machine that converts waste, such as water hyacinth, into biogas, a cleaner alternative for cooking fuel.

At Maasai Mara University in Kenya, students have done research on water hyacinth's ability to remove algae, fecal coliform bacteria, trace amounts of toxic metals, organic substances and other dissolved impurities from wastewater. The research has materialized into a system that can recycle wastewater from bathrooms and kitchens by collecting effluents and purifying them using water hyacinth.

It is said that when life gives you lemons, make lemonade. Climate change might be a real threat to human existence, but young people in Africa are demonstrating that some of these environmental and climate challenges can be tackled by simply tapping into the innovative and tech-savvy nature of the youth of today.

## Northern Ireland charity mends sewing machines to improve people's lives

By Rebekah Wilson

AS the saying goes, one man's trash is another man's treasure - and that is certainly the case for one Belfast-based charity. Tools For Solidarity has been sending sewing machines to people in Africa since 2006.

"We want the old, rusty sewing machines in the shed because they are superior," workshop manager John Wood said.

The charity said it is making dreams come true for people in Tanzania.

"We refurbish about 20 percent of what we send out - the idea is to transfer the skills and the ability to do the work in the country," said Wood.

"Rather than us doing the work, getting those out in Tanzania to take on the work means they can repair, fix and train other people, cutting out the middle man which is us."

The project was set up in Tanzania due to John's previous work. "When we got to Tanzania, I had already worked there as a water engineer so I had connections and we could piggyback off another organisation that had begun charity work there," he said.

But why old sewing machines?

"These older machines need a bit of work and then they run like new - the machines you get in China just are not efficient and too expensive for what they offer," he said.

The project sends donated sewing machines and tools from Northern Ireland to Tanzania at least once a year.

When they arrive in Tanzania, people can buy them at a cheap rate and free training in sewing, tailoring, maintenance and business is provided.

The primary target group is women in rural Tanzania.

"They don't get access to good quality machines, they would buy them from China and they're quite expensive," said Wood.

"For these women, what activities can they do that will bring in an income other than basket weaving? It's tailoring.

"It is one of the few trades that women can get an income for

themselves and their families."

Wood said a survey asked the women what they wanted and it was sewing machines, training in tailoring and to gain maintenance skills. The Mwanza Sewing and Training Centre was then set up.

"We provide training, maintenance training, business training and sewing machines - and we have people in the country that can pass on those skills through the centre," he said.

"The training can transform people because they now have locally made clothes for the likes of children that they would have had to travel very far to get before and they are expensive.

"It means they can put a roof over their heads, buy better quality seeds to grow better food - to make money, to live.

"We found women who were watching videos on YouTube on how to sew but they had no equipment to do it, so this was a dream, and now it's a reality."

The project also trains people with disabilities in Tanzania. Sofia Tagliani is a partnership worker with the charity.

"It is honestly very rewarding to see these people get the help they deserve, the resources for the artisans to grow their business," she said.

"On my last field trip, it was an amazing moment. We met a woman with hearing impairments who had benefited from the project and had set up her own shop.

"We got to the shop and she had 10 women there, who are also disabled - she had trained them. Her business had flourished.

"These women are facing extra barriers in many ways - limited access to healthcare - and in gaining independence, there's a lot of prejudice they face. To see this achievement was incredible."

For more access, more sewing machines are needed. "If possible, the more machines we get the more we can offer people in Tanzania," she said, adding: "People are very generous but it needs to continue."



Singida Hospital Medical Officer Dr Victorina Ludovick (3rd-R) participates in Ikungi Festival 2023 jogging session held at Ikungi township yesterday. Photo: Guardian Correspondent



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## Peace theme essential as parties enter polls cycle

A SORT of transition is being experienced from Christmas homilies to New Year ones. The latter take an extended look not as appeals for solidarity and peace to foster social harmony but as pleas directly linked to the start of a two-year election cycle.

There are civic elections at the end of this year and more expanded polls towards the end of next year, and politicians will doubtless be in a higher gear from this year's start.

They will be out to calibrate their political posture in the two polls and seek out the membership or support base for cadres from whom to select. Building a sufficient support base is no easy matter either.

Vice President Dr Philip Mpango made an appeal in that direction in New Year greetings to fellow worshippers in Dodoma city, with a number of regional administrators and clerics doing much similarly.

This is an overriding theme in political reference: the need to promote and articulate what builds the peace rather than the opposite, whereas among political actors the theme is often a bit different.

There are cherished goals that people demand in the belief that the dominant political party could then be eclipsed or replaced in that way.

Sermons and other appeals to avoid engaging in incidents that may ruin tranquility, first in regard to the New Year and public peace generally, appear to be taking firm root.

A graphic example is a decision by a key opposition political party to drop its stance of election boycotts if a series of demands is not met or otherwise attended to.

The reason for this change has to do with reading the writing on the wall - as to the respective party's own support base when it seeks depriving them of electoral ambitions.

A range of speakers during New Year addresses were concerned with the peace in a more civic sense - for instance,

in saluting achievements in operations conducted to sort out or forestall a recurrence of criminal incidents.

The criminal activities of individual gangsters or small groups of wrongdoers are usually more rapidly solved when police move in, unlike collective acts of criminality like cattle raiding or land entitlement clashes which often call for concerted efforts up to the highest level.

These take plenty of time before the relevant levels of the government can bring to an end such a situation, and incidents keep coming up.

How far such incidents will create disharmony in the coming year is basically unpredictable though, in the final analysis, it is linked with social dynamics like population increase and the need to widen acreage for farmers.

On the contrary, the number of pastoralists, unless cycles of drought push some of them out of the cattle herding preoccupation, will likely rise as well.

Additionally, if the size of cattle herds increases as with current heavy rains all over the country, the range of grazing land may not be sufficient. At that moment, what will matter more is the capacity for farmers to do with smaller chunks of land or settling migrant herders.

Perhaps that is the one area where policy initiative is slow or non-existent, as the prevailing view is that land arbitration councils at the direct level are sufficient for the task, at times assisted or reinforced by cabinet initiatives.

Repeatedly, a representative committee including eight ministries has picked up disputes over entitlement to large chunks of land and worked to solve them, usually by a decision from the top levels of government.

This works better when it is a public agency that surrenders entitlement or control of a portion of land, and less so when it is a collectivity that is asked to renounce its claims on land. Thus it is helpful to shift to individual land ownership for arbitration to work.

## Orphanages a social fabric sore, merit some funding from local governments

PRESIDENT Samia Suluhu Hassan has recently shown the way with regard to the often-forgotten duty of everyone with some ability supporting the genuinely needy.

This includes avoiding situations where the children have to grow up in orphanages, but that principle is observed more in the breach.

There was similarly some good news that a cooperative union in Shinyanga Region has celebrated the New Year by "remembering" children at New Hope Centre by supplying them with a variety of food and non-food items worth Im/.

This has spawned dreams that perhaps this should have been preliminary in the duties and responsibilities of cooperative unions and social safety networks generally, to ensure that children are safe and cared for under a reliably decent roof.

The gifts will have helped bring smiles and hope to the children, who usually the children end their stay in such centres at age 18.

Thereafter some are absorbed into some section of society when they have an attachment and an assured income, while others shift from a roof to a street.

Fortunately, with new thrusts in education like opening community development colleges for learning various crafts for self-reliance, it is possible the future of those leaving such centres will brighten up.

The Shinyanga cooperative union's chairman noted that the New Year support was a corporate social responsibility (CSR) gesture, giving back to the community part of the profit earned through selling crops such as tobacco and cotton.

It is inspiring seeing more and more local entities appreciating the fact that they have a role in helping orphaned,

rejected or neglected children know real hope and find real meaning in life.

What usually brings people together is a common projection of expectations, with people parting with large amounts of money in symbolic contributions to causes where they will be cited and celebrated.

Too bad, but it is often hard to cultivate such response for neglected children whether they are in homes or assembled somewhere by charity groups.

At times, even merely allowing charities to operate may pose problems, as people in various quarters feel that those who initiate the centres will receive foreign support and grow rich, etc.

All hell once broke loose in Malawi when a US hip-hop superstar moved to adopt an orphaned boy, with impassioned dispute as to whether the lady had obtained proper adoption permission in the first place.

We are making considerable progress in what we say or know about human rights, but there are still severe limitations to what we know of our duties towards children.

There is at times little in the way of recognizing children denounced and left aside and who, if they don't lose their lives in the shock or crisis, ultimately find a place in an orphanage.

It is tragic that there are so many children rejected by their very own parents or close relatives, without the latter seeing little to alert them that a child must have reliable shelter and reliable supply of basic human needs - including true love.

Hence need to salute all those striving to show the way by coming to the altruistic help of these hapless young members of society with apparently nothing to offer in return for the kindness extended to them.



By Malavika Vyawahare

A RECENT report from UK and US-based non-profit Global Witness captures the details of how a new mining rush driven by demand for "clean energy" minerals can go wrong, reproducing the same model of extractivism that has impoverished African countries for centuries.

"Sheer mineral wealth hasn't always translated into development, particularly for the communities who live next to mines," says report author Colin Robertson, a senior investigator at Global Witness.

The team investigated mining projects for lithium, an essential mineral in the production of batteries for electric vehicles and power storage, in Zimbabwe, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), and Namibia. It highlighted the risk that future mining will "embed corruption, fail to develop local economies, and harm citizens and the environment".

In January last year, residents of Uis town in western Namibia started noticing a daily convoy of trucks leaving an area they believed to simply be an artisanal mining site.

The large vehicles were passing through the community on their way to Walvis Bay port on the country's western shore, according to community activist Jimmy Aresseb. In reality, the trucks were exporting minerals from an extensive operation residents knew little about.

In March, people took to the streets to protest the activities of Chinese miner Xinfeng Investments, the owner of the trucks and entity extracting resources, alleging the company was carrying out large-scale industrial mining without the proper permits or social licence.

Uis sits at the heart of an area of immense cultural, ecological and economic significance. The mining site falls within the expansive Tsiseb Conservancy, which supports local residents through legal wildlife hunting.

Ancient rock art believed to be thousands of years old lies a few kilometers from Uis. These rocky outcrops also hold pegmatites, igneous rocks traditionally mined for tin and, more recently, lithium.

In a petition, some community leaders, including Aresseb, alleged that the company didn't properly consult with community members when it appeared on the scene last year, adding that leaders of the operation bought off local chiefs to obtain permissions for their mining project.

Aresseb accused the government of "total negligence", overlooking the interests of ordinary citizens in granting approvals.

He said that rather than bringing tangible benefits, the mining activity interferes with the breeding of wildlife like springbok, hyenas and rhinos that bring in revenue for the conservancy, adding that they were scared away by the noise from the mining operations.

## Rush for 'clean energy' minerals in Africa risks repeating harmful extractivist model

"We're not saying the company must go," he said, adding that the community just wants a seat at the table so that "we can discuss the way forward".

Documents reviewed by Namibian firm Mongabay show that Long Fire Investments, owned by businessman January S. Likulano, bought ten mining claims for around US\$160 in total to carry out small-scale mining in the region.

Only Namibian citizens can apply for small-scale mining permits, which are much cheaper than industrial mining permits issued to foreign companies.

The Global Witness report cited links between Long Fire Investments and Tangshan Xinfeng Hong Kong Ltd., owner of Xinfeng Investments, as evidence that the Namibian firm was a front for Tangshan Xinfeng.

In an export application, Long Fire Investments requested permission to export 55,000 tonnes of lithium-rich ore valued at US\$32 million to Tangshan Xinfeng.

"A company is exporting minerals worth millions. The royalty fee they pay our government is only 2 per cent," 28-year-old Aresseb said, adding: "We cannot allow this while the hospitals are falling apart, schools are falling apart, the roads, everything in our country is debilitated."

An assessment of Namibia's mining code found that fiscal requirements for foreign firms, including the royalty rate of 2 per cent for industrial mining of minerals, were hurting the government.

The policy translates into low upfront revenue for the state and isn't designed to bring proportional benefits when the price of minerals like lithium increases on the global market, according to the assessment.

Battery-grade lithium carbonate sold at US\$37,000 per tonne in 2022 compared to around US\$6,000 in 2012, while the royalty rate has remained unchanged since 2009. Thus, the status quo boosts miners' profits.

In November, Xinfeng announced that it plans to launch a lithium-processing plant in Namibia in the first quarter of 2024.

In Zimbabwe, another activist, Farai Maguwu, director of the Centre for Natural Resource Governance, described a similar experience of exclusion and exploitation at the Bikita mine, calling it "typical extractivism".

January 2022 saw Chinese firm Sinomine purchase Bikita Minerals, which operates the largest lithium mine in the Southern African nation.

Following the takeover, its new owners ramped up production from 3,000 to around 10,000 tonnes a month, primarily for export to China and Japan.

"The communities watch mineral-laden trucks leaving every day, yet there is no investment in public goods, in health, education or supporting

alternative livelihoods," Maguwu said.

In 2023, following media reports, the Zimbabwean government briefly shut down the mine, citing exploitative labour conditions.

Global Witness argues that foreign mining firms aren't the only ones exploiting the country's natural resources; "sanctioned local elites" are also profiting, with the complicity of the state at the expense of citizens.

In Zimbabwe's Sandawana mine, over a decade after production of emeralds ceased, a newly coveted mineral was discovered: lithium. Artisanal miners were the first to seize the opportunity, but the Zimbabwe Miners Federation (ZMF) soon obtained a lease for the mine.

It was set up to allow artisanal miners, who tend to be materially poor, to formally participate in and benefit from the mineral rush.

ZMF president Henrietta Rushwaya is an associate of Zimbabwe's President, Emmerson Mnangagwa, reportedly sharing ties of traditional kinship.

Political elites swooping in to take advantage of lucrative opportunities are nothing new. The Global Witness report alleges the incident in Zimbabwe came at the cost of the artisanal miners, who pay to be part of the ZMF even though the body doesn't appear to promote the interests of small miners.

They are paid lower prices for mined ore than before, even as the ZMF strikes profitable deals to export lithium.

"Where the nation must benefit, it's the leaders who are benefiting," Maguwu said, adding: "It's daylight robbery of the people of Zimbabwe."

He said corrupt leaders corner profits from the trade, while falling short of promoting sustainable development that would benefit a broader section of the populace.

One way to prevent exploitation is to shut out firms that "socialise the costs and privatise the profits", Maguwu said.

He described a situation where companies consume community water resources and pollute common water bodies during mining.

The costs of these actions are borne by the communities but when it comes to the profits from mineral exploitation, the firms are mainly concerned about compensating their shareholders.

The Business & Human Rights Resource Centre notes that allegations of human rights violations, environmental harms and labour abuses are as much present in mining operations linked to Canadian, US, UK, Australian and European companies and investors as Chinese companies.

And, in some cases, competition between corporations can prove detrimental, with protracted battles paralysing projects.

In the DRC, two foreign firms are vying for control of the vast Manono lithium

deposit, which could become Africa's largest lithium mine. The project has been mired in corruption allegations and legal challenges for more than five years now.

Australian company AVZ Minerals and Chinese mining behemoth Zijin Mining Group Ltd. are both vying for control of the concession, with a state-owned mining entity, Cominère, involved in alleged shady dealings with both.

Though the Manono mine has yet to produce any lithium ore, the Global Witness report says the project may have generated about US\$28 million for shell companies incorporated in tax havens, windfall gains made through sales of mineral rights acquired below market price from government-controlled Cominère.

Little of that money has reached either DRC government coffers or the communities living near the deposit.

Zijin Mining denied allegations that it was involved in corrupt dealings with respect to the Manono project.

Despite being aware of the fraught nature of this 21st-century mineral rush, Maguwu said he remained hopeful that encouraging competition between companies worldwide is the way to ensure better outcomes for Zimbabweans through competition over favourable contracts and standards benefiting the country, with some businesses emerging as models for others.

No matter the ownership of the firms, both Aresseb and Maguwu said what would benefit their countries was domestic value addition.

Zimbabwe, Namibia and other countries have banned the export of unprocessed lithium, but it remains to be seen whether this will lead to the development of domestic processing facilities and related economic benefits for local communities in these producer nations.

In one encouraging sign, Zimbabwe's mining minister said the country's earnings from lithium exports shot up from US\$70 million in the first nine months of 2022 to US\$209 million in the corresponding period this year.

