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Samia in no hurry to sign adopted bills



Christian Ngwapaula (2nd-R), an engineer with The Guardian Ltd, pictured at the publishing firm's printing unit making a demonstration on newspaper printing to participants of a short course in security and leadership currently in progress at National Defence College in Dar es Salaam who visited IPP media institutions in the city yesterday. The delegation was led by Commodore Baganchwera Rutambuka (2nd-L, foreground). Right is TGL print manager Balasubramaniyan Venkatchalam. See also pictorial spread on Page 4. Photo: Chief Photographer Selemani Mpochi

This year Tanzania will mark yet another milestone in protection of fundamental human rights of freedom to participate in public affairs in upholding democracy in holding local government elections

By Guardian Reporter

PRESIDENT Samia Suluhu Hassan is preparing to sign the three approved bills on electoral reforms, with a hint of not being in a hurry about it. "I will assent to the bills in due course," she said at a New Year diplomatic sherry party grouping members of foreign missions and representatives of international organisations in Dar es Salaam late on Wednesday. The reforms in place will ensure elections are held in a free and fair manner within an agreed institutional framework ensuring peace and security during the polls, she declared.

"The year 2023 had its challenges but we managed to sail through while remaining stable, peaceful and united," she stated, affirming her sincere hopes that "2024 will have more enriching encounters and success in our endeavours on both bilateral and multilateral basis."

She appealed to foreign envoys to adhere to rules, values and diplomatic ethics, citing the premise of not interfering in projected elections.

She was emphatic that the government will ensure the preservation of democratic space and maintain adherence to the rule of law during the

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Empowerment, procurement MoU inked to aid small firms

What we are doing today is to go and reach special groups: I mean the youth, women, the elderly and people with special needs and make them active participants in the national economy

By Guardian Correspondent, Dodoma

AWARDING tenders to local businesses and especially small ones is a helpful method of building an inclusive national economy when taken up by public institutions, the government has stated. Dr Doto Biteko, the deputy prime minister and Energy minister, made this remark here yesterday at protocol event where the National Economic Empowerment Council (NEEC) and the Public Procurement Regulatory Authority (PPRA) signed an accord to give preference to local companies and award them tenders when they merit the consideration. Officiating, the senior minister pleaded that small entrepreneurs be made part of the national procurement process. They need to be encouraged to apply for tenders floated by government institutions and parastatal

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'Land survey strategy to end land conflicts'

By Francis Kajubi, Dodoma

THE government is finalising a review of the current land use strategy with intent to end land conflicts, making it easier for investors to access land.

Prime Minister Kassim Majaliwa made this observation in the National Assembly yesterday when responding to Salim Mussa Omar (Gando) who demanded government plans to tame surging land conflicts, saying the public is steadily losing confidence in local government authorities blamed for sparking land occupancy disputes.

He said that land policy is expected to create a friendly environment for people to transfer occupancy titles and benefit from such titles in the pursuit of economic activities.

The government is working on reforming issuance of land use permits among the various categories of users, like commercial farmers, infrastructure development and property developers, he said.

The government is also developing an online format to make the issuance of permits more efficient, he said, noting that the government is aware of land sector manpower shortage, while unfaithful officials perpetuate the issuance of competing title deeds.

Numerous land conflicts are attributed to issuance of multiple title deeds on a piece of land, along with the absence of land use plans at the district level, he said, acknowledging land conflicts between farmers and custodian authorities for reserved forests and national parks.

The remaining 8,637 villages are yet to be granted land use planning papers. Only 30 percent of the total urban Tanzania has been covered with land use planning. It's time for planning land use countrywide,

Such conflicts are comparable to those besetting farmers and pastoralists as well as boundary related conflicts, he stated.

Debating the report by the Land, Natural Resources and Tourism standing committee for February 2023 to January 2024 MPs argued for priority allocation of funds for preparation of a countrywide land use master plan and land survey. Such developments will provide the framework of a permanent remedy for land conflicts, they stated.

Josephat Gwajima (Kawe) said the National Land Use Planning Commission received 8bn/- allocations in the current financial year, up from 4.73bn/- in fiscal 2022/23 and "it should have spent it accordingly in surveying the whole country's land."

The country's 947,303 square kilometres

holding 12,318 villages, 3,564 wards and 570 divisions had by late 2023 seen 10,744 villages already surveyed, with 3,681 presented with certification of approved land use planning.

"The remaining 8,637 villages are yet to be granted land use planning papers. Only 30 percent of the total urban Tanzania has been covered with land use planning. It's time for planning land use countrywide," he emphasised, asserting that the absence of a land use plan hinders collecting revenues from annual title deed dues and other land fees.

Iddi Kassim Iddi (Msalala) argued that land is the pillar for people to be economically empowered to take up agriculture or other investments.

The absence of a countrywide land use

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Simba's new signings make immediate impact with Premier League goals

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NMB Bank, Young Africans unveil new black debit card for premium customers

Samia in no hurry to assent to bills

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civic polls slated for late this year. "This year Tanzania will mark yet another milestone in protection of fundamental human rights of freedom to participate in public affairs in upholding democracy in holding local government elections," she said.

A task force to examine the rules governing political activity and advise on necessary reforms was formed to ensure free and fair elections, she stated, noting that when the taskforce submitted its report most of its recommendations were accepted by the government and all stakeholders involved.

They revolved around increasing transparency in electoral processes including the modality of appointment of the electoral commission chairman, naming of members of the electoral body as required to reflect its independence, she explained.

"In order for the accepted recommendations to have the force of law, we drafted and tabled to Parliament three bills aiming at addressing recommendations by the task force," she said, noting that they were debated and approved by the legislature.

On the economic front, despite various global shocks, Tanzania's economy has continued to grow where the gross domestic product (GDP) grew at 5.6 per cent on average, up from 4.7 per cent in 2022.

Inflation has remained low at 3.9 per cent and improving on the medium-term target of 5 per cent, she stated, affirming that up to December 2023 the Tanzania Investment Centre (TIC) had registered a total of 526 new large investment projects billed at \$5.6bn. This is a 58 per cent increase from the preceding year, an illustration of sustained

confidence in Tanzania's growth trajectory, she stated. In addition, more credit rating agencies gave Tanzania a favourable credit score in 2023, a positive step in building international confidence and attracting more foreign direct investments, she asserted.

The government will be there to provide full support and protection of the established investments, she stated, pointing at the leading sector as agriculture, whose productivity continues to grow.

There is a high food self-sufficiency ratio standing at 124 per cent, she stated, also mentioning minerals sector growth, attaining a 6.43 per cent increase during the period.

"Tanzania has witnessed notable growth in the tourism sector, with receipts rising from \$3.33bn in 2023 from \$2.33bn in 2022 and in the third quarter of 2023 industrial productivity grew by 4.2 per cent," she said.

In the next few weeks, the government is expected to mark the completion of the Julius Nyerere Hydro-power Project (JNHPP), a flagship project which will greatly help to end power blackouts in the country.

She similarly dwelt on the enactment of the Universal Health Insurance (UHI) Act meant to facilitate access to quality health services for all. Tanzania will pursue peace and security advocacy and participate in peacekeeping efforts in the region and beyond, she said.

Ahamada el-Badaoui Mohamed, dean of the diplomatic corps and Comoros ambassador, said his office has been enabling ambassadors in Tanzania to meet with public officials and others to exchange views, information and experience.

This had eased carrying out of various diplomatic activities and deepening cooperation for sustainable development, he added.



Agriculture minister Hussein Bashe (3rd-L) and the GF Automobile Company director of communications and marketing Salman Karmali (2nd-R) cut the ribbon in Dodoma city yesterday at the handing over of car the firm has given to the BBT (Building a Better Tomorrow) initiative as a gesture of support to agribusiness in the country. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

'Land survey strategy to end land conflicts'

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plan has not only attracted conflicts but denied major investments in different parts of the country, he stated.

"In Msalala district for instance there is no land use plan that differentiates areas for economic and residential purposes," he said.

Dr Florence Samizi (Muhambwe) said

that without proper land use planning land conflicts shall continue to surface, citing the case of Kigoma Region where out of 306 wards just 112 wards have been surveyed.

Buhigwe and Kibondo districts are not surveyed while in Kikonko District not one village has been surveyed, while in Muhambwe District only nine villages have been surveyed out of 50 registered villages. The scenario touch-

es off sporadic land contentions, she stated.

She said the land use survey agency needs 20bn/- yearly to prepare a land use plan gradually for all districts within a few years, insisting that the government needs to allocate the required amounts.

Timotheo Mnzava (Korogwe Rural), the committee chairman, said when tabling the report earlier in the morn-

ing that the government needs to ensure that all surveyed villages across the country are provided with land use plans.

The government should allocate more funds to the National Land Use Planning Commission for it to smoothly carry out its assignments to end land conflicts and attract large investments, he added.



Bank of Tanzania Governor Emmanuel Tutuba (C, facing camera) pictured in Dar es Salaam earlier this week chairing a meeting with a Bank of Africa Group delegation led by CEO Amine Bouabid (R), who was accompanied by Regional Director East Africa and Ghana Kobby Andah (2nd-R), acting Co-MDs of Bank of Africa Tanzania - Samir Yassine (2nd-L) and Wasia Mushi (L). Others include BoT deputy governor Sauda Kassim Msemu (4th-R) and director of financial sector supervision Sadati Mussa. Photo courtesy of BoT

Drought narrows the Panama canal, delays shipping

PANAMA CITY

At the bar that Sandra manages in Panama City's central financial district, the variety offered on the menu has shrunk due to delays in ship traffic through the Panama Canal, one of the world's major shipping routes.

"We are out of stock of some of our foreign beers, because the shipment didn't arrive. I hope it will get here one of these days," the Panamanian bar-keeper told IPS, as she pointed to a half-empty refrigerator in the bar nestled between skyscrapers.

The delays have been repeated since drought took hold in this Central American nation throughout 2023, exacerbated by the effects of the climate crisis and the cyclical El Niño Southern Oscillation (ENSO) weather phenomenon that warms the waters of the Pacific Ocean.

This mixture of phenomena has repercussions on the forested areas surrounding the canal and the Alhajuela, Gatun and Miraflores ar-

tificial reservoirs that supply it and provide water for more than half of the country's total population of 4.7 million people.