The ban on exports of unprocessed lithium came into force in December 2022. But with export earnings accruing to companies, as long as beneficial ownership remains in the hands of foreign entities, it isn't clear how much increased export earnings will boost domestic revenues or the lives of ordinary Zimbabweans.

"There's an increased awareness that African countries have to take a larger share of the value chain as part of a just transition," Robertson said, adding: "But there's a big risk that we'll see more of the same pattern unless real efforts are made to do things differently during this new boom."



# Role of plays and storytelling in pre and primary education

By Telesphor Magobe

**M**ANY parents want their children to study at good schools, get quality education, secure nice jobs and excel in life. This justifies spending on children's education. Quality education is also associated with character formation and law-abiding attitude. If a person is well-educated, he or she is expected to behave differently from a non-educated person.

This is in the understanding that good education transforms a one into a better person. The opposite of this is that if a person receives better education and is not yet transformed, then in the actual sense he or she has not yet received good education (he or she has not yet been transformed or enlightened). In this way, the person cannot claim to have received better education although he or she might have been to school. Going to school may not be necessarily learning.

If children are exposed to better (quality) education they are likely to be transformed (enlightened) right from their childhood. Studies show that pre-primary education is the foundation for children's development and lifelong learning (Eurydice Report, 2019).

Has the government invested adequately in pre-primary education? Do parents value pre-primary education and do they participate in the education of their children? How about knowing in which ways pre-primary schoolchildren learn best?

What teachers, as well as parents, should know is that the brain of children aged 0-8 years has extraordinary capacity for learning. Some literature shows this fact. What is needed is to know how to utilise this "extraordinary capacity for learning" in a more productive way. UNICEF (2018) says that "Scientific research... has taught us



**Learning through play is very important to be considered in the early childhood stage.**

that the most important period of human development is from birth to eight years old. During these years, the development of cognitive skills, emotional well-being, social competence and sound physical and mental health builds a strong foundation for success well into the adult years." It says further that the critical skills that children acquire through play in the preschool years form part of the fundamental building blocks of future complex 21st century.

Sometimes children are in-

structed to help parents in doing household chores instead of playing. This is because many adults, including parents, are unfamiliar with which way children learn best. Yet, education experts suggest that play is crucial to children's learning and there is no substitute for it. Actually, children learn all the time by doing and play serves this purpose.

Kathy Hirsh-Pasek (senior fellow) & Helen Hadani (fellow) from The Brookings Institution suggest that "children learn best when they can be active

and engaged in learning that is meaningful, socially interactive, iterative, and joyful." Play can be free play or guided play (educational play). But how many parents and teachers appreciate playful learning in children?

Lee Jia Yee, Nor Mashitah Mohd Radzi & Nordin Mamat (2022) in their empirical literature review show that play is "the leading activity in child education, a unique form of activity that conforms to the age characteristics of preschool children, and an important

way to promote the overall and healthy development of children's bodies and minds."

They suggest that since the goal of child education and teaching is to cultivate children's love of learning, the content of children's learning cannot be separated from play, while the pre-primary curriculum should be closely linked with life and the process itself is a part of children's life.

"If children's material needs are met, they can learn happily during play, receive knowledge and cultivate good personality

qualities." Their study concludes that "learning through play is very important to be considered in the early childhood stage."

Many teachers do not consider play as having a positive effect on children's learning because they may not be qualified for teaching pre-primary schoolchildren and, therefore, may lack pre-primary school teaching skills and competences.

Rafiath Rashid & Syeda Nazneen Jahan (2021) suggest that "play-based pedagogy is about facilitating a learning environment for children where they would naturally and spontaneously explore their environment and learn by doing, creating, making and manipulating."

According to the Cambridge Life Competencies Framework (2019), play contributes to the development of children's academic outcomes as well as essential skills, including collaboration, communication, confidence, content, creative innovation and creative thinking. It suggests that children's engagement in play activities helps them develop problem-solving, imagination and cognitive flexibility skills. Thus, play has positive long-term benefits in children's cognitive development.

Besides playful learning, there is also storytelling which is highly recommended in early childhood learning. Dalim et al. (2019) suggest that digital storytelling awakens in schoolchildren values and 21st century skills like critical thinking, collaboration, communication, creativity, technology literacy, and social-emotional skills which are necessary for pre-primary schoolchildren's education and "can be developed through several creative activities like art, writing, drawing, sculpture, drama, creative activities and social games, dance, movement and scientific discoveries" (Çetingöz, 2023).

Teaching pre-primary schoolchildren needs not just ordinary teachers, but teachers who are skilled and competent in the teaching and learning of pre-primary schoolchildren. These are teachers who, besides having pre-primary school teaching skills, know the needs, interests, rights and welfare of pre-primary schoolchildren.

# IIT Madras Zanzibar: A model partnership of global south

By Binaya S Pradhan

THE 6 November 2023 will be remembered as a historic day as it's on this day the first ever overseas campus of the Indian Institutes of Technology (IIT) was inaugurated in Zanzibar. IIT Madras, one of the world renowned institutes of engineering and technology, now runs Bachelor and Masters courses on Data Science and Artificial Intelligence for students from different countries from a state-of-the-art campus in Zanzibar.

Dr Hussein Ali Mwinyi, President of Zanzibar, while inaugurating the campus and laying foundation stone of a 250 acre permanent campus, laid down his vision for the campus to emerge as a true international campus with students from different parts of Africa, taking lead in the world of innovation and technology.

Warren Buffet once revealed a conversation with Bill Gates, who stated that if he could hire from only one university globally, it would be the IIT. This acknowledgment underscores the world-class education offered by IITs, propelling their alumni to the upper echelons of Fortune 500 companies. IIT now stands as a global epitome of technical education, producing leaders across sectors such as research, corporations, startups, and politics.

## IIT in Africa: A global move

The decision to establish the first-ever offshore campus in Zanzibar, not only highlights the immense potential within Tanzania as a magnet for technical talent in Africa but also signifies India's steadfast commitment to the African continent. The rapid initiation, with the signing of the MoU in July 2023 and the welcoming of the pioneer batch in October 2023, showcases the governments of Tanzania and Zanzibar's unwavering commitment, also marked by the laying of the



foundation stone for a sprawling 250-acre campus last month.

Very often one comes across the question- Why Zanzibar? Indian External Affairs Minister Dr S Jaishankar, who witnessed the signing of the MoU to set up the IIT campus in Zanzibar on 5 July 2023, in a public address said that Zanzibar is the confluence of India and Africa; historically it has acted as a gateway for Indians to come to Africa. Of course, Zanzibar also has the proud history of being the most advanced city in East Africa during the past centuries.

Dr Jaishankar also added that setting up of IIT in Zanzibar should be seen in the context of India's commitment for Global South. In a larger context, Prime Minister of India Mr Narendra Modi in 2018 had laid down the 10 principles of Engagement with Africa which can be summed up as working with African countries as a partner, on their priorities, without any political agenda and with a focus on their development. There could not have been a better project of partnership than a

campus of IIT in African continent.

## Attracting bright minds for a technological revolution

IITM Zanzibar aims to attract the brightest African minds, nurturing them to become leaders in the technological revolution sweeping across Africa. Beyond this primary objective, IITM Zanzibar brings forth a multitude of benefits for the entire community, contributing significantly to nation-building, mirroring the impactful role played by IITs in India.

The faculty of IITM Zanzibar includes well known professors with global exposure and they are constantly drawing upon the resources of main campus with about 650 professors and elaborate research and innovation expertise. They and the students of IITM Zanzibar are set to play a pivotal role in fostering innovation and entrepreneurship in this campus.

Renowned for solving industry and societal problems, IIT Madras's research park in Chennai, which has generated

over 1300 patents and incubated 200 startups, serves as an invaluable resource. IITM Zanzibar, as part of IIT Madras, gains full access to this research park, promising to foster much-needed innovation in cutting-edge technology in Africa. The capacity to solve real-world problems positions IITM Zanzibar as a catalyst for addressing Tanzania's specific challenges.

## Global collaboration: from academic to industry

IIT Madras boasts partnerships with over a hundred universities worldwide, representing the best across Asia, Europe, and the Americas. IITM Zanzibar inherits this global connect, sealing partnerships with prestigious institutions like the University of Birmingham, UK, and Deakin University, Australia. These collaborations encompass student exchanges, staff interactions, and joint research initiatives.

IITM Zanzibar holds the potential to act as a hub connecting Tanzania and Africa to the capabilities of the world's best

**IIT Madras boasts partnerships with over a hundred universities worldwide, representing the best across Asia, Europe, and the Americas.**

universities, providing crucial international exposure to its students. Similarly, IITs have been successful in providing solutions to global companies for their intricate challenges. In this regard, IITM Zanzibar would emerge as a repository of problem solvers for Tanzanian companies and offering a locally attuned alternative to expensive solutions.

## Conclusion

IIT Madras Zanzibar campus is a product of deep commitments of the governments and leadership of India and Tanzania being implemented by a team of exceptional minds from IIT Madras. In a nutshell, IITM Zanzibar is not merely an educational institution but as a symbol of Tanzania's ascent in the global technological arena. It epitomizes the robust India-Tanzania partnership and the principles of South-South Cooperation.

**The author is India's High Commissioner to Tanzania**





# Europe's shift to the far right and its impact on immigration

By Daud Khan and Leila Yasmine Khan

THE recent elections in the Netherlands signals the increasing power of the far right in Europe. The populist party of Geert Wilders, the Party for Freedom, won a decisive, albeit unexpected, victory taking 37 seats out the 150 seat in parliament. Wilders will likely be the head of the next Government. His policies include stopping all immigration into the Netherlands, holding a referendum on leaving the EU, and banning mosques and the Quran.

Welder's victory is part of a general shift to the far-right in Europe. It follows that of Giorgia Meloni in Italy who has been heading a coalition, headed by the strongly anti-immigrant Brother of Italy, for over a year. In Germany, the Alternative for Germany (AfD) has been increasing its power at both national and regional level. In France there is already talk of the far-right, anti-immigrant leader, Ma-

rie Le Pen being the next president. So what explains the success of far-right, anti-immigrant parties in countries that have a long history of being relatively liberal and inclusive. And, more importantly what will happen now that they are in power, or are increasingly influential.

A key factor in their rise to power is their ability to peddle the narrative that the problems of the Common People are largely due to immigrants, and to an ill-defined political and economic Elite that is only interested in maintaining their power and profits.

According to the populist right, Europe is being overrun by people of a different skin color, with different language or accents, and with a different culture or religion. These foreign people are taking our jobs and businesses, depriving us of housing and acting as a drain on the welfare system. They are also responsible for most of the crimes, in particu-

lar theft, drugs and violence against women.

This narrative had strong appeal in economically deprived areas, among the lesser educated, and among workers who has lost jobs due to the globalization, automation and outsourcing. These people form the core support group of the right wing populist parties. However, their recent successes have been largely due to their appeal to the middle classes that makes up the bulk of the population in Europe.

This middle class is increasingly fearful and apprehensive with regard to the future. The reasons include growing inequality and stagnant real wages; economic difficulties due to rising prices and high interest rates; anxieties about the impact of climate change, automation and AI; and uncertainties about the future due to rising international tensions and the fragmentation of global supply

chains that had brought trillions of dollars of cheap consumer good into Europe. Many people in Europe now believe that the next generation may have a lower standard than this one.

This middle class has been disillusioned with the traditional parties of the left and of the right. They see little real difference between the two and are looking for what they consider real change. Initially the choice fell to parties that were new, but not too radical - parties such as Emmanuel Macron's En Marche! Party, or the Five Star Movement in Italy. However, as perceived problems deepened, the choice has shifted to the more radical right.

But now that the far-right parties have power and influence, what should one expect they will do particularly with regard to immigration which was a major aspect of their appeal. Will they really try to fulfill their election promises to stop or reduce

immigration. The scope for maneuver is limited.

Due to slower population growth, there are fewer people of working age in most of Europe. Moreover, they tend to avoid jobs that imply long hours and hard physical effort, such as unskilled and semi-skilled jobs in agriculture, industry, construction and logistics. There is also little interest in jobs that require unsocial hours, such as home help, cleaning, care for the elderly and nursing. Immigrants are essential to fill these gaps.

In addition, immigrants are increasingly propping up the welfare state in most western European countries. Notwithstanding the rhetoric about "scroungers" on the welfare state, immigrants are net contributors to state coffers - they generally pay more in taxes than they draw in benefits. And, as low reproductive rates continue and populations continue to age, Governments expenditures on pensions and health care will rise. The tax contribution of immigrants will be critical to fund this.

For these reasons it is simply not possible to stop immigration or to send immigrants back. Given the limited space for maneuver, anti-immigrant parties will most likely not make any serious attempt to get rid of immigrants or even to reduce immigration. They may soften or even backtrack on their positions on immigration. Maybe they will come up with qualifiers such as "we are only against illegal immigrants; only immigrants involved in criminal activities will be expelled; and actually, all honest, hardworking immigrants are welcome".

However, explicitly backtracking may be politically risky. It is more likely that these right wing parties will continue with their anti-immigrant rhetoric. This would serve several purposes. It will instill uncertainty and fear in the minds of immigrants; ensure that they do not organize and ask for higher wages or benefits; and that they stay in the shadows and not try to occupy political space.

These actions will very much appeal to unemployed workers and the apprehensive middle classes who voted in the right wing parties. More critically, it will also appeal to "big business" who are now caught between a tight domestic labor markets and rising costs.

If correct, does this mean that the swing to the far-right in Europe is here to stay? It would be such a pity as it would mean that one of the bastions of liberal values will transform into a classist society with a low wage sub-proletariat who have few rights and privileges.

Daud Khan a retired UN staff based in Rome. He has degrees in economics from the LSE and Oxford - where he was a Rhodes Scholar; and a degree in Environmental Management from the Imperial College of Science and Technology.

Leila Yasmine Khan is an independent writer and editor based in the Netherlands. She has Master's degrees in Philosophy and in Argumentation and Rhetoric from the University of Amsterdam, as well as a Bachelor's Degree in Philosophy from the University of Rome (Roma Tre). She assisted in the preparation on this article.

IPS UN Bureau



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# RADIO One

# RATIBA YA VIPINDI JUMATATU - JUMAPILI

MONDAY TIME PROGRAMME	TUESDAY TIME PROGRAMME	WEDNESDAY TIME PROGRAMME	THURSDAY TIME PROGRAMME	FRIDAY TIME PROGRAMME	SATURDAY TIME PROGRAMME	SUNDAY TIME PROGRAMME
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Tembelea mitandao ya kijamii ya Radio One



Radio One



# Riziki: We're working on five-year action plan to end GBV in Zanzibar

By Guardian Reporter

**T**HE Zanzibar Minister for Social Development, Elderly Gender and Children, Riziki Pembe Juma has outlined several achievements registered within the past 60 years of Zanzibar Revolution.

Riziki said in an interview over the weekend that the Zanzibar government initiated a special elderly home in Unguja in 1966 and later in 1982, other homes were built in Wel-ezo Pemba and Limbani.

"So far, all the elderly homes have 67 elders who are living smoothly. The ministry is implementing a strategy to produce special identity cards to enable the group access social services without hurdles," she said, noting that the services include health, receiving pension, public transport and entering in entertainment grounds and areas," she said.

She said that her ministry has so far produced 25,000 IDs distributing them to 11,814 elders and others are set to receive them.

She said the Social Security Policy and Elderly Police No 2 of 2020 are there to help strengthen service provision and welfare of the group as well as establishment of a special plan for paying pension to elders.

She also stated that the ministry has formed a committee and prepared various guidelines to fight violence and sexual harassment which included the National Action Plan to combat the actions for the year 2017 to 2022.

"We are now continuing to prepare a new Action Plan for the year 2023 to 2028, we are motivating



Riziki Pembe Juma

and providing education to the community through the media, collaborating with religious institutions, Shehia coordinators and Sheikhs to provide education against gender-based violence (GBV) in the society," she said.

The minister also said that her office has also initiated a special team of males to champion other men to join the war against all forms of violence and other initiatives meant to bring equality and respect in the society.

Riziki said that the ministry's budget adheres to the major programmes of social security, coordination and administration as well as community development and gender and that the ministry is implementing its plans and duties by adhering to

the national plans including the Vision 2050 and the CCM Election Manifesto of 2020.

"There is also the Zanzibar Development Plan of 2021-2026 and various promises issued by President Dr Hussein Ali Mwinyi," she added.

The ministry is also implementing various international treaties and agreements including The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC 1989), African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (1991), the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), The Beijing Declaration (1995) and The Paris Declaration (2021).