Due to the lack of rain, the level of Gatun Lake, the main source of water for the canal inaugurated in 1914, dropped from its normal height of 26 meters above sea level to less than 24 in recent weeks.

Six percent of the world's maritime trade, especially container trade, goes through the canal connecting the Atlantic and Pacific oceans.

In addition, the interoceanic waterway has lost volume through evaporation due to warming water temperatures, according to a 2022 study by the Netherlands Water Partnership (NWP), a network of 180 public and private organizations.

Oscar Vallarino, a former official of the state-owned autonomous Panama Canal Authority (ACP), founded in 1978 to manage the company, said the situation stems from

including the canal in its current watershed and expanding it since 2016, which doubled its capacity and the volume of ships, in addition to leading to the prohibition of the construction of more dams.

"Above and beyond the ship traffic, the canal must provide raw water for the populations of (the provinces) of Panama and Colon. The difference is that now there is more traffic and the problem is that in the dry season the salt level rises and damages the raw water for potabilization," he told IPS.

From the Bridge of the Americas, which connects Panama City with the western part of its metropolitan area, the ships lined up to enter the canal look like figures in a board game moving slowly over a blue board. The waiting time varies, mostly en route to a U.S. port.

But the slowdown stems from the crucial element of the infrastructure: water, whose scarcity means fewer commercial vessels can cross from one ocean to the other. The

reservoirs that feed the canal have a capacity of 1,857 hectoliters and currently hold only 900.

At the same time, the demand for different activities is increasing, leading to greater competition for consumption and conflicts that will intensify throughout this century.

Law 93 of 1999, modified by Law 44 of 2006, establishes the limits of the canal's watershed, which covers 343,521 hectares and is one of 52 in the country.

The rainy season in this tropical country runs from May to November, but the last quarter of last year recorded lower rainfall, and the drought will worsen in the first half of 2024.

The population of the provinces of Panama and Colon also depends on water from the canal. But the problem is aggravated by waste, the leakage of at least 40 percent of the water due to broken pipes and the lack of efficient infrastructure.

This is despite the fact that this nation ranks fifth in the world in an-

nual rainfall, has six times the world average of fresh water per person, in addition to 500 rivers, in an area of only 75,517 square kilometers.

But on the other hand, it has the highest individual consumption in Latin America, with 507 liters per inhabitant. Panama has an availability of about 115,000 cubic meters per inhabitant/year, according to the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB).

The consequences of the climate crisis and ENSO cloud the outlook for the water supply, since they mean that both excess and scarcity of water will create trouble for this Central American country. El Niño has reappeared in its strong phase, as meteorologists define the worst of its three modalities.

The ACP estimates that the basin captures almost 4.4 billion cubic meters (m³) annually, of which the canal consumes 70 percent for navigation and 15 percent for drinking water.

Empowerment, procurement MoU inked to aid small firms

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firms, and be considered when they meet the criteria.

The protocol reflects provision of the Public Procurement Act 2023 at Section 64, he elaborated, urging NEEC and PPRA to institute awards for institutions that are exemplary in implementing that national strategy.

The PPRA memorandum with NEEC is meant to step up economic empowerment of local firms, enhancing their participation at national level tendering processes, with small entrepreneurs especially in focus, he stated.

"What we are doing today is to go and reach special groups: I mean the youth, women, the elderly and people with special needs and make them active participants in the national economy," he said.

Jenista Mhagama, the Policy, Parliament and Coordination state minister in the Prime Minister's Office (PMO), said the protocol is a clear illustration of the wish by President Samia Suluhu Hassan to include the various segments of society in the national economy.

Finance minister Dr Mwigulu Nchemba said the protocol needs to be implemented without delay to curb deficiencies noticed in current procurement legislation.

Beng'i Issa, the NEEC executive secretary, said the MoU is an additional protocol between the two institutions after another MoU signed in 2017 whose life span ended in 2020.



Chief Sheikh Abubakar Zubeir bin Ally addresses journalists in Dar es Salaam yesterday on his recent official tour of Morocco, where he signed an agreement under which 200 Tanzanian Muslim scholars will pursue studies in leadership there. Photo: Correspondent Imani Nathaniel

Tourism earns 8.25trn/- since Royal Tour film campaign began

By Francis Kajubi, Dodoma

TOURISM sector earned Tanzania 8.25trn/- (\$3.3billion) as of December last year since promotion of the country's top destinations through the Tanzania: The Royal Tour documentary film started in April 2022.

According to the Parliamentary Committee on Land, Natural Resources and Tourism, the earnings are equivalent to 25 percent of all foreign exchange earned during the period.

Tabling a report on activities undertaken by the committee for the period between February 2023 and January this year in the National Assembly yesterday, its Chairman Timotheo Mnzava said that tourism sector is leading in foreign exchange earnings while contributing more than 20 percent of the country's GDP.

He said the tourism sector has recorded unprecedented statistics since the country gained independence.

"Tourism experts attribute these achievements to the efforts by President Samia Suluhu Hassan to market the sector by appearing in Tanzania: The Royal Tour film," he said.

He said as of December last year as per

Bank of Tanzania Quarterly Economic Review of the fourth quarter of 2023, the number of tourists who visited the country were 1,790,301 which he said is the highest number ever recorded in the sector.

In terms of employment, he said the sector has created 1,600,000 direct employment opportunities which is equivalent to 11 percent of all employment in the country.

The committee chair further said that in order to ensure sustainability of the achievements, the nation must invest more in the conservation and market the tourist attractions.

He asserted that among those who visited the country for tourism purposes 58 percent visited national parks while 42 percent visited other hotspots, including Ngorongoro Conservation Area and Zanzibar.

According to him, the status of infrastructure in the national parks is unsatisfactory; adding that the ongoing rains in the country might affect the number of tourists visiting the country.

Mnzava said that since tourism sector has a significant contribution to the country's economy, the National Assembly resolved that the government should im-

plement the strategies of marketing tourism under Tanzania Tourist Board (TTB).

He said the strategy will help to realise growth in the number of visitors to five million per annum by the year 2025 from the current two million and also collect 13.8trn/- in revenues from the visitors.

The Committee also advised the government to establish Tourism Development Fund (TDF) and allocated 1 percent of all earnings from the sector.

Mnzava further said that TTB is set to coordinate production of four international documentaries including two which are continuation of the Royal Tour and two international documentaries from Hollywood.

"One of the films is entitled 'Kijiji cha Milele' or 'Presidential Tour' featuring President Samia and the renown Chinese film actor Jing Dong while the other documentary focuses on the contribution of the late Father of the Nation Julius Nyerere in the liberation struggle in Africa," he said.

"All of these strategies require adequate funding. Unfortunately, as a nation, we have not yet made deliberate efforts to promote tourism in order to achieve the desired results," he said.

TCRA launches cybersecurity awareness campaign

By Guardian Reporter

TANZANIA Communications Regulatory Authority (TCRA) has embarked on a public awareness campaign designed to bolster online safety and advocate for responsible internet usage.

Rolf Kibaja, TCRA head of communication and public relations said this in Dar es Salaam yesterday when speaking to journalists.

He said that the initiative aims to heighten public awareness about cyber threats while providing communication service users with essential resources to mitigate online risks.

Kibaja highlighted the campaign's commitment to educating citizens about the regulations set forth in the Cybercrime Act of 2015, emphasizing the importance of compliance with laws governing online activities.

Scheduled to run from February 6th to March 31st, 2024, the campaign seeks to impart comprehensive knowledge on cybersecurity, legal compliance, digital literacy and effective communication resource utilisation.

"Our fundamental goal is to foster responsible and ethical conduct on the internet," he said.

"We aim to empower citizens with

knowledge and skills to navigate social media responsibly, enabling them to make informed decisions and resist the influence of disinformation and misinformation in the online space."

According to him, TCRA also intends to include children in the campaign, recognizing the vulnerability of this demographic to the misuse of communication services, particularly internet-based platforms.

"We're rolling out a Child Online Protection (COP) initiative together with this campaign to ensure responsible usage of online services by the younger generation, safeguarding them from various

online vices like cyber bullying and child pornography," he said.

"To disseminate this campaign message effectively, we will utilize social media, mainstream outlets, bulk SMS, TV teasers and various other communication modalities."

Beyond promoting online safety, the campaign will stress the significance of using the national domain name (.tz) when registering websites, said, adding that registering with .tz helps establish a website's Tanzanian origin, fostering user trust.

Kibaja urged stakeholders in the Information and Communication Technology

to actively engage with the campaign by registering their websites with the .tz domain, stressing its crucial role in safeguarding online businesses in the country.

As cybercrimes continue to evolve with new attack types and techniques, Kibaja emphasized that TCRA reaffirms its dedication to consistently educating the public as mandated by the Electronic and Postal Communications Act of 2010 and the founding act of 2003 together with regulations and guidelines.

"This commitment aims to empower individuals to safeguard themselves and responsibly utilise cyberspace," he said.

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Bulyanhulu Gold Mine ("the Company"), 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 Quotes from reputable, experienced, certified, and qualified parties to provide the following:

Coating specifications:

- 176 X C-Pox ST 180 Resin Red Aluminum, Size 10L, Part No. 7N181-7802-10
- 176 X C-Pox ST 180 Catalyst, Size 10L, Part No. 7N182-9999-10
- 176 X C-Pox ST 180 Resin Aluminum, Size 10L, Part No. 7N181-7802-10
- 176 X C-Pox ST 180 Catalyst, Size 10L, Part No. 7N182-9999-10
- 150 X C-Thane S700 HB Base RAL 7040 Window Grey, Size 16L, Part No. 7P701-0507-16
- 150 X C-Thane S700 Catalyst, Size 4L, Part No. 7P702-9999-04
- 44 X C-Thane S700 HB Base B49 Golden Yellow, Size 3.2L, Part No. 7P701-0B49-C4
- 44 X C-Thane S700 HB Catalyst, Size 0.8L, Part No. 7P702-9999-B4
- 44 X C-Thane S700 HB Base RAL 9005 Black, Size 3.2L, Part No. 7P701-9005-C4
- 44 X C-Thane S700 HB Catalyst, Size 0.8L, Part No. 7P702-9999-B4
- 30 X C-Pox Thinner CP40, Size 20L, Part No. 7S902-0000-20
- 30 X C-Thane Thinner CP81, Size 20L, Part No. 7Q680-0000-20
- 30 X CIN Degreaser, Size 25L, Part No. 8D954-9874-25
- 102 X C-Pox ST170 Base RAL 7035 Light Grey, Size 10L, Part No. 7N171-7035-02
- 102 X C-Pox ST170 Catalyst, Size 10L, Part No. 7N172-9980-02
- 146 X CINCOAT Sealer S990 Resin, Size 3L, Part No. 8K991-0000-03
- 146 X CINCOAT Sealer S990 Catalyst, Size 1L, Part No. 8K992-9999-01
- 250 X Grit Blastrite B60, Unit Size Ton

Key documents:

- Clear and detailed Quotation.
- Company registration documents i.e. Certificate of incorporation, business license, TIN, VRN, Tax Clearance Certificate etc.
- BRELA detailed search document indicating Tanzanian ownership percentage, Tanzanian management and below management employment percentage to determine classification as an Indigenous Tanzanian Company as per the Local Content Regulation, 2018.
- Applicable certification, accreditation, affiliated registrations, and letter of dealership as required.
- Approved Local Content Plan or acknowledgement of submission from the Mining Commissioner.

Submission of Quotes:

- Please submit your quotes via email to bulytender@barrick.com.
- The reference "BUL-RFQ-24-01-11 - CORROSION PROTECTION PAINT SUPPLY" must be quoted in the subject line of the email.

NB: The Company reserves the right to invite any other supplier(s) who did not submit a quote through this advertisement. If you do not hear from us in 21 days after the deadline date, please consider your bid/quote unsuccessful.

Key dates:

- Last date to submit quotes: **16th February 2024**

For and on behalf of BULYANHULU GOLD MINE LIMITED



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BULYANHULU GOLD MINE LIMITED

Requests the submission of Expressions of Interest from qualifying parties wanting to participate in the below goods/service package at Bulyanhulu Gold Mine

Bulyanhulu Gold Mine Limited (BGML) is a fully owned subsidiary of Twiga Minerals Corporation. Bulyanhulu Gold Mine Site is located 45km south of Lake Victoria, in the Kahama District of Shinyanga Region, northern Tanzania. There are road accesses to the mine from Mwanza, 127km to the northeast and from the town of Kahama, 84km to the south.

BGML, therefore, invites "Expressions of Interest" from reputable, experienced and certified companies interested in pre-qualifying for inclusion in a tender process for the provision of the below goods/service packages.

No.	Reference no.	Description of services to be procured	Pre-Qualification Criteria
1	BUL-23-01-01	CORROSION PROTECTION SERVICE.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contractor specialised in corrosion protection services, must have proven experience with application of different coating systems. • Experience working with similar works in last 3 years. • Competence in corrosion protection of chemicals corrosive nature and fully conversant with the risks and control measures of working in Mining industry. • Team with multi discipline members (Mainly - Supervisors / Safety officer / QA&QC officer / Multi skilled) should have sound Knowledge of Mine Health & Safety acts. • List of equipment's - Resource list - specifying quantities - List of all tools and tackles (with detailed specifications of important equipment).

The above services/goods are intended to be awarded through a competitive tendering process in which a restricted number of suitable pre-qualified and experienced contractors shall be invited to receive the tender documents. Please submit an "Expression of Interest" on your company's letterhead If your company qualify as per the pre-qualification criteria together with the following additional information and/or documentation:

- Full company profile.
- Company registration documents i.e., Certificate of incorporation, Tax Clearance Certificate, etc.
- Applicable certification, accreditation, and affiliated registration.
- Approved Local Content Plan or acknowledgment of submission from the Mining Commissioner.
- BRELA detailed search certificate indicating Tanzanian ownership percentage, Tanzanian management, and below management employment percentage to determine classification as an Indigenous Tanzanian Company as per the Local Content Regulation, 2018.

Kindly send your response by email to bulytender@barrick.com by latest 1800hrs on the **16th February 2024**. Any responses received after this date shall not be considered.

Please quote the above Reference number and description on your Expression of interest submission.

If you do not hear from us in 21 days after the deadline date, please consider your EOI unsuccessful.

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

For and on behalf of BULYANHULU GOLD MINE LIMITED

Participants of National Defence College short course tour IPP media houses in Dar



Capital Radio deputy director Bahati Alex (2nd-L) pictured in the station's studio in Dar es Salaam yesterday making a demonstration on the airing of radio programmes to visiting Tanzanian participants of a short course in Security and Leadership which they are pursuing at the National Defence College in the city. The delegation, which was taken around the IPP print and electronic media outlets, included representatives of political parties, civil society organisations and religious institutions. Photos: Chief Photographer Selemani Mpochi



ITV News and Current Affairs head Stephen Chuwa (L) briefs the delegation on his department's activities.



Delegation head Commodore Baganchwera Rurambuka speaks after leading the team during the tour. From-L: Doyo Hassan Doyo (member of visiting delegation), ITV/Radio One managing director Joyce Mhville, EATV/Radio managing director Regina Mengi and The Guardian Ltd director Joyce Luhanga



ITV/Radio One MD Joyce Mhville elaborates on how the twin stations operate.



The Guardian newspaper managing editor Wallace Mauggo (L) takes the visiting delegation through the basics of print media pre-press operations.



Christian Ngwapaula (L, gesturing), an engineer with The Guardian Ltd Printing Unit, briefs the team on newspaper printing.



ITV/Radio One MD Joyce Mhville makes wrap-up remarks to the delegation as it toured the twin stations.



EATV/Radio MD Regina Mengi briefs the visiting team on the twin stations' operations.

EALA members for efficiency to end delays at Dar port

By Correspondent James Kandoya

MEMBERS of the East African Legislative Assembly (EALA) have challenged the management of the Port of Dar es Salaam to work on the concerns raised by its users, including delays.

Rutazana Francine, Chairperson of the Committee on Communication, Trade and Investment, said the challenge of cargo delays causes increased costs for port users.

They threw the challenge yesterday in Dar es Salaam during their visit to see handling services at the Port of Dar es Salaam.

Rutazana said other issues were cargo storage facilities such as Kwala dry port and other inland containers depots.

"We arrived here in Tanzania four days ago to meet all stakeholders such as operators, investors, traders and customs officials from both here and member countries. Despite being satisfied with the performance, a few challenges were raised by some of the stakeholders," she said.

Rutazana who is from Rwanda further asked to know the authority's commitment to ensuring that cargo leave the port within a maximum of five days after completion of all customs procedures.

"We came to gain insights and meet those complaining about cargo delays. Do we have other areas for cargo storage to enhance efficiency

and decongest the increased demand for the port?" she asked.

Mussa Biboze, the representative of the port director said: "Our port operates efficiently by ensuring that after unloading, all customs procedures are completed within two hours to five days."

Biboze admitted that clearance and customs officials or incomplete documentation contribute to delays.

He however assured the delegates that the port was working hard to address the matter. Biboze highlighted the importance of using Kwala dry port which according to him, may reduce cargo congestion by up to 60 percent.

"Kwala dry port is located a few kilometres from the Port of Dar es Salaam. Despite its small size, we can start using it for some services," he said.

David ole Sankok, EALA member from Kenya, expressed satisfaction with what they observed, saying that Tanzania has more opportunities to invest in the blue economy due to its abundant water resources.

He called on regional countries to increase investment to boost exports over imports.

"Development is achieved by exporting more goods; here we have sufficient infrastructure but where are the goods to export? We have started with leather products and last December we passed laws to increase restrictions on importing such products," he said.



Tanga Port acting manager Peter Millanzi (C) has a word with Transport ministry permanent secretary Prof Godius Kahyarara (L) in Tanga city yesterday on current operations at the port in the wake of major infrastructural and other improvements at the gateway. Photo: Correspondent Hamida Kamchalla

NBS: Headline inflation for January stagnated at 3pc

By Polycarp Machira, Dodoma

THE annual headline inflation rate for the month of January 2024 has stagnated at 3.0 as it was recorded in December 2023, the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) has said.

A statement issued yesterday by the bureau states that the stagnation explains that speed of price change for commodities for the year ended January, 2024 has remained the same as the speed

that was recorded for the year ended December, 2023.

The overall index went up from 110.81 recorded in January 2023 to 114.09 in January 2024. The National Consumer Price Index between December 2023 and January 2024 has increased by 0.7 percent.

"Food and non-alcoholic beverages inflation rate for January 2024 has decreased to 1.5 percent from 2.3 percent that was recorded in December 2023," reads the

statement. On the other hand, annual inflation rate for all items without food and non-alcoholic beverages for January, 2024 has also decreased to 2.8 percent from 3.3 percent that was recorded in December, 2023.

The increase of the overall index is attributed to price increase for some food and non-food items. Some food items that contributed to an increase of the index include sorghum flour by 3.9 percent, fresh sardines (0.8),

dried sardines (2.6), round potatoes (1.6), dried peas (0.8) and dried cowpeas (0.6).

Some non-food items that contributed to an increase of the index includes kerosene by 1.7 percent, firewood (3.9), charcoal (4.0), health services (0.7) and passenger transport by road (2.1).

Others are passenger transport by taxi (2.2), transportation of pupils by school bus between their homes and school (9.2), education services (school fees) (1.6),

food and beverage serving services (1.4) and personal care (2.2).

In comparison, other East African countries of Kenya and Uganda have both recorded increased inflation rate in January with the former recording an increase of 6.9 percent in January 2024 up from 6.6 percent in December 2023.

Uganda recorded an increase of 2.8 percent in January 2024 compared to 2.6 percent recorded in the month of December, 2023.



BARRICK
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Advertisement

REQUEST FOR QUOTATION

BUL-RFQ-24-01-01 - SUPPLY OF 800KVA COMPACT SUBSTATION

Bulyanhulu Gold Mine ("the Company"), 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 Quotes from reputable, experienced, certified, and qualified parties to provide the following:

Substation specifications:

- 1 X 800kVA Compact Substation comprising RM6 Standard Range Medium Voltage Distribution RMS (Schneider) as 4way with 1 isolator and 3 CB provided with Protection Relay Vip 400. 800kVA Cast resin dry type Transformer 6.6Kv/525V, 1No CB 1250A 3P MCCB. Metering and Earth Leakage Relay with NER. Inclusive of skid base and enclosure. Must be IP 65, Must have heater for Moisture control, certification for corrosion protection and must have warrant of at least 3 years.
- 1 X Commissioning at site for 3 days by Electrical Engineer.