"The ministry also supervises the implementation of Africa's Agenda 2063 which also aims to ensure that all forms of violence and discrimination (social, economic, political) are to be eliminated to ensure that women and girls fully enjoy all their human rights," she said.

She further said that the ministry has greatly strengthened sectoral relations with other ministries in Zanzibar and the union government in order to ensure that there is smooth implementation of its responsibilities to achieve intended goals.

"We have also entered into collaborations with various institutions for the aim to work together including the Tengeru Institute of Community Development (TICD) in Arusha," she added.

The Minister however said that despite several recorded achievements, the ministry was still facing a number of challenges including increased violence cases.

Delay of investigation in violence cases is another challenge which she said was thwarting efforts to eradicate the problem in Isles.

She commended President Mwinyi for being in the forefront to the fight against violence and all forms of abuse calling on others to support the efforts.

## Iran pharmaceutical companies to access East African markets

TEHRAN

ELEVEN Iranian pharmaceutical manufacturing companies have taken important steps towards presenting their products in East African markets.

Thanks to the efforts of the Iran House of Innovation and Technology (iHIT) in Kenya and the support of the Vice-Presidency for Science, Technology and Knowledge-Based Economy, 13 different production lines in 11 pharmaceutical companies were inspected by the ministry of health of Kenya and Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) certificates were issued, IRIB reported.

The move plays an important role in strengthening the status of Iran's pharmaceutical industry in the region.

In January 2021, Iran opened its house of innovation and technology in Kenya and the first center in Africa.

The center serves as a base for the creation of innovative ideas, the commercialization of these ideas, and the export of Iranian knowledge-based products and services to the East African market.

### Africa welcomes Iranian medical equipment, medicine

On December 19, the deputy health minister of Libya met with the head of the Food and Drug Administration of Iran, discussing ways to cooperate on producing medical and pharmaceutical products.

During the meeting, which was held in Tehran, the officials also agreed on sharing experiences in research, education, blood transfusion, emergency services, and technology.

"Iran is a leading country in the field of health so we are ready to cooperate with Iran in various fields of health and medicine," Libyan official said.

He added Libya is interested in benefiting from Iran's experience and knowledge in the field of pharmaceutical production, medical equipment, and research.

Heidar Mohammadi Mohammadi,

for his part, referring to the production of 99 percent of medicines in Iran, said, "Iran has achieved self-sufficiency in the field of medicine, medical equipment, food products, cosmetics and powdered milks."

"Currently, six vaccines for coronavirus are being produced by Iranian scientists, and we are ready to jointly produce these vaccines, medicines, and other devices in the health field, as well as transferring technology to Libya," he added.

He went on to say, "The export of Iranian vaccines to neighboring countries shows Iran's capabilities in the field of medicine and pharmaceutical production."

Moreover, Mohammad Hossein Niknam, the deputy health minister for international cooperation, highlighting the importance of health in the world said, "Iran is ready to identify fields of cooperation and expand collaboration in the field of health with Libya."

The parties put forward some proposals to further cooperation in the field of health. These proposals are to be reviewed and implemented in the coming days in meetings, during the visits of the delegation of the Libyan Ministry of Health to Iran's health centers.

In July, Iranian knowledge-based companies concluded contracts for exporting medical equipment and medicine to Africa.

Amir-Hossein Mir-Abadi, an official with the Vice Presidency for Science and Technology, said the African market is an attractive opportunity for Iranian knowledge-based companies, IRNA reported.

Referring to the recent visit of President Ebrahim Raisi to Africa, Mir-Abadi said works are underway for exporting 50 types of medical equipment and 10 medicines to Africa.

He touched on the President's visit to the House of Innovation and Technology of Iran in Kenya, saying: "The capacities and capabilities of Iranian knowledge-based companies for ex-



**Daud Khan a retired UN staff based in Rome. He has degrees in economics from the LSE and Oxford – where he was a Rhodes Scholar; and a degree in Environmental Management from the Imperial College of Science and Technology.**

porting technological products were greatly appreciated."

He also pointed to the establishment of a medical and pharmaceutical equipment exhibition with the presence of more than 10 Iranian knowledge-based companies in Kenya.

He added that two Iranian companies succeeded in concluding contracts in this exhibition.

The process of registering more than 50 medical devices and two drugs for export to Kenya has been done, and the registration and process of exporting more than 10 other drugs to this country is in the implementation phase, he explained.

He listed agriculture, food, and livestock industries as among the fields that were highly regarded and needed by African countries.

"In his speech, the president of Kenya mentioned Iran's House of Innovation and Technology several times and the infrastructure created for technological cooperation between

Iranian and Kenyan companies."

During his visits to Kenya and Uganda, President Raisi emphasized the need to bolster technological cooperation, Mir-Abadi stressed.

In Uganda, an exhibition for knowledge-based products was opened. In practice, an infrastructure has been created for boosting the export of knowledge-based products and the display of Iranian capabilities, the official added.

"The products presented there were mostly in the field of the food industry, agricultural industry, medicine and medical devices, chemical products and catalysts, building materials and products related to the field of livestock and poultry, as well as medicines and herbal supplements."

In September 2022, Health Minister Bahram Einollahi said that Iran has one of the strongest health systems in the region and that this opportunity should be used optimally in the field of health diplomacy.

Based on innovative indicators of health technology development in 2021, Iran was ranked 60th among 132 countries, which shows an improvement of 60 steps compared to 2014, Younes Panahi, the deputy health minister for research and technology, has announced.

In June 2021, Ahmed al-Mandhari, the World Health Organization director for the Eastern Mediterranean Region, said the Islamic Republic of Iran is a role model for primary health care.

The national budget bill for the next Iranian calendar year 1402, which starts on March 21, has increased the health sector's budget by 29 percent compared to the current year's budget.

The bill has proposed a budget of 2,730 trillion rials (about \$6.8 billion) for the Ministry of Health.

The administration has also proposed 690 trillion rials (about \$1.7 billion) as subsidies to provide medicine by health industries.



# Dedicated teams root out invasive weeds chocking Table Mountain



By Don Pinnock

Ian Preston and Margie Bosman help clear the mountain of invader plants. (Photo: Supplied)

EVERY week, volunteer hackers are clearing the Cape Peninsula mountains of invasive alien plants so the rest of us can enjoy pristine fynbos and forest.

Join the hack today. Jeep Track leading to the Secret Garden. Bring popper, loppers, gloves, pliers and garden fork if you can."

Each week, calls like this appear on WhatsApp chats all over the Cape Peninsula.

Having nothing but pliers and unsure what a popper might be, I join a small team on the slopes of Table Mountain one Sunday afternoon. It turns out poppers are long yellow handles attached to jaws with which you lever out mostly Australian invader plants, of which there seem to be thousands.

Janet Small is using one to haul out Port Jackson, watched by her two patient dogs. She tosses each one over her shoulder and moves slowly uphill. "You have to get them early or they're hard to get out," she says.

Dawie Bosch, with his large friendly poodle, is addressing just such a problem. "See here," he says, his leathery smile lines testament to years in the sun tracking down aliens, "poor alien clearing. They cut and didn't poison properly, so the tree coppiced – sent outside shoots and kept deepening its roots. Now it's really hard to get out."

He digs around it with gloved hands to get a grip lower down, engages the popper and puts his weight on the yellow handle. Slowly the root yields and finally

rips loose. Dawie holds it up triumphantly.

"This," he pronounces, "gives me pleasure. We're clearing Table Mountain one alien at a time. But they keep coming back, of course. Eighteen months after a botched clearing exercise by a Table Mountain National Park contractor, the area ended up with so much alien it took us six months to clear 20m<sup>2</sup>."

I look at the slope covered by Port Jackson treelets and wonder at the dedication of hackers who do this sort of thing voluntarily week after week, year after year. I want to know who they are and what motivates them because, as guardians of the Peninsula's magical mountains, they're unsung heroes.

A good person to ask, it turns out, is Sandy van Hoogstraten. "It's an addiction," she says. "The Cape Floral Kingdom is ... priceless. Of the world's six floral kingdoms, it's the smallest, the most diverse and the only one contained in a single country."

"The problem is that only 1% of lowland fynbos is conserved. It's being swallowed by farms and highways. Fynbos is vanishing. But the greatest threat to it now – lowland or mountain – is alien vegetation."

"It's like climate change. For a long time, the problem grows slowly and nobody does enough about it. Then, by the time you realise it's a serious problem, it's too late. Hockey-stick graph. We're pretty much there."

According to Unesco, Cape fynbos represents less than 0.5% of the area

in Africa but hosts a fifth (20%) of the continent's flora. There are about 9,000 plant species, of which 1,736 are threatened and 3,087 are of conservation concern.

"You drive around the Western Cape and what do you see? Black wattle, pine, hakea, Port Jackson, wheat. Monoculture. It's like ... a green wasteland. But it's not dead. Those trees are having babies, spreading."

Hackers, she says, are into biodiversity conservation. They love fynbos. Invasive alien plants steal water, change soil structure, cause erosion and rip up the fabric that makes fynbos so special.

When they burn they burn hotter, posing a fire hazard and damaging the natural ecosystem. But for Van Hoogstraten there's an additional reason to hack: job creation.

"In 2010, I was complaining to my husband about the Port Jackson invasion on the slopes behind Camps Bay and he said: 'Why don't you do something about it?' So I paid for one guy to start hacking it, then another guy, and soon I had a team of four. A few years later I started a second team at Chapman's Peak."

"After a fire on Lion's Head in 2020, the Port Jackson came up like hair on a dog's back, so my team cleared it. Maya Naumann, who was hacking with a community group on Signal Hill, noticed their great work and contacted me. We teamed up and started the Sugarbird Project. Why Sugarbird? Because sugarbirds are endemic to fynbos. When the sugarbirds come back, you know the fynbos is thriving."

They raised money to pay teams to work full-time and the project grew. Two years in, there were seven teams with 39 men in all, working in areas such as Signal Hill, Lion's Head, Camps Bay, Devil's Peak, Rhodes Memorial, Newlands Forest and Hout Bay.

"We have a good relationship with SANParks, who also hire contractors to do hacking under the Working for Water initiative."

It is, she says, a labour of love. You see a section of Table Mountain that's almost destroyed, you bring in a team to clear, and in a season that area is pristine and beautiful.

"People will pay a million rand for a picture on their wall. But you give six men a job for a month and you end up with something far more beautiful than a picture on the wall and something everyone can enjoy."

The whole project is run on WhatsApp. Each morning a team takes a picture of themselves and the area they're about to clear, then a picture of the cleared area at the end of the day.

"The teams are contracted, so we're supporting entrepreneurship. We who organise it are volunteers. Donors love the model. Basically, it's a transfer of 100% of the funds from the rich to the poor, with biodiversity conservation as the outcome. No overheads and the money goes directly to the community. The teams are fully supported, with training, uniforms and good equipment. Next year, we're hoping to expand to 12 contracted teams with 60 men in all."

Table Mountain National Park con-

sists of about 25,000ha and SANParks has mapped it into about 1,000 units. Working for Water employs women to clear aliens in these units but their pay is low and, it has been alleged, their enthusiasm matches their pay packet.

Sugarbird pays well and, according to Van Hoogstraten, this builds enthusiasm, pride and interest in the work. SANParks reciprocates, providing herbicide, permits and planning to do the clearing work effectively.

Part of the Sugarbird system is to link paid hackers with local community hackers who are generally highly skilled and knowledgeable people who hack for the love of it.

There's even a Helihack team that uses a chopper to get to inaccessible places. They're dropped in, armed with chainsaws, and have removed thousands of pines from inaccessible places, risking their lives against invaders.

Hackers include a wide range of people who hack as a labour of love. They give oversight, do follow-ups and offer encouragement to the paid guys for work well done.

One of those volunteers is Liz Sparg, who started the Rhodes Memorial/Newlands Forest hacking group in 2020. She noticed the pine trees growing in the forest and got a permit from SANParks to start clearing the area above the old zoo. She met Maya Naumann when volunteering at a hack on Lion's Head and over time started working closely with the Sugarbird Project.

Another passionate volunteer is Anton Weers, who works in cloud computing and has been a hacker on and off for more than 20 years. When people want plants identified, he's the man.

"They're mostly Australian," he says. "The climates are similar, but over there natural enemies inhibit their growth and reproduction. Here nothing stops them."

"Pines and gums were imported and grown in plantations for wood and paper production. Pine seeds are then blown high into the mountains, allowing them to spread rapidly. Gums were often used as firebreaks in addition to forestry."

Port Jackson and rooikrans were planted on the Cape Flats to stabilise the sand. Bottlebrush – also Australian – are used as ornamental plants but often escape captivity and find the local conditions favourable.

Seeds like Port Jackson lie dormant when under other cover, but when there's a fire that cover goes and the heat and smoke stimulate germination. The germination cues that stimulate fynbos seeds to germinate also work on the Australian acacias.

"I guess it's a hobby," says Weers reflectively, "but also it's so stimulating personally when you come back to an area and it's clear of aliens and pristine again."

Van Hoogstraten agrees. "After the [University of Cape Town] fire, Port Jackson took over and it was a horror show. But the Rhodes Memorial team cleared it and now there are thousands of silver trees interspersed with pink watsonias. I cannot tell you what that feels like – it's transformation on another level! You just can't put a price on saving the Cape Floral Kingdom."

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 UMJUJUYO 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



# BUSINESS

## Alliance One comes up with clothes and food for victims of Hanang District mudflow

By Guardian Correspondent, Hanang

MOROGORO-based Alliance One Tobacco Tanzania Limited (AOTTL) has donated various clothes and food items worth 25m/- to the mudflow victims in Hanang District, Manyara Region.

The donation included blankets, baby formulas flour bags, assortments of new t-shirts and jeans of different sizes for the young and adult victims, most of whom have lost everything but their lives.

Hanang District Council executive director Francis Namaumbo, received the donation at the hand over event held at Katesh Secondary school, where some of the victims are still sheltered.

Namaumbo commended the Morogoro based tobacco buying company's generosity, and urged other companies to emulate Alliance One in alleviating social needs of the victims in collaboration with the sixth phase government led by President Samia Suluhu Hassan.

"This donation to our people, who were hard hit by the disaster and still live in horrors as they look back at the landslide, which led to the flooding pandemonium of mud, logs, stones and many other killer objects comes at the very right time for us and will greatly help these needy families living in limbo here," he noted.

Citing an example, he said the donated baby formulas will greatly help restore and boost babies' health in the aftermath of the disaster and thereby enable them become better men and women later in life.

"As for t-shirts and jeans trousers and skirts, these will greatly help these families with clothing needs on their way to full economic and social recovery because most them lost all of their possessions including foods, shelter and clothes," he said.

He assured Alliance One and other prospective donors, that his office will make sure all the handouts will be distributed responsibly to the right people and not otherwise.

Namaumbo welcomed other companies and individuals

alike to help Hanang victims with other donations such as building equipment, so that the on-going government efforts to help restore their livelihoods, especially assisting them with better accommodation becomes a reality.

Advocate John Magoti, the company's Spokesperson said his company received with sorrows the news about Hanang' disaster and sends so much condolences to President Samia for the loss of so many innocent lives in the district.

"The management of Alliance One via its corporate social responsibility programme, deliberated on the magnitude of the disaster and arrived at the decision to give out the said donation to the victims" he noted.

One of the survivors currently putting up at Katesh secondary school, Zepetu Murda said she was luckily pulled out of the mud slides by good Samaritans, otherwise she would have succumbed to death by submerging in the filthy waters.

"I was completely naked when they pulled me out of the muddy waters, thereafter they clothed me with a khangas and this dress, which are my only possessions as of today," she said, adding that she had high hopes that the donations from the government and the community in general would greatly help them get back to normal life.

Another survivor who also lives at Katesh school camp, Stephano Robert said most residents who died were possibly caught unaware and in beds when the disaster hit their area sometime at around 6:15am.

"I was caught between the wall and the hard place, when I saw a lot of mud entering profusely into our house, I was alone in my room, what I did was to escape through a freaky window and thereafter I found good Samaritans somewhere outside waiting to rescue and help me," he said adding that the only clothes he had was his shorts.

Alliance One sets aside 400m/- every year for the noble course of giving back to the community around their areas of operations. They donate mainly in three areas namely water, health and education.