Key documents:

- Clear and detailed Quotation.
- Company registration documents i.e. Certificate of incorporation, business license, TIN, VRN, Tax Clearance Certificate etc.
- BRELA detailed search document indicating Tanzanian ownership percentage, Tanzanian management and below management employment percentage to determine classification as an Indigenous Tanzanian Company as per the Local Content Regulation, 2018.
- Applicable certification, accreditation, affiliated registrations, and letter of dealership as required.
- Approved Local Content Plan or acknowledgement of submission from the Mining Commissioner.

Submission of Quotes:

Please submit your quotes via email to bulytender@barrick.com.

The reference "BUL-RFQ-24-01-01 - SUPPLY OF 800KVA COMPACT SUBSTATION" must be quoted in the subject line of the email.

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

If you do not hear from us in 21 days after the deadline date, please consider your bid/quote unsuccessful.

Key Dates

- Last date to submit quotes: **16th February 2024**

For and on behalf of BULYANHULU GOLD MINE LIMITED

Mwanga Hakika Bank doubles its pre-tax profit, rise asset value

A commercial bank in Tanzania, Mwanga Hakika Bank Ltd has posted an impressive 2023 financial results after its profit before tax more than doubled at Sh10.07 billion from Sh4.06 billion recorded by end of December 2022.

The bank's official have stated that for last year, they achieved remarkable growth across key financial metrics, showcasing its resilience, strategic foresight, and unwavering commitment to customer satisfaction.

According to the financial statements the bank had improved significantly its asset value to Sh209.35 billion, marking an impressive 80 percent increase from Sh116.05 billion in the previous year.

Mwanga Hakika's Head of Finance and Administration Chomete Hussein said, MHB Bank last year performance is due to innovative products and excellence in customer service that has fostered a strategic partnerships to better solve the evolving financial needs of our diverse customer base.

The bank had a strong lending activity last year, as loans surge by 64 percent to Sh131.93 billion from Sh80.69 billion, with deposits reaching a remarkable high of Sh146.67 billion, demonstrating customers' confidence.

Net interest income witnessed a substantial increase, rising to Sh13.4 billion compared to the Sh10.01 billion of preceding year. Additionally, non-interest income experienced significant growth, surging by 52 percent to an impressive Sh7.85 billion from Sh5.17 billion.

"The bank is also continued to remain committed to shareholder value and financial stability," said Mr. Chomete Hussein as the Shareholders' fund has risen to Sh29.75 billion from Sh22.7 billion.

The return on equity has also seen a remarkable increase, rising to 24.19 percent from 13.62 percent, marking a significant 78 percent growth year on year.

"The bank has demonstrated efficient cost management, with the cost-to-income ratio decreasing to 50.3 percent from 69.76 percent, underscoring operational excellence and financial efficiency."

Govt working on 'efficient' virtual teaching system

By Guardian Correspondent, Kibaha

THE government has started to test an online teaching system which enables one teacher to remotely teach more than 1,000 pupils in various secondary schools.

The system which is currently being tested in some schools in Coast and Dodoma regions enables a teacher from one centre to reach many learners in different regions.

In addition to making the task easier, the system addresses the challenge of lack of science teachers facing many schools in the country.

Sara Mlaki, Coast Regional Education Officer, said the system will improve teaching and boost pupils' performance.

"After the system is completed, the next stage is to upgrade classroom facilities to comply with the system's requirements," she said.

According to Jackson Mhoro, an IT specialist at Kibaha Education Centre (KEC), who provides teacher training on how to use the system, four teachers have so far mastered the system and others still hone their skills.

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Although the government is still testing the system, Kibaha Secondary School pupils believe it would make understanding of topics easier and improve their performance in the exams.

They also noted other advantages such as time saving that allows for the timely completion of all subjects and topics.

Elihuruma Thomas, one of the pupils, said the system is useful and could help address the teacher shortage challenge, particularly in science-related subjects.

"When this system starts fully, it will bring comfort to pupils because we will be completing topics early and start making revisions. I believe it will enable us perform well in our national exams," said Zaharuki Hamisi.



Songambe Initiative Organisation programme manager Happiness Manjuu (R, foreground) pictured in east Machame in Hai District on Wednesday conducting a training session on inclusive sports and the understanding of disability-related issues in schools. The event attracted 34 teachers from five primary schools. Photo: Correspondent James Lanka

'Restore council loans to save traders from loan sharks'

By Guardian Correspondent, Simanjiro

WARD councillors in Simanjiro District, Manyara Region have urged the government to restore 10 percent of council earnings as loans for women, youth and people with disabilities to save people from high interests charged by loan sharks.

For years, councils have

been setting aside 10 percent as revolving fund for the three groups until it was suspended by the government in April last year due to various irregularities cited by the Controller and Auditor General (CAG).

Speaking during their meeting here recently, some of the councillors said the situation has become worse in the area, especially amongst small-scale traders who suffer due to lack

of capital.

Paulina Makeseni, a Special Seats councillor said currently many people are forced to seek financial support from unregistered institutions or individuals and later face hard time to repay the loans due to high interests charged.

Makeseni asked the government to rethink its decision and come up with a supportive system to enable people access

low interest loans.

Lucas Zacharia (Endiamtu Ward) said that majority of people, especially women and youth are unable to access loan services due to high interest rates as well as tough conditions set by banks and that the 10 percent loans issued by district councils was their only saviour.

"High interest rates charged by financial institutions and

other tough conditions are a big burden for many Tanzanians. So, the only area where Tanzanians can get relief is the loans provided by district councils," he said.

Gracian Makota, Simanjiro District Executive Director, said the government is yet to reinstate the 10 percent loans which come from council's internal revenues.

He said that if the govern-

ment decides to restore provision of such loans, it is important for political leaders to push for those who take the funds to repay for others to borrow too.

Makota underscored the need for people who borrow funds to develop a culture of repaying the loans on time in order for others to benefit from the opportunity.



China's Ambassador to Tanzania, Chen Mingjian, makes remarks at a function held in Dar es Salaam on Wednesday to mark tomorrow's (Feb 10) onset of the Chinese Lunar New Year. Photo: Correspondent Mary Kadoke

Lunar New Year: China sees stronger ties with Tanzania

By Correspondent Mary Kadoke

CHINA sees its historic bilateral ties with Tanzania getting stronger going forward for mutual benefit of the people of two countries.

Chen Mingjian, Chinese ambassador to Tanzania made the remarks in Dar es Salaam on Wednesday night in an occasion to officially welcome Lunar New Year to be celebrated this Saturday.

Lunar New Year is the beginning of the New Year based on the lunar calendar and the 2023 has been dubbed 'the year of the dragon' to symbolize peace, harmony, power and success.

She said over the past 60 years, the two countries have enjoyed increased cooperation in trade, education, medical care and culture, noting that the friendship is deeply rooted in history and has grown stronger during the past decades.

"Tanzania is supportive and committed to global security and civilization. With that, China is ready to take this opportunity to carry on the traditional friendship and deepen strategic and pragmatic cooperation," she said.

Chen said China-Tanzania cooperation is in a good condition especially after President Samia Suluhu Hassan's visit in China in 2022 where she met Chinese President Xi Jinping and the two leaders agreed to upgrade bilateral relations to a comprehensive strategic partnership.

"Also, in August last year, President Samia met President Xi on the sidelines of the BRICS Summit in Johannesburg where they shared their readiness to take the opportunity of jointly celebrating

the 60th anniversary to continuously work together in supporting each other's core interests and deepening strategic cooperation," she said.

She thanked the Ministry of Culture, Arts and Sports for allowing 37 Zhejiang artists from China to perform at the New Year celebrations alongside Tanzania's Safi Theater group.

Hamisi Mwinjuma, Deputy Minister for Culture, Arts and Sports commended the comprehensive cooperation between the two countries as they mark 60 years of anniversary of diplomatic relations this year.

"As we usher in the year of dragon, it will be remiss of me if I do not take time to recognize the contributions made by our founding fathers, the Late Mwalimu Julius Nyerere and the late Chairman Mao Zedong. These two leaders are the reason Tanzania and China are all-weather friends whose friendship is built on a strong foundation," he said.

"This year is also a year of culture and tourism for both Tanzania and China. These two countries are highly committed to holding several cultural and tourism activities so as to attract more tourists from China to Tanzania and vice versa as well as enhancing the so-people-to-people exchange which is the integral part of our robust economic and social relations."

The dragon has long held a power position in the Chinese zodiac, showering success upon those born in its years. With 2024 being a year of the dragon, legends have it that the mythical creature's good fortune will be sprinkled upon all.

US fugitive wanted for murder escapes from custody in Kenya

NAIROBI

A MAN who fled the US after allegedly killing his girlfriend has walked out of a Kenyan police station where he was being held without anyone stopping him.

Kelvin Kangethe, 41, was arrested last week leaving a club in Kenya's capital, Nairobi, after a months-long manhunt.

A court had allowed his detention for 30 days awaiting possible extradition.

Authorities say that after Kangethe murdered his girlfriend last October, he abandoned her body in a car at Boston Logan International Airport.

He then boarded a flight to Kenya, his country of origin. He has not commented on the allegations.

Police have shocked Kenyans by dis-

closing that Kangethe managed to walk out of the Muthaiga Police Station where he was being detained on Wednesday afternoon.

According to the police statement, Kangethe took off during a meeting in a private room with a man who visited the station saying he was his lawyer.

"After a short while the prisoner escaped by running away and left the lawyer behind," the statement said.

At the time, all the officers were attending a separate meeting that had been called by the head of the station.

An eyewitness who works near the station told the BBC that police pursued Kangethe, who was dressed in a black jacket.

"We thought he was being chased for

jaywalking. People just watched him run away," the witness said.

"If we knew why he was wanted we'd have helped arrest him."

Police say they failed to apprehend Kangethe. His whereabouts are currently unknown.

Four police officers who were on duty and the man who met Kangethe have been arrested, Nairobi police commander Adamson Bungei told local media.

The privately owned Star newspaper quoted Bungei as saying that the security lapse was "embarrassing" for Kenyan police, who have since launched a new search for Kangethe.

Officers at the station are restricting access, fearing more information could leak to the public.

The family of Kangethe's girlfriend, Margaret Mbitu, told US media that she had been planning to end their relationship before he allegedly killed her.

She was a 30-year-old Kenyan-American nurse working in Halifax, Massachusetts.

Mbitu was last seen alive leaving her workplace on the evening of 30 October last year.

She was reported missing the same day and her body was discovered two days later.

Authorities believe Kangethe left the US during the window between Mbitu's disappearance and the discovery of her body.

BBC



Serengeti National Park head conservator Moronda Moronda pictured on Thursday presenting a progress report on the construction of three classrooms worth 60m/- at Mwauchungu Primary School in Bariadi District, Simiyu Region. The work, which was done in part on self-help basis and with KfW Development Bank sponsorship, has been completed. Photo: Guardian Correspondent. Photo: Correspondent Dege Masoli

Tobacco farmers called on to desist from child labour

By Guardian Correspondent, Kahama

TANZANIA Tobacco Board (TTB) has advised farmers to follow international guidelines regarding tobacco farming, namely environmental conservation, child labour, quality of the crop and payment to workers.

Stanley Mnozya, TTB director general made the call earlier this week when speaking to journalists following reports that farmers in Ushetu Council, Kahama District, Shinyanga Region violate tobacco farming guidelines by involving children in farming.

He tasked farmers to ensure that children are not used in tobacco farming as well as to eliminate child labour and other forms of harassment for workers involved in the crop production.

"In response to article 69 of the Tobacco Industry Act of 2001 and its amendment in

2011, the aim of the guide is to create a good, safe and fair environment in all tobacco farms so that they can continue to sell the crop to their customers locally and internationally," he said.

Mnozya said that the guidance is based on the employment standards as per Employment and Labour Relations Act No. 6 of 2004, Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work of the International Labour Organization (ILO) as well as other conditions.

He said all stakeholders in tobacco value chain should ensure they follow guidelines and bar children from engaging in the sector in any way.

On children from Rwanda, Burundi and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) who reportedly work in tobacco farms, Mnozya said immigration procedures are being followed to ensure they are taken back home.

Emmanuel Shibuga, one of the tobacco farmers in the dis-

trict, said he has been farming tobacco for more than 20 years but has not faced the challenge of child labour by foreign nationals.

Kahama District Immigration Officer, Salum Rashid Salum, said there are legal procedures to bring immigrants into the country to work as seasonal labourers which are done by those who need them with a special permit.

Salum appealed to farmers who need labourers in their fields to go to his office and be given procedures to obtain permits.

Kahama District Commissioner Mboni Mhita said cultivation of tobacco in the district complies with international laws governing the sector and that is why Kahama is currently second in production of tobacco in the country.

She said the government is paying attention to each of its departments to ensure that all the guidelines for managing the crop are followed.

TRA sensitising transporters on compliance with tax rates

By Correspondent Wilhelm Mulinda, Mwanza

THE Tanzania Revenue Authority (TRA) in Mwanza Region has embarked on a campaign to train commuter bus owners and transporters on changes in current tax rates.

The training aims at creating awareness among businesspersons to make them aware of tax rates that are currently used to promote compliance.

TRA manager in Mwanza Region Ernest Dundee said when opening a seminar held at the authority's regional office yesterday that the taxman regards transporters as development stakeholders in the region and the nation as a whole hence the need to involve them in key issues.

He pointed out that their work is crosscutting, adding that they enable different groups of people to move from one point to another in their economic activities.

"I praise you for your cooperation in the way you contribute to raising national revenues through your operations of transporting people to and from their various destinations," he

said. He said that with the seminars, TRA gets an opportunity to exchange ideas with businesspersons on issues related to tax and also get information on time for voluntary compliance.

Mujarifu Manyasi, one of the participants, called upon the government to review current tax rates on transport vehicles, saying the current ones are unfriendly and make them operate at loss, a situation that negatively impacts on their business.

Morgan Isdory, TRA taxpayer education and communication officer in Mwanza, appealed to businesspersons to go to the authority's offices for tax assessment to avoid unnecessary penalties.

"This is the tax assessment period; therefore, it is important for businesspersons to go to TRA offices to have their businesses assessed timely to avoid delays that attract penalties", he said.

He insisted that businesspeople should ensure proper use of Electronic Fiscal Devices (EFDs) to help keep accurate sales records so that assessment of their businesses corresponds with actual income.

Zimbabwe abolishing inherited death penalty

HARARE

ZIMBABWE'S cabinet agreed to abolish the death penalty for murder offences, almost two decades after its last execution.

The cabinet on Tuesday approved the Memorandum on the Private Member's Death Penalty Abolition Bill introduced to parliament last year, bringing an end to the death penalty introduced in the southern African nation by British colonial administrators.

In an official statement, the Zimbabwean cabinet stressed the need to maintain a fair and balanced penal system, where aggravating circumstances can result in life sentences.

The last execution in Zimbabwe was in 2005, marking a decade and a half since the country renounced this controversial practice.

President Emmerson Mnangagwa, himself a former death row inmate during the struggle for independence from British rule, played a central role in this historic decision.

The death penalty in the current Constitution of Zimbabwe was inherited from colonial Rhodesia.

While the Constitution of Zimbabwe guarantees the right to life, it also allows the state to execute its citizens in execution of the sentence of a court in respect of a criminal offence of which he has been convicted.



MUCOBA BANK PLC

P. O. Box 147, Tel. 026-2772165, Fax 026-2772075
Mafinga, Tanzania.

PUBLICATION OF AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Issued pursuant to regulations 7 and 8 of the Banking and Financial Institutions (Disclosures) Regulations, 2014

CONDENSED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 31-12-2022
(Amounts in Millions shillings)

	Current Year 31/12/22	Previous Year 31/12/21
A. ASSETS		
1 Cash	239	841
2 Balance with Bank of Tanzania	13	85
3 Investments in Government securities	-	-
4 Balance with other banks and financial institutions	2,393	3,215
5 Cheques and items for clearing	-	-
6 Inter branch float items	-	-
7 Bills negotiated	-	-
8 Customers' liabilities for acceptances	-	-
9 Interbank loans receivables	-	-
10 Investments in other securities	-	-
11 Loans, advances and overdrafts (net of allowances for probable losses)	15,641	15,051
12 Other assets	-	4,528
13 Equity Investments	3,738	-
14 Underwriting accounts	-	-
15 Property and Equipment and Right of use Assets	514	569
16 TOTAL ASSETS	22,538	24,289
B. LIABILITIES		
17 Deposits from other banks and financial institutions	3	1,003
18 Customer deposits	14,060	15,269
19 Cash letters of credit	-	-
20 Special deposits	86	138
21 Payment orders/transfers payable	-	-
22 Bankers' cheques and drafts issued	-	-
23 Accrued taxes and expenses payable	186	536
24 Acceptances outstanding	-	-
25 Interbranch float items	-	-
26 Unearned income and other deferred charges	-	-
27 Other liabilities	503	472
28 Borrowings	3,776	2,527
29 TOTAL LIABILITIES	18,614	19,945
30 NET ASSETS/LIABILITIES (16 minus 29)	3,924	4,344
C. SHAREHOLDERS' FUNDS		
31 Paid up share capital	8,789	8,789
32 Capital reserves (capital Grants)	(5,724)	(5,274)
33 Retained earnings	181	716
34 Profit (Loss) account	677	113
35 Other capital accounts	-	-
36 Minority Interest	-	-
37 TOTAL SHAREHOLDERS' FUNDS	3,924	4,344
38 Contingent liabilities	-	-
39 Non performing loans and advances	1,020	1,843
40 Allowances for probable losses	191	815
41 Other non performing assets	-	-
D. SELECTED FINANCIAL CONDITION INDICATORS		
(i) Shareholders Funds to total assets	17.41%	16.14%
(ii) Non performing loans to total gross loans	9.87%	13.20%
(iii) Gross loans and advances to total deposits	112.24%	92.45%
(iv) Loans and Advances to total assets	69.40%	60.98%
(v) Earning Assets to Total Assets	84.61%	85.00%
(vi) Deposits Growth	-13.78%	4.20%
(vii) Assets growth	-7.21%	34.47%

CONDENSED STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31-12-2022
(Amounts in million shillings)

	Current Quarter 31/12/22	Previous year 31/12/21
I: Cash flow from operating activities:		
Net income (loss)	187	899
Adjustments for:		
- Impairment/Amortization/Depreciation	409	574
- Net change in Loans and Advances	(780)	(1,462)
- Gain/Loss on Sale of Assets	-	-
- Net change in Deposits	(2,260)	1,211
- Net change in Short Term Negotiable Securities	-	-
- Net change in Other Liabilities	(334)	(115)
- Net change in Other Assets	412	(972)
- Tax Paid	(120)	(239)
- Others (Specify)	-	-
Net cash provided (used) by operating activities	(2,486)	(104)
II: Cash flow from investing activities:		
Dividend Received	-	-
Purchase of Fixed and intangible assets	(195)	(117)
Proceeds from Sale of Fixed Assets	-	-
Purchase of Non-Dealing Securities	-	-
Proceeds from Sale of Non-Dealing Securities	-	-
Others - CWIP	-	-
Net cash provided (used) by investing activities	(195)	(117)
III Cash flow from financing activities:		
Repayment of Long-term Debt	(1,400)	(260)
Proceeds from Issuance of short Term Debt	2,850	-
Proceeds from Issuance of Share Capital	-	-
Payment of Cash Dividends	-	-
Net Change in Other Borrowings	-	-
Others	(65)	(91)
Net Cash Provided (used) by Financing Activities	1,185	(351)
IV Cash and Cash Equivalents:		
Net Increase/(Decrease) in Cash and Cash Equivalents	(1,496)	(572)
Cash and Cash Equivalents at the Beginning of the year	4,141	4,713
Cash and Cash Equivalents at the end of the year	2,645	4,141

CONDENSED STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY AS AT 30-12-2022
(Amounts in million shillings)