## NBC pledges support to efforts to raise performance in mathematics



NBC Bank's University of Dar es Salaam Branch manager Anne Mwaisaka (L) applauds mathematics teachers in secondary schools located in the Ubungo constituency in Dar es Salaam who helped their students get Grade "A" results in the National Form Four Mathematics Examination. Among them is Michael Msembwe (R) from Kimara Secondary School, who led the way by achieving a pass rate of 20 students with Grade "A" in the subject.

By Guardian Reporter

THE National Bank of Commerce (NBC) continues to support the government's efforts to improve the education sector in the country, by funding the Mathematics Teaching and Learning Motivation Programme in Ubungo District, Dar es Salaam known as 'KiuHsabati'.

Initiated by Ubungo MP, who is also the Minister of State in the President's Office (Investment), Prof. Kitila Mkumbo, the programme aimed at improving performance in mathematics through various incentives, including awards and prizes, especially cash rewards for teachers who excel in teaching the subject.

Through the programme students who perform well in the subject benefit from sponsorship for their academic needs when they pass to the "A" level education in public schools.

The award ceremony for the teachers was held over the weekend in the constituency, led by the ruling CCM deputy secretary-general, various education stakeholders, NMB Bank

officials led by the University of Dar es Salaam (UDSM), bank's branch manager, Anne Mwaisaka.

Commenting on the initiative, Macha congratulated the MP for devising the program while thanking and requesting NBC Bank to consider expanding the program to reach various areas in the country in order to benefit more teachers and students, a move he said would help boost the success rate in the subject.

"Mathematics is the foundation of all subjects in our education system. Any efforts made by various stakeholders to improve performance in this subject are supported by the party and the government as a whole. This is why we congratulate the Ubungo MP for this great innovation and also thank NBC Bank for its sponsorship in this programme. We strongly urge NBC Bank to consider expanding this program further," said Macha.

Apart from thanking the bank, Prof. Mkumbo stated that it involves teachers and students who achieve grade "A" in mathematics and students who pass the Mathematics subject

with grade "A" and "B".

"Every Mathematics teacher will receive 100,000/- for each student who achieves an A grade in Mathematics in the National Form Four Examination. The student who obtains an "A" grade in the Exams will be provided with all necessary school materials, including uniforms, notebooks, and textbooks, if they enrol in a government school for A level education," he explained.

According to him, since the start of this program in 2020, assessments show that there has been an increase in the number of students achieving "A" and "B" grades in the constituency, but not in reducing the number of students failing mathematics.

"This indicates that the incentive program for teachers has been effective in motivating students to study Mathematics more. However, the challenge is still significant considering that the pass rate for the subject in the Ubungo constituency is only 11 per cent, while the national average for the subject is 19 to 20 per cent," he added.

Mwaisaka stated that the bank's support for the pro-

gramme is a continuation of its efforts to support government initiatives and other stakeholders aimed at improving the education sector in the country.

"In essence, our funding for this programme aims to stimulate motivation for teachers and students who have performed well in mathematics in the Form Four National examination. As a financial institution, we are directly involved in education, including Mathematics, since our activities are mainly driven by numbers. So we also have a responsibility to ensure its prosperity," she stated.

Expressing gratitude on behalf of the teachers and students who benefited from the programme, Michael Msembwe from Kimara Secondary School, who led the way by achieving a pass rate of 20 students with Grade A in Mathematics in the Ubungo constituency, said that the introduction of the program has increased the drive and motivation for teachers and students in that region, which he believes promises a better future in improving the pass rate for mathematics in the coming years.

## Treasury ordered to draw rules for CBK emergency borrowing

NAIROBI

THE Treasury and Central Bank of Kenya (CBK) have until May 2024 to draw regulations on the use of an overdraft facility amid concerns that the State is misusing the kitty held at CBK.

The National Assembly's Public Debt and Privatisation Committee gave the two institutions six months to develop the rules after the Controller of Budget (CoB) said there is no policy to guide how and when the Treasury should tap the emergency kitty.

The Treasury has in recent months significantly increased reliance on the kitty, breaching the Sh80 billion mark for the first time in November amid a biting cash crunch.

"The National Treasury and CBK should submit to the National Assembly, within six months, regulations to guide the sustainable use of the government overdraft facility," the committee says in a report before the House.

CoB Margaret Nyakang'o in her latest review of the kitty flagged the Treasury on the use of the funds, saying that lack of regulations has exposed the facility to abuse and unnecessarily exposed taxpayers to high interest rates.

"However, the facility continues

to be used as a long-term facility, resulting in high-interest rates. This indicates a lack of policy direction in the use of a facility that may be used to smoothen tax revenue fluctuations and minimise liquidity constraints," Dr Nyakang'o said.

The Treasury had by November 10 used 83 percent of the Sh97 billion limit available in the current financial year ending June 2024.

The facility helps the Treasury to finance short-term needs when it faces a cash crunch, including urgent payment requirements such as salaries and other priority expenditures like debt repayments.

Section 46(3) of the CBK Act sets the limit of the overdraft facility from the bank at five percent of the gross recurrent revenue as reported in the latest audited financial statements.

The increased use of the overdraft facility highlights the cash-flow woes facing the Treasury amid missed targets on the local borrowing market and missed revenue collections by the Kenya Revenue Authority (KRA).

Emergency loans the Treasury has tapped directly borrowing from the Central Bank of Kenya (CBK) have hit a historical record Sh91.13 billion, revealing the



Cabinet Secretary, National Treasury & Economic Planning Njuguna Ndung'u

extent of the exchequer's cash crunch.

The overdraft facility largely helps the Treasury to finance short-term needs when it faces a cash shortage, including urgent payment requirements such as salaries and other priority recurrent expenditures like debt repayments.

The National Treasury has been running up its overdraft balance at the reserve bank in recent months with the facility representing a last-resort avenue to

fund the budget deficit.

According to data from CBK, the government's overdraft has grown from a lower Sh61.12 billion at the end of July and rose at the fastest pace in November when it moved from Sh73.93 billion at the end of October to Sh88.33 billion on December 1.

"The overdraft facility is a temporary source of cash to fund the deficit in payments of domestic instruments such as matured Treasury bills," notes the Controller of Budget.

The facility is restricted to a maximum of five percent of the most recent audited revenues and is expected to be paid off at the end of the financial year, according to the Public Finance Management Act.

The running balance of the overdraft at present is higher than the last limit set at Sh80 billion, which covered the 2022/23 financial year.

According to economists, the exchequer's reliance on the CBK overdraft in recent weeks is an image of a cash-strapped government that continues to run in a tight fiscal space, defined by expanded expenditures amidst slacking revenue sources, including subdued taxes and constrained external financing.

"The overdraft facility is a plug to short-term cash-flow difficulties. Over the last few months, the balance on this facility has been running very high informing of the tight fiscal space we are running. There is less and less money for running basic government services where most of everything recurrent outside paying salaries may be funded out of the overdraft," noted International Budget Partnership's Country Manager for Kenya, Dr Abraham Rugo.

Interest on the overdraft facility is usually charged at the rate equivalent to the Central Bank Rate which currently runs at 12.5 percent.

Spending on repayments to the overdraft facility usually runs in the billions of shillings every year with data from the Controller of Budget placing charges on the facility in the first three months of the current 2023/24 fiscal year to September at Sh980.7 million.

Deficit financing from the CBK overdraft has come under sharp scrutiny in the past with critics likening the borrowings to the monetisation of the funding gap which is usually equated to the printing of cash by the government out of thin air.

Ironically, current Treasury Cabinet Secretary, Prof Njuguna Ndung'u, then the CBK governor, said borrowing from the reserve bank was inflationary, equating the practice to printing money which has dire macroeconomic effects, including generating inflationary pressures.

CBK overdrafts are expected to remain the norm as the government strives to deliver services on emaciated funds, which has already seen it delaying the payment of salaries to civil servants throughout 2023.



# Brazil's economy improves during President Lula's first year in office

BRASILIA

**B**RAZILIAN President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva likes to boast he had a good first year after returning to the job.

"The economy is improving, Congress passed a long-overdue tax reform bill, rioters, who wanted to oust him are now in jail, and his predecessor and foe Jair Bolsonaro is barred from running for office until 2030.

Still, the 78-year-old leader has struggled to boost his support among citizens and lawmakers. Some major setbacks, including a series of votes by Congress to override his vetoes, signaled that Lula's future could be less productive in a Brazil almost evenly split between his supporters and Bolsonaro's.

"Brazil's political polarization is such that it crystallized the opinions of Lula and Bolsonaro voters beyond the economy," said political consultant Thomas Traumann, the author of a recent best-selling book on Brazil's political divisions.

"These groups are separated by very different world views, the values that form the identity of each group are more important than food prices or interest rates."

Lula took office on January 1, 2023, after a narrow victory over Bolsonaro in October 2022. At the beginning of his four-year term, only one fourth of Brazil's Congress sided with him. Business and opposition leaders feared Lula had gone too far to the left.

A riot led by Bolsonaro supporters destroyed government buildings in the capital of Brasilia on Jan. 8 and more turmoil looked certain. Former Finance Minister Paulo Guedes, among other conservatives, forecast Lula's policies would make Brazil's



Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva

economy soon turn as sour as those in crisis-ridden Argentina and Venezuela.

"Six months to become Argentina. One year and a half to become Venezuela," Guedes said in an interview.

Brazil's economy is set to grow 3 percent this year instead of the 0.6 percent expected by market economists. Inflation looks controlled at about 4.7 percent on a yearly basis, slightly above projections but far from the double digits of recent years. The unemployment rate fell to 7.5 percent in November, one percentage point below the day Bolsonaro left office.

The Sao Paulo stock exchange hit record levels in December, rising above 134,000 points for the first time in its history. Brazil's real currency is also rising against the U.S. dollar. All that brought back the optimistic, keen-to-travel-abroad Lula who had been missing during almost a decade of personal gloom.

"We needed to get our house fixed (in 2023), put things into place," Lula said in a meeting at the presidential palace on Dec. 12. "And now I say get ready. Next year, the Brazilian economy will not let anyone down."

Yet some polls have shown unchanged support for the presi-

dent, at between 38 percent and 40% since January 2023. The numbers didn't pick up even after the announcement of a higher minimum wage in 2024, the buildup of Bolsonaro's legal woes or Brazil's return as a player in foreign affairs under Lula.

About a third of Brazilians consider Lula's presidency about average and another third deeply dislike the way he governs Latin America's powerhouse economy, which rose once again to the top 10 biggest in the world after years of sinking.

Lula's supporters are at home, but Bolsonaro's are still taking to the streets.

Though not as numerous as in the recent past, the few thousand protesters asking Congress to impeach Lula on corruption allegations have shown the resilience of the far-right leader's political base.

Bolsonaro was barred in June 2023 from running for office again until 2030 after Brazil's electoral court ruled that he abused his power and cast unfounded doubts on the country's electronic voting system.

Engineer Eduardo Carlos Santos, 73, believes Brazil's economy recovered due to the work of Bolsonaro. A devout evangelical, as with many in the former president's base, he says there is a cultural war against conservatives and that leftists should have no place in government.

"Like it or not, Bolsonaro left a better economy and Lula is just reaping the fruits of that," said Santos, who blames the economic difficulties during the previous presidency on the COVID-19 pandemic and health restrictions.

"Lula is a former inmate, sentenced for corruption. He had his time in office, we needed to move the country to another direction. I don't see a bright year coming ahead."

Lula was imprisoned for alleged corruption in 2018, when he led polls to return to the presidency. He was released after the country's Supreme Court ruled the following year that prison sentences could only take place after every appeal has been exhausted – which was not the case with Lula. Later, the same court ruled that the judge in Lula's case, now a pro-Bolsonaro senator, was biased against him.

Lula's difficulties on the streets also appeared in Congress, which voted several times to override his vetoes, especially on environmental legislation. The most recent was in December, when law-

makers reinstated legislation to undo protections of Indigenous people's land rights. The decision set up a new battle between lawmakers and the country's top court on the matter.

Brazil's Congress also decided to override Lula's veto of a multi-billion-dollar bill that exempts multiple sectors of the economy from paying some taxes. The bill was introduced in 2011 and would lose validity at the end of 2023. It will remain in place until 2027, one year after the president's term ends.

Other measures depleted the federal treasury of budget money by enabling lawmakers to approve earmarked resources for themselves, without interference from the executive branch.

Lula's allies have blamed some defeats on Speaker Arthur Lira, once a staunch Bolsonaro supporter who has operated more quietly. Lira, who will remain in his position for another year, can't run for reelection under current congressional rules.

Supporters of the president are also upset with his decision not to appoint another woman to replace Chief Justice Rosa Maria Weber on the Supreme Court. They also complain about the leftist leader's slow approach in providing more resources for welfare programs and inclusion.

That's the case of Daniela Fernandes, 34, who works in a government agency in Sao Paulo.

"I believe we can improve our economy, but I am also hoping that the revenue gets spent with the poor, not in making the rich richer with high interest rates and construction work that only suits some lawmakers," he said. "I am here because I want our president to tame the military that sided with Bolsonaro all these years, to challenge the far-right on the streets too."

Traumann, the political consultant, said Lula's future will depend on how he moves between antagonistic groups within Brazilian society.

"Dealing with this divided country is surely the biggest challenge for the Lula administration next year," he said.

## Stock market today: Asian markets are mixed on the first trading day of 2024



SEOUL

ASIAN markets were mostly lower Tuesday following the release of data showing more signs of weakness in the Chinese manufacturing and property sectors.

U.S. futures were higher and oil prices gained more than \$1 a barrel. Japan's markets were closed for a holiday.

The Hang Seng index in Hong Kong sank 1.5 percent to 16,788.55 and the Shanghai Composite index dropped 0.4% to 2,962.28.

Investors were selling property developers like debt-laden China Evergrande, which fell 6 percent, and LongFor Group Holding, which lost 6.9 percent. Sino-Ocean Holding declined 4.6 percent.

The December survey of the official purchasing managers

index, or PMI, in China fell to 49 for the third consecutive month., signaling weak demand and underscoring the challenging economic conditions in the world's second-largest economy.

That contrasted private-sector survey, by financial publication Caixin, which registered a slight improvement in the manufacturing PMI to 50.8, driven by increased output and new orders. However, it showed that business confidence for 2024 remained subdued.

The latest data also showed that the value of new home sales by China's top 100 developers fell nearly 35 percent from a year earlier in December despite moves by regulators to lift limits on such transactions.

South Korea's Kospi gained

0.6 percent to 2,669.81 and the S&P/ASX 200 in Australia rose 0.5 percent to 7,627.80.

The S&P 500 slipped 0.3 percent. The benchmark index still posted a rare ninth consecutive week of gains and is just 0.6 percent shy of an all-time high set in January of 2022.

The Dow Jones Industrial Average fell 0.1 percent and the Nasdaq slipped 0.6 percent.

For most of last year, gains in the broader market were driven largely by seven stocks -- Apple, Microsoft, Alphabet, Amazon, Nvidia, Meta Platforms and Tesla. Dubbed the Magnificent 7, they accounted for about two-thirds of the gains in the S&P 500 in 2023, according to S&P Dow Jones Indices.

Nvidia led the group with a gain of about 239 percent, driven by the mania surround-

ing artificial intelligence.

Investors are now betting the Federal Reserve can achieve a "soft landing," where the economy slows just enough to snuff out high inflation, but not so much that it falls into a recession.

The Fed is expected to begin cutting rates as early as March and has signaled plans for three quarter-point cuts to its benchmark interest rate this year. That rate is currently sitting between 5.25 percent and 5.50 percent, its highest level in two decades.

Lower rates could add more fuel to the broader market's momentum in 2024. Wall Street is forecasting stronger earnings growth for companies next year after a largely lackluster 2023, when companies wrestled with higher input and labor costs and a shift in consumer spending.

The yield on the 10-year Treasury, which hit 5 percent in October, was unchanged from Friday's level of 3.88 percent.

The yield on the two-year Treasury, which more closely tracks expectations for the Fed, fell to 4.25 percent from 4.28 percent from late Thursday. It also surpassed 5 percent in October.

In other trading, U.S. benchmark crude oil gained \$1.34 to \$72.99 per barrel in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. Brent crude, the international standard, added \$1.54 to \$78.58 per barrel.

The U.S. dollar rose to 141.42 Japanese yen from 140.88 yen. The euro fell to \$1.1033 from \$1.1047.