	Share Capital	Retained Earnings	Regulatory Reserve	Total
Current Year 2022				
Balance as at the Beginning of the year	8,795	(4,558)	107	4,344
Profit for the year	-	181	-	181
Other Comprehensive Income	-	-	-	-
Transactions With owners	(4)	-	-	(4)
Dividend Paid	-	-	-	-
Regulatory Reserve	-	(568)	568	-
General Provision Reserve	-	-	-	-
Others	-	(588)	-	(588)
Balance as at the end of the current period	8,791	(5,543)	675	3,923
Previous year 2021				
Balance as at the Beginning of the year	8,886	(5,280)	87	3,693
Profit for the year	-	742	-	742
Other Comprehensive Income	-	-	-	-
Transactions With owners	(91)	-	-	(91)
Dividend Paid	-	-	-	-
Regulatory Reserve	-	(20)	20	(0)
General Provision Reserve	-	-	-	-
Issue of Share Capital	-	-	-	-
Balance as at the end of the previous period	8,795	(4,558)	107	4,344

Name and Title	Signature	Date
Philipo Raymond General Manager	(Signed)	31/01/2024
Kelvin Mushi Finance and Administrative Manager	(Signed)	31/01/2024
Said Abdallah Internal Auditor	(Signed)	31/01/2024

We, the undersigned directors, attest to the faithful representation of the above statements. We declare that the statements has been examined by us And, to the best of our knowledge and belief, have been prepared in conformance with International Financial Reporting Standards and the Requirements of the Banking and Financial Institutions Act, 2006 and they present a true and fair view.

Name and Title	Signature	Date
1. Bakar R Bakar Director	(Signed)	31/01/2024
2. Prof. Dominicus Kasilo Director	(Signed)	31/01/2024

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Lunar New Year: China sees stronger ties with Tanzania

By Correspondent Mary Kadoke

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the 60th anniversary to continuously work together in supporting each other's core interests and deepening strategic cooperation," she said.

She thanked the Ministry of Culture, Arts and Sports for allowing 37 Zhejiang artists from China to perform at the New Year celebrations alongside Tanzania's Safi Theater group.

Hamisi Mwinjuma, Deputy Minister for Culture, Arts and Sports commended the comprehensive cooperation between the two countries as they mark 60 years of anniversary of diplomatic relations this year.

"As we usher in the year of dragon, it will be remiss of me if I do not take time to recognize the contributions made by our founding fathers, the Late Mwalimu Julius Nyerere and the late Chairman Mao Zedong. These two leaders are the reason Tanzania and China are all-weather friends whose friendship is built on a strong foundation," he said.

"This year is also a year of culture and tourism for both Tanzania and China. These two countries are highly committed to holding several cultural and tourism activities so as to attract more tourists from China to Tanzania and vice versa as well as enhancing the so-people-to-people exchange which is the integral part of our robust economic and social relations."

The dragon has long held a power position in the Chinese zodiac, showering success upon those born in its years. With 2024 being a year of the dragon, legends have it that the mythical creature's good fortune will be sprinkled upon all.

US fugitive wanted for murder escapes from custody in Kenya

NAIROBI

A MAN who fled the US after allegedly killing his girlfriend has walked out of a Kenyan police station where he was being held without anyone stopping him.

Kelvin Kangethe, 41, was arrested last week leaving a club in Kenya's capital, Nairobi, after a months-long manhunt.

A court had allowed his detention for 30 days awaiting possible extradition.

Authorities say that after Kangethe murdered his girlfriend last October, he abandoned her body in a car at Boston Logan International Airport.

He then boarded a flight to Kenya, his country of origin. He has not commented on the allegations.

Police have shocked Kenyans by dis-

closing that Kangethe managed to walk out of the Muthaiga Police Station where he was being detained on Wednesday afternoon.

According to the police statement, Kangethe took off during a meeting in a private room with a man who visited the station saying he was his lawyer.

"After a short while the prisoner escaped by running away and left the lawyer behind," the statement said.

At the time, all the officers were attending a separate meeting that had been called by the head of the station.

An eyewitness who works near the station told the BBC that police pursued Kangethe, who was dressed in a black jacket.

"We thought he was being chased for

jaywalking. People just watched him run away," the witness said.

"If we knew why he was wanted we'd have helped arrest him."

Police say they failed to apprehend Kangethe. His whereabouts are currently unknown.

Four police officers who were on duty and the man who met Kangethe have been arrested, Nairobi police commander Adamson Bungei told local media.

The privately owned Star newspaper quoted Bungei as saying that the security lapse was "embarrassing" for Kenyan police, who have since launched a new search for Kangethe.

Officers at the station are restricting access, fearing more information could leak to the public.

The family of Kangethe's girlfriend, Margaret Mbitu, told US media that she had been planning to end their relationship before he allegedly killed her.

She was a 30-year-old Kenyan-American nurse working in Halifax, Massachusetts.

Mbitu was last seen alive leaving her workplace on the evening of 30 October last year.

She was reported missing the same day and her body was discovered two days later.

Authorities believe Kangethe left the US during the window between Mbitu's disappearance and the discovery of her body.

BBC

Essential elements of oral contracts: Case of Aggreko versus Triumphant

IN our ordinary life, many business transactions were conducted or finalized through oral agreement or contract. Sadly, most of these oral agreements were entered without compliance with provision of the law in which some of them were successful and others were not.

Mostly successful transactions are due to trust, the behaviours which developed within the community we are living and other factors. Such way of transacts are not guaranteed in all transactions, because sometimes problem occurs whereby one party might not be satisfied or agreed with certain act or omission from other party, such as breach of what seems to be agreed between the parties and other related issues therein.

In most cases when that occurs, the viable means to get out of such problem is to invoke legal process for determination of the dispute between parties, as who is right and who is wrong hence grant of the appropriate remedy.

Winning legal dispute does not demand miracle rather than presentation of right facts and applying proper law, failure of which, one should not expect the court to give judgment in his favour.

Today, we are going to point

out some vital elements which you need to consider when opting entering into oral agreement so that our readers can have the basic knowledge.

What needs to be done to make one easily understand legal requirements of oral agreement, is to look at the recent decision in a commercial case which involved substantial sum of money. The decision was made by the Court of Appeal of Tanzania in the case of Aggreko International Project Limited against Triumphant Trade and Consultancy Services Limited, Civil Appeal Number Civil Appeal No 83 of 2020, delivered on October 27th, 2023.

Brief facts of the case

Aggreko International Project Limited (herein after referred as Aggreko) is a company registered in the United Arab Emirates. The company secured a contract with Tanzania Electric Supply Company Limited (TANESCO) in 2011 for commissioning a 100MW power plant at Ubungo power station to replenish power shortages into national grid.

It was alleged that consideration of the above agreement was \$120,000,000.00. On the other side, Triumphant Trade and Consultancy Services Limited, (herein after as "Triumphant"), a company registered



in Tanzania for provision of consultancy services as the name depicts.

Triumphant alleged to have been integral part in securing the above contract with TANESCO as consultant to Aggreko. Despite that the said transaction involved colossal amount of money, but it was done through oral agreement.

Triumphant alleged Aggreko of breaching the oral agreement by not paying him agreeable commission at rate of 6 percent of the contractual sum awarded, therefore, claiming to be awarded the sum of \$7,200,000.00.

The dispute was ferred to the High Court of Tanzania, at a Commercial Division in Dar es Salaam in which among other issues, it was ordered that Aggreko should pay Triumphant the claimed sum along with a general damage of \$1,000,000.00. Aggreko was not satisfied with above deci-

sion, hence appealing to the Court of Appeal of Tanzania.

Legal position

Reference was made to the Law of Contract Cap 345 R.E 2019, particularly Section 10 which provides for mandatory requirements that all contracts must meet, being written or oral contract.

After the court going through the above section into details along with other provision, it stated: "It means therefore that, in order for the agreement or contract to be enforceable, it must satisfy several crucial elements which are: One, there must be an offer which must be clearly communicated, Two, there must be acceptance of the communicated proposal, Three, parties must be competent or must have capacity to enter into the contract and lastly, there must be a lawful consideration.

It is also noteworthy that the

object of the contract must be lawful and the parties must clearly exhibit intention to create legal relations. It is also important to note that, in our jurisdiction, alongside written contracts, there are also oral contracts which are basically defined as 'agreement made with spoken words and either no writing or only partly written'.

Emphasize is that, validity of any contract must depend on four issues-availability of an offer, expressly clear acceptance, competent to enter into agreement and lawful consideration.

Decision of the court

As the matter of law, in absence of written agreement, the court's duty is bounded to go through various issues done between the parties in respect of such transaction in dispute to construe intension of the parties, such as conduct of the parties or any correspondences and see validity of the contract.

In the above case, the court went through all emails and other correspondences which were presented. Neither of them expressly stated an offer as required by section 2(i) of the Law of Contract which was clearly accepted by the Aggreko.

Further the court looked at

the alleged agreeable consideration of 6 percent as commission of the entire consideration, neither of them supported whether parties agreed on the said commissions.

The court said clearly that it was wrong for the trial court (commercial court) to draw inference from other agreement entered between the same parties which were not in dispute before the court.

In view of the above facts and legal position, the Court of Appeal of Tanzania overturned the decision which declared the Triumphant to be paid the sum of \$8,200,000.00 into nothing and worse enough it ordered the company to pay Aggreko the costs of the case.

Our Opinion

Under normal circumstances while taking into account our business environment, we know it is difficult to avoid doing business without having an official written agreement drafted by the lawyer or any competent person.

One needs to be careful when entering into such oral agreement because any transaction which will not meet the above requirements cannot be enforced in the court of law.

Terms of conducting business transactions must be clear to make it easily for the court to test or fix legal require-

ments to see whether they are meet or not. Nowadays, many transactions are conducted electronically that is through normal text messages, Whatsapp text messages, emails and any other electronic means, therefore those correspondences are important when a dispute occur.

Keep them safe and avoid tempering with them. They are relevant and allowed in our courts of law to prove your case. Whether it is a big deal or not, one must ensure that all elements of the contract stated above are seen in the contractual dealing or transactions, otherwise, in case the contract is breached, no remedy can be awarded to you.

Note: the material and information contained in this article are for general information purposes only. They only provide either elementary or basic legal knowledge on the above subject. Anyone considering legal action should consult an experienced lawyer to understand current laws and how they may affect a case in question.

You can send questions or comments to our email info@legisattorneys.co.tz or postal address Managing Partner, Legis Attorneys, P. O. Box 3750, DSM. You can visit our website www.legisattorneys.co.tz

Project tackles root causes of child abuse and school dropouts in Shinyanga Region

By Beatrice Philemon

THE 'Keeping School Children Safe in Shinyanga' project, a two year, initiative implemented by the Youth and Women Emancipation (YAWE), with funding from Women Fund Tanzania Trust (WFTT) has seen children demonstrating behavioural and attitude changes.

Primary and secondary school children from Puni, Nyida and Didia Wards in Shinyanga District Council are now more confident and can participate in meetings and air their views, something which was not the case in the past.

The project which ended in 2023 aimed to empower school children by forming clubs, peer groups and enabling them to make informed decisions on their rights as well as strengthening the capacity of teachers, school committees and parents to monitor and manage child abuse cases in school settings.

Various approaches were applied to ensure achievement of the targeted goals which included, strengthening the school clubs to deliver Sexual and reproductive health services (SRHS), child rights, life-skills and self-esteem education sessions among club members.

It also involved building the capacity of parents, teachers and school board committees to ensure that child protection is integrated and upheld in the school governing systems.

"We aimed at improving the well-being of adolescent students by helping them to live a healthier and empowered life. The goal was also to increase the number of peer activists advocating for child rights and protection, strengthening reporting mechanisms of child abuse cases in schools, increase the level of cooperation between parents, teachers, and the community in taking concerted action to protect child rights, through awareness creation," Moshi Jilalage, YAWE Project Officer told The Guardian, adding the organization



was established in 2017 in Shinyanga Region.

He said that WFT injected more than 26.8m/- to enable the organization to execute project in Shinyanga because it was one of the regions with the highest prevalence of child pregnancies by (34 percent), child marriages (59 percent) and school dropouts, according to Tanzania Demographic and Health Survey 2016.

Jilalage said a total of 5200 school children from eight primary and secondary schools have been benefited from the project, adding they worked

closely with 676 parents, caregivers and teachers in creating awareness on risk of violence against children and encouraging positive parenting. He said the increased student's confidence has resulted in increased number of child abuse cases reported at relevant authorities.

"At Buyubi Primary School, five child abuse cases were reported in 2023 compared to one case reported in 2022, when the project started. This is due to increased level of awareness among adolescent students, particularly those at

risk of different forms of violence," he said.

The officer added: "These changes came as a result of mentorship sessions on child rights. Parents were also equipped with skills on provision of responsive care giving to their children both at home and school.

Parents have also changed their attitudes as some are now visiting schools to follow-up on the academic progress and welfare of their children. Accountability and commitment to take action against child abuse cases by school authori-

ties has also been increased.

The project implementation has seen six out of eight schools posting child rights posters in classrooms to ensure each student is aware of his/her rights and knows the right channels for reporting gender-based violence, he said, noting that they have identified and trained 90 peer activists in schools who are advocating for child rights and protection. Of the number, 50 are females and 40 males.

Child protection and safety desks and child junior councils were formed using new national guidelines and monthly ses-

sions between school peer activists and children were organized to educate them on sexual reproductive health and rights and life-skills and address their concerns through one-on-one discussions.

The project also led to the implementation of mentorship programs for school peer activists to raise their self-esteem and confidence and help them connect with community change agents, to strengthen collaboration in advancing the agenda on ending violence against children.

Dialogues with school teachers, school committees, and parents were also held to help curb harmful norms and emphasize positive relationships within the community.

Paul Robert, a Standard Seven pupil at Puni Primary School is one of the beneficiaries of the project, he said: "My parents used to beat and prevent me from attending school. They did not want to buy me school uniforms and other school needs. It was difficult for me to request them to provide me with the needed school needs as they were shouting at me throughout."

Robert added: "Things have now changed as they involved in YAWE sessions for parents; they are now supporting me and have bought me school uniforms and other necessities."

Amina Khamis, chairperson of the child protection and safety desk lauded YAWE for supporting children in the district.

"YAWE has revived my dream of becoming a great leader in Tanzania and helping a large number of people to know and demand their rights and speak against all forms of violence against children and women. I will be an advocate in revealing incidents of violence and defending the rights of children at school and society level," said Khamis.

Rehema Kennedy, a peer activist at Puni Primary School said: "We are now aware of the negative impacts of violence against children. We have decided to lead the movement to end violence against children, at our school; we always meet with members of the safety desks and junior council to discuss issues related to child protection as well as encouraging each other not to hide any case of abuse."

Itwangi Secondary School students participating in one of YAWE's life-skills and child rights sessions conducted in Shinyanga Region. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

By Nikhila Henry

Reasons why India law against exam cheating may not work

INDIA'S parliament has passed a stringent new law to prevent cheating in exams for government jobs and admission to public colleges.

The Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Act, 2024 - which was passed on Tuesday - carries a jail sentence of three to 10 years for those who facilitate cheating.

It also carries a fine ranging between 1 million rupees (\$12,040; £9,551) and 10 million rupees.

The new law does not impose penalties directly on test takers; instead, their punishments will be determined by the rules set forth by their respective testing authorities.

The law will be applicable to most exams conducted by the federal government and its test agencies. All offences are non-bailable and will be investigated by senior police officials.

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)-led government has said the act will bring "greater transparency, fairness and credibility" as it is the first federal legislation to prevent malpractices in examinations.

But critics argue that severe punishment alone won't effectively address the issue, noting instances of cheating and impersonation already punishable under India's criminal laws.

"The new law could prove to be ineffective because coaching centres collude with students to help them pass entrance examination," says Ghanta Chakrapani, former chairman of a state-run organisation which recruits people for state government jobs.

In 2022, India's top investigative agency, the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), arrested a Russian hacker for reportedly breaching the entrance exam for admission to the prestigious Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs).



Students have smuggled textbooks and notes into the examination centres despite tight security.

The hacker allegedly worked for a coaching institute.

Cheating is prevalent in India due to the intensely competitive nature of government jobs and top college admission tests, where millions vie for a limited number of positions.

For the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) exam, the entrance test for the federal civ-

il service, over a million people applied last year for just over 1,000 job vacancies.

The Joint Entrance Examination (JEE), which determines admissions to IITs, sees tens of thousands of applicants annually for just over 15,000 available seats.

In response to exam manipulation, several states have

implemented laws to curb cheating. Rajasthan enacted an anti-cheating law two years ago, while Andhra Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh have had such laws since 1998 and 1997, respectively. Last year, Gujarat and Uttarakhand also introduced laws to prevent cheating.

Despite the existence of these laws, cheating cases have per-

sisted in each of these states until recently, indicating their limited effectiveness.

India also reports question paper leaks periodically, leading to cancellation of exams. An investigation by The Indian Express newspaper had found 41 documented cases of question paper leaks in job recruitment exams across 15 states over the

last five years.

However, "high quantum of punishment cannot be a one stop solution for the cheating menace," says Jacob Punnoose who worked as a top ranking officer in the Indian police service before his retirement.

Cheating can be prevented by tightening security at examination centres, Punnoose says. "It's possible to use mass surveillance digital technology to prevent cheating by just monitoring students who take the examination."

India, however, has reported an emerging trend of young candidates using inventive and mischievous ways of cheating using digital technology.

In Rajasthan some used slippers with embedded Bluetooth devices to share test answers with accomplices outside the examination hall. Recently, 30 candidates were arrested in Tamil Nadu for using Bluetooth earphones to cheat in an Indian customs service examination, reports say.

Laws targeting cheating have proven ineffective, partly due to "organised criminals" with influential connections disrupting examinations, say experts. People who facilitate cheating often have political ties. In Karnataka, a police recruitment exam was investigated last year as a governing party leader was accused of facilitating mass cheating at an examination centre, resulting in over 65 arrests.

In India, disputes over public examination results can linger for years. Two years ago, violent protests erupted over alleged inaccuracies in the results of a railway recruitment test, leading to the suspension of the exam. Some 700,000 candidates were short-listed for just over 35,200 posts in this exam.

"The new law does not make it difficult to cheat. It just makes those caught, face stringent punishment," Chakrapani says.



The sad state of health care in Cuba for 2024

By El Toque

JOSE Angel Portal Miranda, Cuba's Minister of Public Health, described 2023 as one of the most difficult years for the healthcare system. The minister publicly acknowledged the systemic crisis in the sector and called for the revitalization of healthcare in the country.

"There are deficiencies in the organization of services, as well as in the management of key processes for primary and secondary care. This generates dissatisfaction," stated Portal Miranda. He added that the quality of service at

health institutions is low. He announced that shortages of supplies will continue, leading to "constantly rearranging activities."

The Exodus

Portal stated that the migration of health personnel both abroad and to other sectors of the national economy was a reality. He urged addressing issues affecting the quality of teaching "and [having an impact] on the training of future professionals, which inevitably [affected] the quality of services."

Public Health officials acknowledged in October 2023

the exodus of over 8,000 undergraduate students, more than 5,000 postgraduate students, and over 1,400 faculty members from medical schools.

The decline of the Cuban healthcare system has only worsened. In 2022, there were 46,000 fewer workers compared to the previous year, according to data from the Statistical Yearbook on Health and Social Assistance. The breakdown of the figures indicates that between 2021 and 2022, Cuba lost more than 12,000 doctors, 7,414 nurses, and over 3,000 dentists.

The most probable causes

of abandonment include migration to other countries, low salaries, a shortage of basic supplies, rumors of a possible prohibition for healthcare workers to travel, and increased work hours due to unfilled vacancies.

Lisset Castaigne, a pediatric intensivist, is an example of professionals seeking work in a different area than healthcare. "I am passionate about a child's smile, but I cannot save lives when my salary is not enough to buy food or anything basic; not to mention that you work miracles with almost nothing," she explained.

Although the Ministry of Public Health took measures to alleviate the situation caused by the lack of professionals (authorizing moonlighting and payment for overtime), recent statements by the minister of health confirm that the downward trend in healthcare personnel has continued in recent months.