## BRICS expansion: Five more nations join ranks



JOHANNESBURG

SAUDIA Arabia, Egypt, the United Arab Emirates, Iran and Ethiopia joined the ranks of the BRICS group on Monday, January 1.

The five countries were to join the group in August 2023 at the 15th BRICS summit in Johannesburg, South Africa. Argentina was also invited but backed out at the end of December.

The BRICS group of emerging countries was formed in 2006 by Brazil, Russia, India and China, with South Africa joining in 2010.

It has since become an important platform for cooperation among emerging markets and developing countries. The doubling of its members on Monday is aimed at increasing the group's clout on the global stage.

The newly expanded BRICS has a combined population of about 3.5 billion people, with a combined economy worth over \$28.5tn or about 28% of the global economy.

The group's growth could mark a shift in the geopolitical landscape, although analysts remain uncertain as to whether the expansion will be a help or a hindrance to BRICS members.

Some experts say that differences within the group could weaken decision-making and BRICS' power overall.

However, BRICS countries are hoping that the expansion will lead to greater representation for emerging economies and a chance to move away from reliance on the US dollar.

In August last year, Brazil's president called for BRICS nations to adopt a common currency for trade and investment between each other.

**Russia's presidency**

Russia took over the BRICS presidency on Monday, following on from South Africa's chairmanship in 2023.

Under the motto "Strengthening Multilateralism for Equitable Global Development and Security", Russia will hold the chair for one year and will host the BRICS annual summit in Kazan in October.

Russian president Vladimir Putin has said he plans to increase BRICS' role in the international financial system and will "spare no effort to ensure that [...] we facilitate the harmonious integration of new participants" in activities.







## WORLD

## Africa seeks to make climate needs known on global stage

NAIROBI

IN the year following Africa's hosting of the 27th United Nations climate summit, more commonly referred to as COP27, held in Egypt in 2022, the continent has endured a run of lethal and unprecedented extreme weather events.

In September, Libya hit global headlines when Storm Daniel made landfall, causing severe weather conditions, including strong winds and sudden heavy rainfall that affected several areas in the country. Massive floodings killed more than 4,300 people, and more than 8,500 are still missing, according to the United Nations Children's Fund.

Even though Libya's floods were among the few African climate extremes that made global headlines last year, many other deadly and life-threatening events in Africa failed to gain international news coverage.

The Horn of Africa has seen almost three years of some of the worst drought conditions in history, said the Famine Early Warning Systems Network, a global provider of early warning and analysis on acute food insecurity. Ethiopia and Somalia have experienced five failed rainy seasons since late 2020, which have displaced 1.4 million Somalis and killed 3.8 million livestock.

This period of extreme drought was followed by the El Niño-induced heavy rains and flash flooding that killed hundreds in Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia last year, the United Nations said. The deluge swamped more than 1,000 hectares of cropland in Ethiopia and Somalia, challenging the agricultural economies in the two countries where more than 65 percent of the population relies on farming and much of the region's farmland relies on rainfall for irrigation.

Kilon Nyambuga, a research and planning expert involved in the resettlement of slum dwellers in Kenya, said Africa is responsible for only a fraction of global emissions but is suffering disproportionately from climate change.

"The fact that Africa is continuously facing

the extreme effects of climate change despite the continent's low emissions is harming food security, ecosystems and economies while fueling displacement, migration and worsening the threat of conflict over dwindling resources," he said.

Emissions of carbon dioxide per person in Africa in 2021 were 1.04 metric tons, standing in stark contrast to the global average, which is more than four times as high, said a report published by the World Meteorological Organization in September.

The report, called "State of the Climate in Africa 2022", said the rate of temperature increase across Africa has accelerated in recent decades, with weather and climate-related hazards becoming more severe. Yet, financing for climate adaptation is a drop in the ocean of what is needed.

Nyambuga said the global approach, which seems fixated on mitigation, neglects Africa's pressing need for adaptation financing and loss and damage compensation. The decision by African countries to host the inaugural Africa Climate Summit in Kenya's capital Nairobi in September 2023, was timely and "a plus for the African Union", he said.

Alex Mugambi, chair of the Environmental Institute of Kenya, said the African Climate Summit was a success, highlighting the adoption of the Nairobi Declaration, a comprehensive document that outlines Africa's vision, priorities, and demands for climate action and finance.

"The declaration call was a win for Africa for calling for a new global financial deal with fit-for-purpose financing instruments and products to serve Africa's specific growth goals," Mugambi said.

## Disproportionate financing

"The declaration also shed light on the disproportionate global climate change financing system by urging developed countries to honor their commitment to provide \$100 billion per year in climate finance by 2020 and increase their ambition and support for adaptation, mitigation, technology transfer



Children of the Turkana tribe go down a well to fetch water in northern Kenya on Feb 17, 2023 as climate change in East Africa causes the worst drought in its history. REUTERS

and capacity building in Africa."

Nyambuga said the Africa Climate Summit also drew attention to local African solutions in combating climate change, adding that previous focus on local solutions generated by native communities had been inadequate.

As global delegates gathered in the United Arab Emirates in November for the 28th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, African experts have said the forum produced a range of outcomes that may help to scale up efforts to invest in clean energy, mitigate climate change damage and accelerate the development of carbon markets.

A key priority for the African continent heading into COP28 was to bring the loss and damage fund into operation, said Hardi Yakubu, movement coordinator of Africans Rising For Unity, Justice, Peace & Dignity, a pan-African civil society movement. This fund was agreed in principle at the previous summit as a vehicle to help low-income countries that are most exposed to climate change impacts, and was featured prominently in the Nairobi Declaration.

The financial commitments announced by several countries at COP28, with pledges totaling more than \$700 million, reflect a glimmer of hope for developing countries, said Yakubu, a climate activist from Ghana.

"The first round of pledges will clearly be insufficient to support countries in Africa and around the world on the front line of the climate crisis. However, the success of this fund will depend on the speed and scale at which funds start flowing to people in need," he said.

Another area that received much attention at COP28 was Africa's contribution to the voluntary carbon market, he said. This market provides a route for Africa to financially benefit from its natural resources and assets which remove carbon from the atmosphere and provide other environmental services to the planet.

"COP28 achieved good progress toward realizing the win-win opportunities from

the carbon markets. Africa is poised to benefit from a maturation of the carbon market over the next 18 months," Yakubu said.

Mugambi said all is not lost for Africa as the continent steps up efforts to make its climate needs known.

In addition to demanding climate compensation, he said African policymakers can create an enabling environment for green ventures that invest in research, innovation and education, as well as for promoting public-private partnerships and fostering collaboration across governments, businesses and local communities.

"Africa should prioritize transitioning to sustainable agriculture, which currently contributes about 17 percent to sub-Saharan Africa's GDP. Embracing organic farming, precision agriculture and agroforestry are some of the approaches that can enhance productivity while minimizing negative impacts on ecosystems," he said.

"Africa can also become a trailblazer in renewable energy solutions, with abundant solar, wind, hydro, biomass and geothermal resources that may contribute to an increase in the continent's GDP. Ocean renewable energy is another vast untapped resource for Africa."

## Addressing challenges

Nonetheless, other experts have argued that despite Africa being one of the major victims of global warming, its countries must not forgo addressing their specific challenges in poverty alleviation and development. In other continents, they said, such development has often been fueled by the utilization of oil and gas resources.

Exploiting Africa's newly discovered fossil fuels will lead to new jobs and business opportunities, Nyambuga said. In addition, successful exploration on the continent will attract further investment, leading to a rise in employment across many industries and accelerated economic growth for oil-rich African countries.

Agencies

## Japan quake toll hits 48 as rescuers rush to reach survivors

TOKYO/WAJIMA/BEIJING -

At least 48 people were killed after a powerful earthquake hit Japan on New Year's Day, with rescue teams struggling on Tuesday to reach isolated areas where buildings had been toppled, roads wrecked and power cut to tens of thousands of homes.

The quake with a preliminary magnitude of 7.6 struck on Monday afternoon, prompting residents in some coastal areas to flee to higher ground as tsunami waves hit Japan's west coast, sweeping some cars and houses into the sea.

A 3,000-strong rescue crew of army personnel, firefighters and police officers from across the country have been sent to the quake site on the Noto peninsula in Ishikawa prefecture.

"The search and rescue of those impacted by the quake is a battle against time," Prime Min-

ister Fumio Kishida said during an emergency meeting on Tuesday, donning a blue outfit commonly worn by officials during disaster relief operations.

Kishida said rescuers were finding it very difficult to access the northern tip of the Noto peninsula where helicopter surveys had discovered many fires and widespread damage to buildings and infrastructure. There are around 120 cases of people awaiting rescue, his government spokesperson later said.

Many rail services and flights into the area have been suspended. Noto's airport closed due to damage to its runway, terminal and access roads, with 500 people stranded inside vehicles in its parking lot, public broadcaster NHK reported.

More than 90 tremors have been detected since the quake first hit on Monday, according to the Japan Meteorological Agency. The agency has warned more



A man stands in front of a destroyed candle store following an earthquake in Nanao, Ishikawa prefecture, yesterday. AP

strong shocks could hit in coming days.

In Suzu, a coastal town of just over 5,000 households near the quake's epicenter, there may have been up to 1,000 houses destroyed, according to its mayor Masuhiro Izumiya.

"The situation is catastroph-

ic," he said. Authorities have confirmed 48 deaths so far, all in Ishikawa prefecture, NHK reported. Many of those are in Wajima, another hard-hit city on the remote northern tip of the Noto peninsula.

Scores more have been injured and authorities were bat-

ting blazes in several cities on Tuesday and hauling people from collapsed buildings.

"I've never experienced a quake that powerful," said Wajima resident Shoichi Kobayashi, 71, who was at home having a celebratory New Year's dinner with his wife and son when the quake struck.

"Even the aftershocks made it difficult to stand up straight," he said, adding his family slept in their car for fear of returning to the shaken home.

More than 140 tremors have been detected since the quake first hit on Monday, according to the Japan Meteorological Agency, which warned more strong shocks could hit in the coming days.

In Toyama city, around 100 km from the worst-hit area, some shelves in convenience stores were empty as the disaster disrupted the delivery of goods across the region.

## Ex-Hamas operatives confirm terror group uses Gaza civilians as human shields - IDF

TEL AVIV

IN a video released by the Israel Defence Forces (IDF), former Hamas operatives confirmed that Hamas was using civilians as human shields and in several other ways as cover for their operations, as reported by The Times of Israel.

The IDF released a video on Monday showing new interrogation of Palestinian terror suspects who were captured by troops in the Gaza Strip.

Israel has repeatedly said that the Hamas terror group was using civilians as human shields, including by locating operations bases under hospitals, launching rockets from schools and shelters, building tunnel shafts under children's bedrooms, storing weapons in and around schools and mosques, and embedding itself within civilians amid the ongoing war.

Recently, these captured Hamas terrorists have confirmed some of the human shield claims, explaining, for example, that Hamas knows Israel will not target hospitals, medical centres and facilities.

One of the videos was of Zahdy Ali Zahdy Shahin, identified by the military as a former Hamas operative, who told interrogators of the Military Intelligence Directorate's Unit 504 that he felt "we were being used as human shields."

Shahin further described an incident, stating that he was heading from northern Gaza to the Strip's south in the humanitarian corridor set up by Israel when apparent Hamas gunmen pulled him and other civilians aside and brought them to al-Shifa Hospital in Gaza City, The Times of Israel reported.

He further explained that he and other civilians were on the ground floor of the hospital, and once IDF forces reached the medical centre, Hamas operatives came out from tunnels and hid among the sheltering civilians.

He further argued with one of the Hamas operatives and said, "I told him 'Your place isn't up here with the civilians, but below. Why did you come up?'"

"He started to threaten me, saying that when the war ends, he would settle the score," he told the interrogator.

Another detainee, Muhammad Darwish Amara, whom the IDF described as a member of the Palestinian Islamic Jihad, said that Hamas fighters took over his home.

Amara said that he was sheltering in a school in northern Gaza and told his son to check their home every couple of days to ensure nobody was breaking in to steal their belongings, as reported by The Times of Israel.

"He entered the apartment, opened the door, and there was a mess. He looks and sees young men sleeping in my apartment," Amara told the Unit 504 interrogator, claiming that they were Hamas fighters.

Additionally, Amara said that he did not approve of Hamas using his home to fight against the IDF.

"We left the apartment and they took control of it. On the upper floor where my son lives... a sniper was sitting by the window, and in the other room, there were several (operatives). He said there were more than 20 people (in the apartment), their weapons thrown on the floor," he added.

Moreover, Amara told the interrogator that a Hamas operative tried to place an explosive device a few metres away from the home of one of his acquaintances.

He said the homeowner saw the operative placing the bomb "and went down and told him, 'How are you placing an explosive by the door?'"

Amara claimed the Hamas operative responded to the man by saying, "If this doesn't suit you, leave; this is none of your business."

"He told the (Hamas operative) 'How is this not my business, these are my children, this is not OK.' And the (Hamas operative) responded, saying, 'I'll place the explosive even if it doesn't suit you; I'll even place it between you and your wife.'" Amara claimed, adding that the Hamas operative then shot the homeowner in the leg.

Meanwhile, Israel emphasised that its ground offensive against Hamas in Gaza is aimed at destroying its infrastructure amid vows to eliminate the entire terror group, which rules the Strip.

It added that they are targeting all areas where Hamas operates while seeking to minimise civilian casualties, according to The Times of Israel.

The use of human shields is part of Hamas's "core strategy," a senior Israeli military official said.

Reportedly, the Hamas-run Gaza health ministry claimed that over 20,000 people have been killed in the Strip during the war, an unverified figure that also does not differentiate between combatants and civilians and does not take into account those killed as a consequence of terror groups' own rocket misfires.

Recently, the Israeli forces identified several launches from Lebanon toward the area of Adamit in northern Israel on Monday.

Reportedly, five IDF soldiers were lightly injured as a result. IDF soldiers and aircraft struck terrorist infrastructure, military sites in which Hezbollah terrorists were operating and launch posts in the last few hours, as well as a terrorist cell operating in the area of Houla.

ANI

## Russia's BRICS chairmanship begins; aims to strengthen multilateralism for equitable global development and security

MOSCOW

AS Russia has begun the 2024 BRICS chairmanship, Russian President Vladimir Putin has emphasised that, under the motto "Strengthening Multilateralism for Equitable Global Development and Security," they will act precisely in this manner and focus on positive and constructive cooperation with all countries concerned.

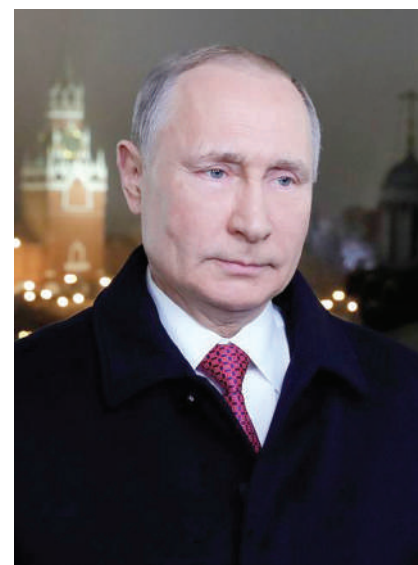
"On January 1, Russia was passed the baton of the BRICS chairmanship, an association that, according to the decision adopted by the 15th BRICS Summit in August 2022, now includes 10 countries," Russian President Putin (pictured) said in his remarks on Monday.

The ten countries include Egypt, Ethi-

opia, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates, which is a strong indication of the growing authority of the association and its role in international affairs.

BRICS is attracting an ever-increasing number of supporters and like-minded countries that share its underlying principles, namely, sovereign equality, respect for the chosen path of development, mutual consideration of interests, openness, consensus, the aspiration to form a multipolar international order and a fair global financial and trade system, and the pursuit of collective solutions to the top challenges of our time, Putin said.

"We will spare no effort to ensure that, while preserving traditions and being



guided by the experience gained by the association in years past, we facilitate the harmonious integration of new participants in all formats of its activities," Putin added.

He further stressed that Russia will work on the modalities of a new category of BRICS partner countries.

"Of course, we will consider the degree to which many other countries, about 30 of them, are prepared to join the BRICS multidimensional agenda in one form or another. To this end, we will start working on the modalities of a new category of BRICS partner countries," he said.

In general, Russia will continue to promote all aspects of the BRICS partnership in three key areas, including politics and security, economy and finance, and

cultural and humanitarian contacts.

Moreover, Putin emphasised that Russia will focus on enhancing foreign policy coordination among the member countries and on jointly seeking effective responses to the challenges and threats to international and regional security and stability.

"We will contribute to the practical implementation of the Strategy for BRICS Economic Partnership 2025 and the Action Plan for BRICS Innovation Cooperation 2021-2024 for ensuring energy and food security, enhancing the role of BRICS in the international monetary system, expanding interbank cooperation and expanding the use of national currencies in mutual trade," he added.

Highlighting their priorities, he stated

that Russia's priorities include promoting cooperation in science, high technology, healthcare, environmental protection, culture, sports, youth exchanges, and civil society.

Moreover, in total, over 200 events of different levels and types will be held in many Russian cities as part of the chairmanship.

"We encourage representatives of all countries interested in cooperating with our organisation to take part in them. The BRICS Summit in Kazan in October will be the culmination of our chairmanship," he stated.

Furthermore, as Russia assumes its chairmanship, it looks forward to working productively with all countries in the BRICS orbit.

ANI



## Maduro calls Argentina's decision to refuse BRICS membership 'stupidity'

CARACAS

VENEZUELAN President Nicolas Maduro criticized the decision of his Argentine counterpart Javier Milei to refuse the country's accession to BRICS.

"By excluding Argentina from BRICS, he [Javier Milei] is acting against the Argentines. This is one of the most clumsy and stupid things that Milei has done against Argentina," Maduro (pictured) said in a traditional interview with Le Monde diplomatic newspaper on January 1.



He added that such a decision "takes Argentina back to the 19th century." Earlier, Nicolas Maduro had already harshly criticized the neoliberal political program and plans of the newly elected President of Argentina.

"The presidential elections in Argentina were won by far-right neo-fascism - the far right with a colonial project for Argentina, who intend to lead the neo-colonial project throughout Latin America and the Caribbean," Maduro said on the Venezuelan de Television channel on November 21.

BRICS was formed in 2006 and initially included Brazil, Russia, India and China. South Africa joined the intergovernmental organization in 2011.

Five new members (Egypt, Iran, the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia and Ethiopia) formally became full-fledged members of the BRICS group, and commence joint work in that capacity, on January 1. Argentina was slated to become the sixth new member of the intergovernmental association, but on December 29 new Argentinian President Javier Milei officially notified the BRICS members that his country will decline the group's invitation to join issued after its August 2023 summit in Johannesburg. In his letter, Milei said that he did not consider his country's participation in the BRICS group to be appropriate at this time. **Agencies**

## PM Modi opens new Trichy airport terminal, launches projects worth over Rs 20,000 cr

TIRUCHIRAPPALLI

IN a push for 'Sabka Vikas' south of the Vindhyas, Prime Minister Narendra Modi yesterday inaugurated and laid the foundation stone for a bouquet of development projects worth over Rs 20,000 crore in Tiruchirappalli.

After holding a convocation event at the Bharathidasan University, PM Modi was felicitated by Civil Aviation Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia and Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin at the public programme in the city.

Speaking at the event, Civil Aviation Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia spoke highly of PM Modi's leadership, saying the central government, on his watch, has ensured that airports are not only a medium of travel but also centres of growth.

"Airports are also emerging as centres of employment for the whole country. The one big change that has taken place over the last 9.5 years of this government is that PM Modi, through his leadership, has democratised civil aviation for every single citizen of this country. Everyone who wears a 'Hawai Chappal' (slippers) must also travel in a 'Hawai jahaj' (aircraft). This has been the PM's dream for the people of our country," Scindia said.

PM Modi later proceeded to inaugurate the new terminal building at the Trichy airport.

The new terminal building has been developed at a cost of more than Rs 1100 crore. The two-level new international terminal has the capacity to serve more than 44 lakh passengers annually and about 3,500 during peak hours, the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) informed earlier through an official release.

"The new terminal hosts state-of-the-art amenities and features for passenger convenience," read the PMO statement on Monday.

Tiruchirappalli International Airport is the second-largest airport in terms of international passenger traffic after Chennai in Tamil Nadu.

The new terminal building contains 60 check-in counters, 5 baggage carousels, 60 arrival immigration counters, and 44 departure emigration counters, the release stated.

Prime Minister Modi also dedicated to the nation multiple railway projects worth crores. These include the doubling of the 41.4 km Salem-Magnesian Junction-Omalur-Mettur Dam section; the doubling of the rail line section of

160 km from Madurai-Tuticorin; and three projects for rail line electrification: Tiruchchirappalli-Manamadurai-Virudhunagar; Virudhunagar-Tenkasi Junction; Sengottai-Tenkasi Junction; Tirunelveli-Tirunelveli-Tiruchendur. The rail projects are tipped to help improve the rail capacity to carry freight and passengers and contribute to economic development and employment generation in Tamil Nadu.

He also dedicates to the nation five road projects, including a 39-km four-lane road for the Trichy-Kallagam section of NH-81; a 60 km long 4/2-lane road for the Kallagam-Meensuruti section of NH-81; a 29 km four-lane road of Chettilkulam - Natham section of NH-785; an 80 km long two-lane road with a paved shoulder of Karaikudi-Ramanathapuram section of NH-536; and a 44 km long four-lane section of NH-179A Salem-Tirupathur-Vaniyambadi Road.

The road projects will facilitate safe and faster travel of people of the region and improve the connectivity of industrial and commercial centres like Trichy, Srirangam, Chidambaram, Rameshwaram, Dhanushkodi, Uthirakosamangai, Devipattinam, Erwadi, and Madurai, among others, according to a government release.

Prime Minister Modi also laid the foundation stone for important road development projects. These include the construction of a 31-kilometer-long, four-lane road from Mugaiyur to Marakkanam of NH 332A.

The road will connect ports on the East Coast of Tamil Nadu, enhance road connectivity to the world heritage site -- Mamallapuram -- and provide better connectivity to Kalpakkam Atomic Power Plant.

ANI



## Xi's 2024 New Year message highlights confidence, people, global vision

BEIJING

CHINESE President Xi Jinping's 2024 New Year message was focused on confidence, people's livelihood and a global vision.

Xi delivered the message on Sunday evening, which was televised and live-streamed nationwide. The message offered a glimpse into China's commitment to advancing Chinese modernization, delivering a better life for the people, and striving to make the world a better place for all in 2024.

CONTINUED CONFIDENCE

Xi's message depicted China's solid and robust steps toward high-quality development. Reviewing the year 2023, Xi said the Chinese economy had sustained the momentum of recovery, the modernized industrial system had been further upgraded and the country had secured a bumper harvest for the 20th year in a row.

These facts indicate that the Chinese economy has shown tremendous resilience in the face of multiple and unforeseen factors, bolstering confidence in China's development prospects. In terms of regional development, Xi noted that "new progress has been made in fully revitalizing northeast China, the Xiong'an New Area is growing fast, the Yangtze River Economic Belt is full of vitality, and the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area is embracing new development opportunities."

The president's 16 domestic inspection and research trips in 2023, along with five meetings on regional development that he chaired, were crucial in driving the progress of regional



development. During these occasions, he charted the course for coordinated regional development across the country.

Another highlight featured in Xi's New Year message was China's breakthroughs in science and technology. He mentioned that the C919 large passenger airliner entered commercial service, the Chinese-built large cruise ship completed its trial voyage, the Shenzhou spaceships are continuing their missions in space, and the deep-sea manned submersible Fendouzhe reached the deepest ocean trench. "Everywhere across our country, new heights are being scaled with dogged determination, and new creations and innovations are emerging every day," he said. Xi referred to the time-honored history of China and its splendid civilization as the source of Chinese people's confidence and strength.

Gong Wen, curator of the Chinese Archaeological Museum, found inspiration in Xi's words. "The Chinese Archaeological Museum will devote more efforts to research and disseminate archaeological achievements to interpret the source of cultural confidence and contribute to boosting national pride and the cohesion of the Chinese nation," Gong said.

## China's Blue Circle environmental initiative gives new solution to marine plastic waste

If plastic waste is dumped into the sea, it will gradually break down into microplastics, exerting continuous and permanent adverse impacts on the environment. How can plastic waste be recycled and turned into useful resources?

The Blue Circle environmental initiative, a marine plastic waste program launched in east China's Zhejiang province, has given the answer to the question.

The program uses blockchain technology and the Internet of Things to comprehensively monitor the entire lifecycle of plastic waste, encompassing collection, regeneration, re-manufacturing and re-sale.

This year, the program was honored with the 2023 Champions of the Earth award - the United Nations' most prestigious environmental recognition - by the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP), from a pool of 2,500 nominations.

During the twilight hours, fishing boats returned from the sea and docked on a beach of Huangjiao Island of Taizhou, Zhejiang province. A captain surnamed Chen, while unloading the catch, instructed his crew to empty the used fishing nets, foam plastics, plastic bottles, plastic bags, and marine debris collected along with the fish out of the boat, and send them to a nearby place called Xiaolan Zhijia, which literally means little blue house.

Xiaolan Zhijia is a collection and storage site for marine debris. It collects, sorts and compacts waste materials collected from the sea. To encourage wider participation, Xiaolan Zhijia offers much higher prices for marine debris compared to regular waste.

At the port of Jiaojiang district, Taizhou, there is a facility in the shape of a box. It is called "Ocean Cloud Warehouse" and is an intelligent processing system that can sort, temporarily store, purify, and pre-process waste. The volume of marine debris is compressed by up to 90 percent in the warehouse after crushing, which significantly lowers transportation costs.

The collected marine waste will be sent to Veolia Huafei Polymer Technology (Zhejiang) Co., Ltd. located in Anji county, Huzhou, Zhejiang province. The company is a member of a non-profit organization called "Blue Alliance" and has been awarded the certification for marine plastic recycling by an international accreditation body.

According to Fu Xianwei, the company's operations director, the company has basically achieved automated production, and its products are standardized and high-quality.

Taking plastic bottles as an example, Fu told People's Daily that the bottles are sorted, thoroughly cleaned, melted and reshaped into plastic pellets, so that they can be recycled.

So far, Veolia Huafei Polymer Technology (Zhejiang) Co., Ltd. has processed over 10 million of plastic bottles collected from the ocean. By adjusting the granulation technique, the company is able to produce recycled plastic particles of various grades, including those suitable for food contact.

Products made from marine plastic waste have higher added value. Hangzhou Xinsheng Printing and Dyeing Co., Ltd., also a member of the "Blue Alliance", transforms marine plastic particles into various fabrics.

Fu Xiaoling, marketing director of the company, said, "Thanks to the technological breakthroughs we have made, these fabrics and garments made from marine plastic are no inferior to other recycled clothing in terms of quality and performance, and they are highly sought after in the international market."

Products made from marine plastic are stamped with

BETTER LIVELIHOOD

Over the years, "the people" have always been front and center in Xi's New Year message. On New Year's Eve, Xi lauded the extraordinary contribution made by each and every ordinary Chinese and praised the people as the ones the country looks to when it fights to prevail over all difficulties or challenges.

"Our goal is both inspiring and simple. Ultimately, it is about delivering a better life for the people," the president said. Issues concerning people's livelihood, especially those regarding children, the youth and the elderly, "are a top priority of the government."

He called for concerted efforts to deliver on these issues. Among the photos on the bookshelf behind Xi as he delivered the speech were some capturing the moments of him standing among the people on various occasions.

One of them shows Xi speaking to villagers in Shuiyuzui Village in Mentougou District of Beijing, when he undertook an inspection tour in November 2023 to have a close look at areas affected by summer flooding in Beijing and the neighboring Hebei Province.

Li Meng, a resident of Shuiyuzui Village, expressed a feeling of warmth as Xi once again showed care for their lives in his New Year message. Li said the basic needs of flood-affected villagers had been fully met, with timely distribution of assistance and subsidies.

The renovation of infrastructure in the village had been completed. The villagers will work together to pool their strength to build the village into a demonstration area of rural revitalization, Li

said.

GLOBAL VISION

While caring about issues at home, Xi also focused on foreign policies and global affairs. He said in the New Year message that while pursuing its own development, China has also embraced the world and fulfilled its responsibility as a major country. Xi mentioned the China-Central Asia Summit and the Third Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation, China's two major diplomatic events at home last year at which Xi hosted leaders from across the world.

Xi said that he also paid visits to a number of countries, attended international conferences, and met many friends, both old and new.

Zafar Uddin Mahmood, former special assistant to the Prime Minister of Pakistan, hailed China's constant efforts to open up to the outside world. "China will surely continue opening its arms to embrace the world, share its development experience and accomplishments with other countries, and contribute its strength to the progress of human civilization," he said.

In 2023, Xi went abroad four times, and also met with foreign people from all walks of life in China on dozens of occasions. At these events, Xi shared China's vision and enhanced common understandings with foreign friends. China lives in peace, but the world as a whole does not.

As Xi said in the New Year's message, conflicts are still raging in some parts of the world. Xi said the Chinese are keenly aware of what peace means. "We will work closely with the international community for the common good of humanity, build a community with a shared future for mankind, and make the world a better place for all," he said.



A fisherman collects and sorts marine plastic waste encouraged by the Blue Circle initiative. (Photo from the Blue Circle initiative)

a unique QR code bearing the words "Produced by Blue Alliance" before leaving the factory. This serves as an exclusive identification for each product.

After a People's Daily reporter scanned the QR code on a document bag made from marine debris, a picture popped up on the phone, which said the document bag contained 6.5 grams of marine plastic and the purchase of it would reduce the production of 0.32 plastic bottles and 8.45 grams of carbon emission. The entire process of how the raw material of the bag was collected and made into a commodity was shown on the phone, too.

Chen Guanghui, co-founder of Zhejiang-based technology company VisionBlue and one of the initiators of the Blue Circle initiative, noted that many domestic and international companies are willing to purchase higher-priced marine plastic recycled particles and products in order to fulfill their social responsibilities.

However, it is difficult to determine whether these plastic particles actually come from marine plastic waste with traditional methods. Therefore, the company has developed a blockchain-based visual traceability system to solve this problem.

So far, 237 industrial enterprises and 10,200 ships in Zhejiang have joined the Blue Circle initiative. The program has also been participated by 61,800 people living along the coast, including seniors, fishermen, and volunteers.

The program has collected and processed 10,900 tons of marine waste, including 2,254 tons of plastic waste, resulting in a reduction of approximately 2,930 tons of carbon emissions.

Frontline collectors have increased their annual income by about 13,000 yuan (\$1,845.81) thanks to the program, and fishermen have obtained over 100 million yuan in low-interest green loans through their green credits of waste collection.

People's Daily



The flow of marine plastic waste can be traced via a QR code. (Photo from the Blue Circle initiative)



# 2023 altered soccer power image in East Africa, for a while at least

By Correspondent John Kimbute

THIS past year marked a sort of soccer aptitude or power renewal for leading clubs in the Mainland Tanzania Premier League, and surprisingly also for the senior national side, Taifa Stars.

The defeat that Uganda Cranes suffered, when it faced Taifa Stars on neutral ground in a match the team had to win to qualify for the finals of the 2023 Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON) played in Ivory Coast this month, rattled the Ugandan federation intensely enough to ax the national side head coach Milutin Sredojevic, alias Micho.

Reports at that time said that the writing was on the wall with Micho's future as Uganda Cranes head coach upon his failure to qualify for the 2023 AFCON, leaving many Ugandan football fans calling for his ouster.

Axing Micho was not an easy decision for the Federation of Uganda Football Associations (FUFA) as in a way he is one of the finest coaches they ever had for the national side.

Online entries say he first served as the head coach of the national team in 2013 and worked up to 2017.

In that period, he helped the Uganda Cranes return to the Africa Cup of Nations, breaking a long-standing jinx of 39 years.

That makes him comparable to our own Emmanuel Amunike, who similarly ended that same dry patch of qualifying for AFCON finals, then fired him midway for a poor showing in the finals.

The report notes that after AFCON 2017, Micho moved to Orlando Pirates, one of South Africa's leading clubs, following a disagreement with the Uganda federation after an outburst in the media about the failure of FUFA to pay him.

He was replaced by French coach Sebastian Desabre and later Northern Irish coach John McKinstry,



Some of Tanzania's senior national soccer team players are pictured participating in intensive training at New Amaan Complex in Zanzibar recently, shaping up for the 2023 AFCON campaign slated for this month in Ivory Coast. PHOTO: COURTESY OF TANZANIA FOOTBALL FEDERATION

but on August 1, 2021, Micho was re-appointed as Uganda Cranes' head coach, putting pen to paper on a three-year contract.

That included taking the Cranes to the qualification, and participation in the 2024 finals, which has been cut short by failure to qualify.

Our coach hiring and dismissal politics were not dissimilar to Uganda's, as we have more than once changed coaches since Amunike left the scene back in April 2021, in which case the scenario is altered by the fact that the one who prevented Uganda from qualifying was an opponent who, when they met last, Uganda had already qualified.

Tanzania played its heart out and won 3-0 over a Ugandan squad that would have faced difficulties to be spirited about that encounter, but local propaganda

extolled unity and purpose that led to Uganda being defeated.

This time around there was no need to search around, where the one qualified already was Algeria, despite that even then the side played good football and Tanzania obtained a draw.

Ugandan critics rapped the Algerian side for failing to just beat Tanzania when they should have, to Uganda's benefit.

The fact that Uganda had singularly no such advantage in the run to this year's AFCON finals is indicative that things are changing on the ground, where Tanzania's Premier League football is much better than in the past, and Uganda clubs possibly do not have that same momentum.

From the leading local clubs' ability to recruit players, it would appear that the gap with North Africa, and

not just for players but even for coaches.

While other countries regularly had a crop of players from well-to-do clubs outside, Tanzania has succeeded in locating, apparently due to the overarching reach of social media, local youths who went abroad in the past to attend academies.

With that advantage diminishing and Tanzania having players in clubs that issue players who can impress at CAF preliminaries for the Africa Cup of Nations, and the locally based players pushed to a higher standard of play because of the presence of foreign players in big numbers, and often the cream of those playing in West and Central Africa, this is changing the outlook.

While this was taking place, it is difficult to say if our regular competitors like Uganda or Algeria were taking notice, which helped Taifa Stars as no one expected a good performance.

Algeria for once did not have to take into account anything as they had qualified, but Uganda was punished for not having been able to learn anything, especially as it had earlier won at the Benjamin Mkapa arena.

How far this advantage is noticed in the 2023 finals awaits to be seen, if Taifa Stars will be able to win at least one match, compared to the poor showing of the 2021 AFCON finals.

This situation will also depend on whether other countries have been similarly making progress, as countries that were in the past being banged 7-0, or something of the sort, are no longer pushovers, in which case chances that Tanzania faces a similar situation as in its earlier appearance in the finals can't be ruled out.

Yet what is significant is qualifying for the finals, as no one has ever dreamed of crossing the group stage into the quarterfinal. We are not there yet.

What can be said is that perhaps a taboo has been broken, that it is rare or miraculous for Taifa Stars to qualify for AFCON finals, that it is a matter of effort the way the two leading clubs both made it to the group stage of the CAF Champions League.

And when pushed to the second tier tourney (now shut out for the two leading sides unless one comes third or we have no quarterfinals qualification the previous season), there was capacity for a good show, by Young Africans SC last year.

At the moment both sides are second in their ranking after two crucial encounters at Benjamin Mkapa Stadium, nicknamed 'Estadio de Lupaso', and are struggling to register players to fill in gaps.

There could still be surprises where two local sides both enter the quarterfinals of the CAF Champions League, signaling a new era in our soccer image, but we should be aware others will be investing as well.

## New Simba SC winger lauds teammates, technical bench

By Correspondent Nassir Nchimbi

SIMBA SC's newly signed winger Salehe Karabaka has expressed how his fellow players and technical bench guided him towards his debut against his former club, Zanzibar's from JKU SC.

The winger netted a goal in Simba SC's 3-1 win over JKU SC when the two outfits took on each other in a 2024 Mafinduzi Cup clash which took place at New Amaan Stadium in the Isles on Monday.

Karabaka- who was introduced earlier in the day and made his debut later in the day- scored his debut goal for Simba SC against JKU SC.

The winger scored through his weak right foot as he attempted to whip in a cross but the ball went straight into the net to see him score the third goal of the game.

Other goals were scored by Congolese striker Jean Baleke and Zambian Moses Phiri, whereas Mozambican midfielder Jose Miquissone recorded two assists before he was substituted.

Karabaka, speaking with a broad smile on his face, said: "I am delighted to make my debut with a goal for a club with a huge status like Simba SC, before I came in, captain John Bocco said to me that I have to be calm with ball and without the ball, wear off my pressure and show my skills set and be productive to the team and everything will fall into the right direction."

Simba SC head coach Abdelhak Benchikha made various changes in the second half after playing various players out of position in the first half.

The changes included playing striker Shaban Chilunda as a center-attacking midfielder- playing in deeper positions.

The Belgo-Algerian coach had few instructions for Karabaka as he introduced him for his debut.

Karabaka said: "Benchikha had few important instructions for me including playing on the half-space and zone 14 of the pitch, where I will be free to receive the ball freely and try to cut in and cause problems to my opponents, I think I did my job correctly and I ask fans to be patient with my as I feel I will be able to do many



Simba SC's newly recruited winger, Salehe Karabaka.

good things."

"On the training pitch, Jean Baleke and Fabrice Ngoma were cracking jokes and telling me that I would score against my former team JKU SC, that's why during my goal celebration, they were slapping me in joy that they were right that I would score, overall I am settling good and I look forward to bright days."

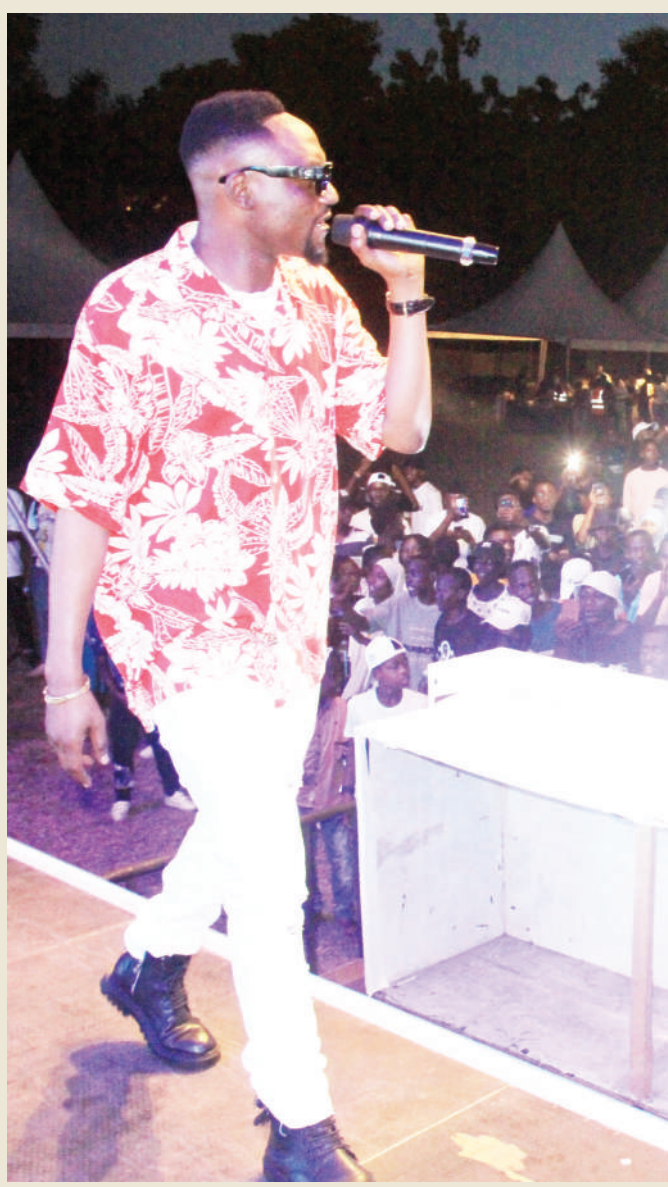
Simba SC Information and Communication Manager, Ahmed Ally said that they are making quick progress to strengthen their squad as they aim until January 15 when they are done introducing new players who will quickly settle in.

Ally stated: "In the mini registration window, I am sure we will shock many fans due to the type of players we will introduce."

"These are coming to work for the team, considering that the mini window does not need to register many players," the official insisted.

"The improvements that are being made in this window are aimed at strengthening the areas that were not strengthened by our squad due to various reasons, but we will introduce new players before January 15, and the fans will recognize them," he said.

Simba SC will play the squad's second Mafinduzi Cup fixture against Singida Fountain Gate FC at New Amaan Complex today.



Tanzanian rapper, Shariff Ramadhan 'Darassa', entertains runners that battled it out in this season's Tanzania-India Friendly Marathon, which took place in Dar es Salaam yesterday. PHOTO: CORRESPONDENT JUMANNE JUMA

## Kitulo National Park set to host Tanzania-India Friendly Marathon

By Guardian Correspondent

THE government has said that the next season's Tanzania-India Marathon is expected to be held in Kitulo National Park located in Mbeya and Njombe.

Minister for Culture, Arts, and Sports Damas Ndumbaro affirmed after this season's showdown, which took place in Dar es Salaam yesterday, it will next season be held in the national park.

He said the government has decided to take the marathon to Kitulo National Park to ensure runners have the opportunity to do tourism.

Ndumbaro stressed that this year's friendly marathon has been a great success due to the leadership of a veteran athlete from India Milind Soman- who accompanied his family and ran 120 kilometers from Dar es Salaam to Bagamoyo

and back to Dar es Salaam.

The minister also said that the government's decision to host the race in Kitulo National Park will help to attract various tourists to the country.

He noted: "We expect next season's marathon will be held in Kitulo National Park to ensure that we attract various tourists."

He said: "We have received various visitors from India who have come to visit various places, we will continue to cooperate with the country in sports and ensure that this race is a great success," he disclosed.

"This race will next season be held in Kitulo National Park where there is a garden of flowers and friendly animals- it will be held in the first week of July and it will be sustainable," Ndumbaro added.

India's High Commissioner to Tanzania, Binaya Pradhan, said he was grateful to

the Tanzanian government for accepting cooperation in organizing the race.

He said the race is expected to be sustainable, taking place every year, after signing a cooperation agreement between Tanzania and India.

The High Commissioner said that next season they expect the race will be a great success including the participation of many athletes from various countries who will have the opportunity to visit attractions including climbing Mount Kilimanjaro.

"We thank the government of Tanzania for agreeing to cooperate with India to organize this race in the first season," he stated.

"We expect next season's race to be a great success including gathering athletes from various parts of the country to ensure they come to visit the attractions including Mount Kilimanjaro," Pradhan noted.

## CECAFA Zone referees selected to officiate 2023 AFCON finals

By Correspondent Nassir Nchimbi & Agencies

ELEVEN match officials from the Council of East and Central Africa Football Associations (CECAFA) Zone have made the final shortlist to officiate the 2023 TotalEnergies Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON) slated for January 13-February 11, 2024 in Côte d'Ivoire.

The officials include six referees, three assistants, and two VAR referees selected from Kenya, Burundi, Rwanda, Somalia, Djibouti and Sudan.

Rwanda's Salima Rhadia Mukansanga, the only female official selected from the zone, will this time work as a VAR referee.

Salima, who became the first female referee to officiate at the AFCON in 2022, has also officiated at the Olympic Games, Africa Women's Cup of Nations, CAF Women's Champions League, FIFA Women's World Cup and the 2022 FIFA World Cup in Qatar.

Ethiopia's experienced official Bamlak Tessema Weyesa, Peter Waweru Kamaku (Kenya), Samuel Uwikunda (Rwanda), Omar Abdulkadir Artan (Somalia), Pacifique Ndbihawenimana (Bu-

rundi) and Sudan's Mahmood Ali Mahmood Ismail are part of the 26 referees selected.

The Kenyan duo of Gilbert Cheruiyot and Stephen Yembe, and Libam Abdoulrazak (Djibouti) are among the 30 assistant referees selected, while Salima and Sudan's Ibrahim Abdallah Mohamed are part of the 12 VAR referees.

Tanzania is yet to have a referee debut for the premier continental tournament for national teams.

The East African country, which qualified from the CECAFA Zone, will be part of the 23 other teams that will tussle it out in the competition to be hosted in five cities. Senegal are the defending champions.

### 2023 AFCON Groups:

**Group A:** Ivory Coast, Nigeria, Equatorial Guinea, Guinea Bissau  
**Group B:** Egypt, Ghana, Cape Verde, Mozambique  
**Group C:** Senegal, Cameroon, Guinea, Gambia  
**Group D:** Algeria, Burkina Faso, Mauritania, Angola  
**Group E:** Tunisia, Mali, South Africa, Namibia  
**Group F:** Morocco, DR Congo, Zambia, Tanzania



## Gaza war now overshadows football as 2023 Asian Cup looms for Palestine

DOHA

TWO weeks ahead of Palestine's opening game at the 2023 Asian Cup in Qatar, the team is struggling to focus as war rages on in Gaza, where thousands have been killed.

Some players have lost loved ones in Israel's relentless bombardment of the besieged territory in response to Hamas's October 7 attack on southern Israel. Much of Gaza has been reduced to rubble, including stadiums, in air and artillery strikes and a ground offensive, and football fields have been used as makeshift graves for some of the dead as many cemeteries are either full or inaccessible.

"Everyone is glued to the news, before and after training, be it on the bus or at the hotel," the team's coach, Makram Daboub, said from Saudi Arabia where the players were training.

Qatar hosts the 2023 Asian Cup from January 12 to February 10, and Palestine will play its opening game on January 14 against Iran.

The players have "a constant feeling of anxiety for their families", Daboub, a former Tunisia coach and player, said by telephone.

The Palestinian Football Association had celebrated in June last year when the national team won -- for the third time -- a spot in the Asian Cup. But with no end in sight to the Gaza war, the team now feels crushed as they try to prepare for the upcoming competition.

Since the October 7 Hamas attacks on Israel, football matches in the Gaza Strip and Israeli-occupied West Bank have been suspended.

Many players are struggling, particularly those like Mahmoud Wadi and Mohammed Saleh who have family trapped in Gaza where their homes have been destroyed, said Daboub.

"They are suffering," he said. Others have relatives who have had to flee relentless Israeli bombardment in the north of the territory and seek safety in the south, "where conditions are difficult", he added.

The UN says 85 percent of Gaza's population has been displaced and no area of the crowded territory was safe, as Israel has extended its offensive from north to south.

The October 7 attack was the worst in Israeli history, and the Gaza war it unleashed has been the bloodiest yet in the long-blockaded Palestinian territory of 2.4 million people.

The Hamas attack resulted in the deaths of around 1,140 people, most of them civilians, according to an AFP tally based on official figures.

Israel's punishing offensive has killed at least 21,978 people, mostly women and children, according to the territory's health ministry.

Daboub said the team hopes to "qualify for the latter stages of the Asian Cup and show the honourable face of Palestinian football".

Most importantly, the coach said, "raising the Palestinian flag" in international arenas "affirms Palestinian identity and shows that in Palestine people deserve freedom and a better life".

Palestinian Football Federation president Jibril Rajub said the Gaza war wreaked havoc on "sports and youth" movements.

"So far, more than 1,000 members of sports, youth and scout movements have been killed," said Rajub.

He accused Israeli forces of "targeting Palestinian sports clubs... in flagrant violation of the Olympic charter".

He mentioned specifically "horrible images" that emerged from the Yarmouk football stadium in Gaza which Israeli forces "turned into a detention, abuse and interrogation centre".

He was referring to Israeli media footage showing scores of stripped Palestinians, including children, sitting on the ground of the stadium.

The Israeli army has said those seen in the footage, which sparked an outcry on social media, were suspected of taking part in "terrorist activities".

Rajub said Yarmouk stadium was built in 1939, making it one of the oldest in the Palestinian territories. The federation has sent letters to the International Olympic Committee and FIFA demanding an "urgent international probe into (Israeli) occupation crimes against sports and athletes in Palestine".

# Klopp's super-subbs deliver statement win for Liverpool

By Jason Burt

LIVERPOOL know all about the importance of super-subbs. And so Jurgen Klopp won this game from the bench, with a punchy triple substitution just after the hour, as his side took a precious three-point lead at the top of the Premier League table.

In the end this was a statement performance. A statement that Liverpool are absolutely up for this title race. A statement that they will not give up. And a statement that they have the power in their substitutes to make the difference.

Jurgen Klopp knew it. He went to all four sides of Anfield at the end, reserving his fist pumps for The Kop and temporarily losing his wedding room in the process, and he looked like a man who felt how much this meant.

We had expected Liverpool's statement performance to have come against Manchester United and Arsenal but those games ended in frustrating draws. Instead it came against Newcastle United as they produced their display of the season so far just at the right moment.

"We go again, we go again, we go again," Klopp said and there was a glorious relentlessness to his team. How timely it was for Diogo Jota and Cody Gakpo to make such compelling contributions with this being Mohamed Salah's last match before he leaves for the African Cup of Nations and with the unfortunate Darwin Nunez missing chance after clear-cut chance and with Luis Diaz fading after a bright start.

At one stage it appeared the story would be about Liverpool's extraordinary wastefulness which, given they finished with



Jurgen Klopp

four goals, now appears churlish. But look at those chances, look at the statistics, look at their dominance of Newcastle who are on such a worrying slide.

Given how much store Eddie Howe traditionally gives to defensive stability he will be embarrassed to see that his team conceded an XG - expected goals - of 7.27 which is the highest in the Premier League since such records began in 2010. That means Liverpool should have scored at least seven goals and frankly if

they had achieved 10 it would not have flattered them.

They had 34 attempts on goal with 15 on target and while Newcastle goalkeeper Martin Dubravka was outstanding, making 10 saves, the joint most this season, the bigger factor was Liverpool's failure to capitalise.

"I didn't have to look at the stats because it was really special," Klopp declared. There should still be concern from him, however, at quite how his team could totally outplay an oppo-

nent and yet somehow not put the result to bed until the 86th minute when Salah converted a hotly-disputed penalty.

But kudos to Klopp for the changes he made after yet another miss by Nunez. The energy and cutting edge provided by Jota, in particular, will fuel the belief that he can step into the huge void left by Sal

ah who scored twice, and should have had a hat-trick only to miss a first-half penalty, and was involved in all four goals.

It is worry that Nunez lacks so much confidence in front of goal but Klopp will surely believe he has the resources to cope and, interestingly, it is now 14 goals or assists Liverpool have earned from the bench this season which is already just two short of their overall contribution from the last campaign.

Jota and Gakpo will want to be more than the successors to Diogo Origi or, going back into Liverpool lore, the original, David Fairclough, and on this evidence the pair definitely deserve to start Liverpool's next game - in the FA Cup away to Arsenal on Sunday - ahead of Nunez and Diaz.

For Newcastle their cup tie is away to Sunderland on Saturday lunchtime and it appears to be a fixture they are facing with some rising trepidation. It is now just one win in eight and six defeats, seven if the penalty shoot-out loss in the Carabao Cup away to Chelsea is included and while Howe argued that he has "half a team" out that is simply not the case.

The latest absence includes Kieran Trippier although, frankly, he could probably do with a rest having suffered a hamstring injury in the loss at home to Nottingham Forest.

Liverpool were as relentless as

the rain and Newcastle could not escape. Dubravka denied Nunez twice, although the Uruguayan should certainly have scored the second opportunity, and also beat out Salah's penalty which was awarded after a foul on Diaz. Salah went for power with Trent Alexander-Arnold slicing the rebound over the crossbar. The full-back later struck the post with an audacious half-volley from an amazingly tight angle.

The miss appeared to affect Salah although, in the end, it fuelled him with a determination to put it right which he did by scoring, claiming his 150th Premier League goal. It was so simple, also, with Liverpool showing great control as they cut through Newcastle for Salah to sidestep home.

If that was supposed to settle nerves, it did not quite work. After more misses from Nunez, Anthony Gordon released Alexander Isak who smartly held his run - and then beat Alisson with an accomplished finish. It contrasted so sharply with Nunez and off he and Diaz went.

The subs changed the game. There was drive and decisiveness as Salah and Jota set up the impressive Curtis Jones, and then Salah played a sumptuous ball with the outside of his boot for Gakpo to finish. Game over?

Not quite. Sven Botman headed in from a corner and just as Newcastle had unlikely hope it was quashed as Liverpool broke with Jota running clear through the middle.

As he rounded Dubravka he claimed he was clipped with another penalty awarded. This time Salah picked his spot, made his point, redeemed himself and Liverpool had their raucous, affirming win.

THE TELEGRAPH

## Arsenal have a Saka, Martinelli problem and it is compromising their title bid

By Sam Dean

IN two consecutive matches, Arsenal have entered the final 30 minutes in desperate need of goals. On both occasions, Mikel Arteta has removed Gabriel Martinelli from the pitch. Against West Ham, it was after 64 minutes. Here against Fulham, it was after 67.

Martinelli? Hooked? Until recently, it would have been unthinkable to substitute the Brazilian with Arsenal in need of attacking spark. Over the past 18 months, few players in the league have been so consistent in causing problems for opposition defenders.

At this point of the season, though, there could be no objections. This is a sticky moment for Arsenal and no player appears to be more stuck between gears than the 22-year-old, who has scored just two goals in 18 league appearances this campaign. By comparison, he struck 15 goals in 36 league matches last season.

The problem has been made worse by the fact that Bukayo Saka, the other 22-year-old winger in Arteta's team, is also enduring an uncharacteristically challenging spell. Saka scored in this defeat at Fulham but it was his first goal in six matches, and he was a long way from his best. It was Saka who lost the ball in the build-up to Fulham's equaliser.

This moment was always going to come for Arsenal.

Players as young as Saka and Martinelli were always going to suffer dips in form. In many ways, it is remarkable these dips have taken this long to arrive. Saka, especially, has for years appeared immune to the usual fluctuations in performance that one would expect from a player of his age.

The issue for Arsenal is that Martinelli and Saka have both slumped at the same time. For so much of the last 18 months, one would step up when the other was struggling. If Saka did not drive Arsenal forward, Martinelli would. Now they are both looking towards each other, hoping the other can lead the way.

For Arteta, it must be a source of considerable concern. Even if, after five minutes at Craven Cottage, those two players combined for Saka's goal. The Arsenal manager might have thought it was a sign that they were back to their best but, as the rest of the game proved, it was instead a brief moment of light on an otherwise bleak afternoon.

According to Opta figures, Martinelli did not attempt one take-on in the game. A player who has built his game on terrifying defenders, deciding against running at his full-back. From Arsenal's perspective, it did not look - or feel - right.

Clearly, this is more complicated than Martinelli and Saka simply losing their spark. In many ways, their



Gabriel Martinelli and Bukayo Saka are both suffering from a dip in form at a crucial time for Arsenal's campaign. Agencies

struggles are a reflection of the quality they have shown in recent seasons. Opponents are so frightened of Arsenal's wingers that they double up, closing down the space and blocking their usual avenues.

It was no coincidence

that Arsenal's goal came from the one occasion in which Martinelli had space to run. Fulham, who were excellent throughout, did not make the same mistake twice.

Within the Arsenal fanbase, there are increas-

ingly loud demands for a new striker. The counter-argument is that Arteta needs another winger - a player who can ease the burden on Saka and Martinelli, and provide a different option on the flanks.

Arsenal know they are

short in these wide positions. Over the past 18 months they have made attempts to sign Pedro Neto from Wolves, Mykhailo Mudryk from Shakhtar Donetsk (before Chelsea hijacked the deal) and Raphinha, who moved to Barcelona from Leeds United. They also explored the possibility of signing Joao Felix from Atletico Madrid last January.

There is another winger in Arsenal's squad: Reiss Nelson. There is little evidence to suggest, however, that he is capable of contributing regularly for a team with genuine ambitions of winning the Premier League title. Leandro Trossard, meanwhile, prefers to drift inside rather than stretch the game.

These back-to-back defeats have exposed some of the weaknesses in Arsenal's squad. A centre-forward would be helpful, and so would another winger. More defensive cover would be appreciated, too. For now, though, Arteta can only work with what he has got. And Arsenal can only hope that Saka and Martinelli return to form soon.

THE TELEGRAPH



Palestine players are training for the 2023 Asian Cup in Qatar in the shadow of the Israel-Hamas war. AFP





## SPORT

Klopp's super-subbs deliver statement win for Liverpool

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# Benchikha unhappy despite Simba SC's victory over JKU in Mapinduzi Cup



Simba SC attacker, Moses Phiri (2nd L), scores for the outfit during the 2024 tie against JKU SC that took place in Zanzibar two days back. PHOTO: COURTESY OF SIMBA SC

By Correspondent Seth Mapoli

**D**ESPITE roaring to a 3-1 victory over JKU SC in the 2024 Mapinduzi Cup, Simba SC head coach Abdelhak Benchikha remained unfazed by the celebratory cheers.

While applauding the positive results, he swiftly switched gears to highlight his outfit's defensive lapses that could prove costly in the high-stakes tournament.

"We played well, yes, and I'm happy with the win but let's not sugarcoat it - conceding a goal due to lapses in defense simply won't fly in a competition like this. Every mistake here can be the difference between glory and going home," Benchikha conceded.

The coach acknowledged JKU SC's tactical prowess, particularly the Zanzibar side's well-structured midfield play. He stressed the need for his outfit to tighten up the defensive coordination before taking on the next challenge.

On the brighter side, the match witnessed the triumphant debut of Simba SC's newest acquisition, Saleh Karabaka.

The former JKU SC player stole the show in the second half, burying a thunderous strike for the team's final goal and sealing their victory.

Overcome with elation,

Karabaka expressed his gratitude for the opportunity to wear the Simba SC colours and contribute to their success.

"I'm ecstatic to have made my debut today, but even more thrilled to help my new team secure a win against my former club," he beamed.

"The fans' support has been incredible, and I promise to keep pushing my limits to deliver more victories for Simba SC."

Karabaka's impact was immediate, needing only five minutes after his introduction to find the back of the net.

He credited his success to following Benchikha's instructions to stretch the field through wide play and create

scoring opportunities.

The opening goal belonged to Simba SC's dynamic forward Moses Phiri, who capitalized on a precise pass from Luis Miquissone early in the first half.

However, JKU SC refused to back down, equalizing before halftime, setting the stage for a tense second half.

Despite conceding and facing a spirited opponent, Simba SC's resilience shone through. The introduction of Karabaka proved to be the golden touch, injecting fresh energy and attacking intent into the team.

His well-placed shot in the 75th minute sent ripples of joy through the Simba SC faithful, ultimately securing the criti-

cal win.

The victory comes with valuable rewards. Not only did Simba SC advance to the next stage of the tournament, but Karabaka also walked away with a special prize of 100,000/- for scoring the third goal.

Additionally, Cameroonian defender Che Fondoh Malone, whose rock-solid performance had Simba SC keeping JKU SC's attacks at bay, was deservedly named the star of the match.

With momentum building and confidence boosted, Simba SC sets its sights on the next hurdle - a clash against Singida Fountain Gate FC slated for today.

The New Amaan Complex

will again host the fierce encounter, with an 8:15 PM EAT kickoff ready to ignite the Mapinduzi Cup stage once more.

However, Benchikha knows the celebrations must be short-lived. The victory against JKU SC serves as a springboard, not a final destination.

His focus remains laser-sharp - to refine Simba SC's defensive discipline and turn their raw talent into championship-winning consistency.

This is just the beginning of Simba SC's 2024 Mapinduzi Cup journey, and Benchikha will ensure his team is ready to conquer each challenge with a relentless pursuit of excellence.

## Elvis Rupia eyes Mapinduzi Cup golden boot

By Correspondent Nassir Nchimbi

KENYAN striker Elvis Rupia took his tally to three goals in the 2024 Mapinduzi Cup when he scored Singida Fountain Gate FC's first goal in the outfit's 3-1 victory over Rwandan giants APR FC.

Singida Fountain Gate FC was pegged back early in the first half but responded thrillingly.

Kenyan midfielder Duke Abuya lofted in a corner that was not well defended by APR FC whose goalkeeper fouled Singida Fountain Gate FC forward Habib Kyombo and the referee pointed to the spot.

Rupia stepped up and effortlessly converted the spot-kick, sending the APR FC goalkeeper the wrong way to draw his team level.

Nigerian midfielder Morice Chukwu then put the Tanzanian side ahead with a thunderous strike from distance, which the APR FC goalkeeper made a mess of before Congolese forward Francis Kazadi swept home the third against the run of play.

It was the third goal in three matches for Rupia who put in a man-of-the-match performance against JKU SC of Zanzibar last Friday.

The former Kenya Police FC striker scored twice as Singida Fountain Gate FC recorded the biggest victory in the history of the competition when they triumphed 4-1 against JKU SC.

Singida Fountain Gate FC's information officer, Hussein Masanza, said of the competition between the two forwards: "I like his (Kazadi) battle with Rupia, if one scores, the other one responds so our opponents have to decide between the two who should score against them."

The match also saw the return of former Gor Mahia defender Joash Onyango to the team after missing the win over JKU SC.

It was a good game for the Kenyans playing for Singida Fountain Gate FC - with midfielder Abuya also putting in an impressive performance.

The Singida outfit will be expecting the same when the squad comes up against Simba SC in the final round-robin stage game today.

Singida Fountain Gate FC will head into the game with little pressure since the side has already sealed a ticket to the quarterfinals thanks to its two wins.

Mapinduzi Cup is an annual competition that forms part of the anniversary celebrations of the Zanzibar Revolution, which expelled the Sultan from power on January 12, 1964.

The 2023 edition is the 60th anniversary of the celebrations, with all matches being played at the recently refurbished New Amaan Complex in Zanzibar, whose capacity was expanded to 15,000.

Singida Fountain Gate FC reached the final of the tournament last year before losing 2-1 to Mlandege FC of Zanzibar.



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Singida Fountain Gate FC's attacker, Elvis Rupia.

## Simba Queens, Yanga Princess battle for top place in SWPL

By Correspondent Nassir Nchimbi



Yanga Princess' defensive midfielder, Mary Saiki (L), dribbles past Simba Queens' midfielder, Riticia Nabbosa, when the squads met in the last-four tie of this season's Serengeti Lite Women's Premier League (SWPL) curtain raiser, Community Shield mini competition, at Azam Complex Stadium in Dar es Salaam last year. PHOTO: COURTESY OF YANGA PRINCESS

SIMBA Queens will welcome Yanga Princess in this season's Mainland Tanzania Women's Premier League third-round tie as both teams aim to move to the top of the league log.

Both teams have been tied on six points as they face each other in a clash slated to take place at Azam Complex Stadium in Dar es Salaam today.

Simba Queens and Yanga Princess are separated by one goal difference, as the former has scored 10 goals and conceded two goals whereas the latter has netted eight and let in one goal.

Speaking ahead of today's match, Simba Queens' assistant head coach Mussa Hassan said that they have worked hard reviewing Yanga Princess' weaknesses, adding they will exploit them and score goals.

"We aim to get three points tomorrow (today) and reduce mistakes because, in big games like this, anything can happen, we can score many goals and they can do

the same, all we need to do is be hardworking in all areas of the pitch and get maximum points," Hassan noted.

Hassan did not disclose his outfit's today game plan but called on the club's fans to show up for the game, maintaining it is a match that gives Tanzania fans a chance to assess local women's football's development.

The tactician added: "I cannot disclose our game plan because our opponents will get familiar with our game plan, all I know is we are now familiar with how Yanga Princess approaches games and we are ready to combat that."

"Fans should show up in huge numbers to witness and measure the growth of Tanzanian football," Hassan noted.

Simba Queens boasts healthy players as all players are fit ahead of today's derby.

Yanga Princess' head coach Charles Haalubono said playing against Simba Queens in this season's Community Shield mini-tournament semi-final has given his squad a slight edge after being familiar with how the opponent

plays. "Every match has its approach and playing techniques, I am glad we played against them in the Community Shield mini-tournament, we know how their top players function and the depth of their squad, how they move the ball on dangerous areas and their limitations," the Zambian gaffer noted.

"Every match has its pressure, we also encounter pressure when playing against modest teams because anytime these teams can surprise you, as for us, we are a team of top players and coaches that are familiar with top games," the tactician said.

Haalubono added that winning comes as part of preparations and they are calm and eager to turn their preparations into a win while revealing luck will add an edge to his club.

Yanga Princess lost to Simba Queens in the penalty shootout of the Community Shield mini-tournament's semi-final, succumbing to a 5-4 loss after the regular 90 minutes had seen the teams locked to a 1-1 draw.

## Flexibles by David Chikoko

DAVY'S LAW OF MOTION: THINGS IN THOUGHTS AND IDEAS MOVE FASTER THAN IN THE ACTUALITY

BECAUSE THERE IS NO FRICTION

FRICTION NOT FICTION