Shortages and Abandonment

Between 2010 and 2022, 63 hospitals, 37 family doctor's offices, 187 maternity homes, and 45 dentistry clinics closed, according to data from the National Statistics and In-

formation Office.

Likewise, most of the 13,454 healthcare units in the country show signs of neglect. Patient testimonies report inefficient electrical and air conditioning systems, walls with mold and leaks, overcrowded rooms, poor nutrition, the presence of insects (cockroaches, bedbugs, and mosquitoes), inadequate ventilation, a shortage of drinking water, and a lack of ambulances.

In mid-2023, Ailuj Casanova Barreto, Head of the Department of Primary Health Care, reported that 1,626 doctor's offices did not receive running water; of these, only 65

had resolved the situation. She also explained that 3,314 family care centers were in a regular or poor state of construction.

The shortage of resources, equipment, supplies, and medicines is acknowledged by Portal as a cause of population dissatisfaction. He warned that it will continue in 2024 and has led to citizen complaints and protests in recent months, along with several requests for humanitarian visas.

In late November 2023, the protest of several mothers in front of the Ministry of Public Health in Havana came to light. Holding their children's medical records, the women demanded a better quality of life and a humanitarian visa for them to be treated abroad.

The most recent case of a violation of the right to health in Cuba is that of Amanda Lemus Ortiz. The 2-year-old girl has been waiting for a liver transplant for over 12 months, which her father is willing to donate. However, according to activists and family members, the "William Soler" Pediatric Hospital lacks the necessary resources to perform the operation and refuses to use supplies that her family can provide.

The Cuban government is trying to alleviate the current shortage of medical supplies through donations from abroad. On January 28, 2024, the "William Soler" Pediatric Hospital and the Institute of Gastroenterology received donations from the organizations Puentes de Amor and Code Pink. During 2023, the healthcare system in Santiago de Cuba received 96 donations - ambulances and neonatology equipment - arranged with the support of solidarity groups from Spain.

International organizations (World Health Organization, Pan American Health Organization, United Nations Development Program, and UNICEF) who have also made recent donations to the Cuban healthcare system.

Experts: Locally appropriate interventions needed to stem malaria infections in Africa

By Aimable Twahirwa, Kigali

EXPERTS recommend that the current prevention of malaria in highly endemic countries in Africa should integrate "locally appropriate" control measures to cope with the highest burden of mosquito-borne disease on the continent.

The latest 2023 World Malaria Report shows that the life-threatening disease remains a significant public health challenge, with both malaria incidence and mortality higher now than they were before the start of the COVID-19 pandemic on the African continent.

According to a World Health Organization (WHO) report, the effects of climate change and other issues pose a threat to the advancement of the disease-fighting effort.

Official statistics show that the African region disproportionately bore the brunt of the malaria burden in 2022, accounting for 94 percent of global malaria cases and 95 percent of all malaria deaths, which were estimated at 608,000, a nearly 6 percent increase since 2019.

WHO's Africa office's Tropical and Vector Borne Disease Lead, Dr. Dorothy Fosah-Achu, said that vector control interventions in Africa have remained challenged, with bednets being one of the most effective vector control tools the continent is relying on.

"Most endemic countries [in Africa] are adopting new treated bednets to replace those having the issue with resistance, but these improved

nets are more expensive, which makes it challenging for countries to cover large zones using this intervention," Fosah-Achu said in an exclusive interview.

The latest WHO report on malaria places a special focus on climate change as a critical factor threatening progress in the fight against malaria. Climate-related disruptions, such as extreme weather events, may have exacerbated the spread of the disease.

Alongside climate change, other issues are threatening efforts to fight malaria.

The funding gap has grown, the report says. "Total spending in 2022 reached USD 4.1 billion—well below the USD 7.8 billion required globally to stay on track for the global milestones of reducing case incidence and mortality rates by at least 90 percent by 2030 (compared with a 2015 baseline)." This funding would include control, diagnosis, preventative therapies, and treatment.

Growing resistance to available control tools, such as insecticides and antimalarial drugs, remains an increasing concern.

According to experts, most African countries do not have enough bednets. They do have insecticides that can be used to spray homes at breeding sites, but those interventions are very expensive.

While the high proportion of the population without access to quality medicines for malaria in Africa continues to be another issue, Fosah-Achu is convinced that the consequence of high mortality in Sub-Saharan Africa is also related to the limited health facilities and hospitals that



Rwanda is using drone technology as an effective and innovative way of eradicating malaria in breeding sites.

provide access to treatment in a timely manner to the population living in remote zones.

In addition, health experts say that any success of anti-malarial interventions in endemic countries in Africa will require appropriate coordination of efforts in terms of fighting against the resistance of vectors to insecticides and the resistance of parasites to medicines.

According to experts, another challenge is that endemic countries in Africa have technical capacity gaps because their national health facilities

are not equipped with the right human resources who are able to manage programs and monitor some of these biological threats, such as vector resistance.

The latest estimates by WHO show that in Africa, an estimated 233 million cases of malaria occur each year, resulting in approximately 1 million deaths. More than 90 percent of these are in children under five. Official statistics show that currently the African region bears the heaviest malaria burden, with 94 percent of cases and 95 percent

of deaths globally, representing 233 million malaria cases and 580,000 deaths.

Dr. Ludoviko Zirimenya, a medical researcher at the Uganda Virus Research Institute (UVRI), told IPS that the changing climate across many endemic regions in Africa poses a substantial risk to progress against malaria.

"Africa is the most affected due to a combination of factors, the major one being climate change," Zirimenya said.

In Rwanda, like other endemic countries across Africa, malaria is often found in rainy

seasons, and meteorological factors and altitude are described by experts as the major drivers of malaria incidence on the continent.

Both Zirimenya and Fosah-Achu believe that the burden of malaria transmission on the continent can be reduced when countries put in place appropriate mechanisms to strengthen the data management system to ensure they have strong surveillance systems.

Public health experts observe that climate change is a growing issue, and countries

in some endemic countries have little support to set up programmes to counter its impact.

The WHO report acknowledges this saying: "Equally crucial is the need to position the fight against malaria within the climate change/health nexus and to equip communities to anticipate, adapt to, and mitigate the effects of climate change, including the rise of extreme weather events. As you will see in the report, there are a range of actions—strategic, technical, and operational—that countries and their partners should begin to pursue now."

Currently, numerous interventions to control malaria have been implemented across many African countries, but experts note that the incidence of the killer disease has increased in recent years.

"There are financial capacity gaps to be filled by some countries. Most African governments still need to learn how to mobilize resources and ensure that [malaria interventions] programs deliver on the plans that they have developed themselves," Fosah-Achu said.

Despite these challenges, there have also been achievements. Recent progress includes the launch of the first malaria vaccine, RTS,S/AS01, and the endorsement by WHO of a second vaccine, R21/Matrix-M.

Additionally, the use of new dual-active ingredient insecticide-treated nets and expanded malaria prevention for high-risk children has been crucial advancements, offering new avenues for combating the disease.

Ghana gvt retracts execution of power tax plan after uproar

ACCRA

GHANA'S government has suspended plans to implement a 15% tax on power, following a public uproar that it will worsen the cost-of-living crisis.

The value-added tax (VAT) was to be levied on domestic consumers of electricity. But labour unions opposed the new tax and announced nationwide protests against it next week.

Authorities now say the plan has been put on hold until talks are held to resolve the dispute.

It comes a few days after the government started to implement a fuel emissions levy, sparking mixed reactions.

Ghanaians are now required to pay an annual levy for the carbon emissions produced by their petrol or diesel-powered vehicles.

Critics fear that the additional taxes could have a ripple effect on the struggling economy, further intensifying the cost-of-living crisis that has already pushed up the prices of necessities like fuel.

How Ghana's central bank lost \$5bn in one year

In a statement on Wednesday, the finance ministry directed the two main power distributors - Electricity Company of Ghana (ECG) and the Northern Electricity Distribution Company (NEDCO) - to put the new levy on hold.

This is to allow for "extensive dialogue and also to get the buy-in of industry players and labour unions, following the grave concerns raised about its impact on consumers and businesses," the statement said.

"On behalf of the government, the ministry would like to inform ECG and NEDCO to suspend the implementation of the VAT directive pending further engagements with key stakeholders including organized labour," it added.

But the Trades Union Congress (TUC) said the government was yet to officially communicate its decision to them.

Therefore, plans to hold protests, slated for next Wednesday, remain in place, Joshua Ansah, TUC's deputy secretary general, told the Ghana News Agency.

Trade unions say the introduction of additional taxes will burden families and companies, exacerbating the already high cost of doing business.

"Our message to the government is very simple - we cannot pay VAT on electricity," Mr Ansah was quoted as saying, and demanded that the tax be dropped immediately.

Ghana is currently going through its worst economic crisis in a generation, and the government is battling to increase its revenue.



Ghana has for several years been experiencing power shortages

New study points to untapped potential in Africa's rice sector



NEBRASKA, US

A NEW study has found that Africa's rice sector has the potential to bolster its rice yields through improved agronomic practices while avoiding "massive land conversion".

The research, led by international scientists and published in the journal *Nature Communications*, also finds that production advances could be important in meeting Africa's projected food needs and even for reducing dependence on imports.

Currently, Africa imports nearly 40 percent of its rice, however the researchers note that rice demand in Africa is projected to more than double over the next 25 years due to population growth and increased rice consumption.

"Nearly 15 million hectares of rice are waiting for yield improvement in Africa, but no yield gain can be achieved without better agronomy. Intensifying rice production to reduce imports and land conversion in Africa," said Patricio Grassini, the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Professor of Agronomy who coordinated the team working on the study.

Meanwhile, Kazuki Saito, a former researcher at the Africa Rice Center and is currently working at the International Rice Research Institute, explained that agronomic practices involving improved land development, soil and plant nutrition, weed control and water management, as well as moderate cropland expansion, "could give the region a more optimistic future".

To carry out the research, teams at University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Huazhong Agricultural University, Africa Rice Center, and Wageningen University and Research, received support from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation through the Consultative Group for International Agricultural Research Excellence in Agronomy 2030.

"The current average rice yield in Africa is very low in relation to other parts of the world, indicating a substantial opportunity to enhance African rice production. By employing a process-based crop simulation modelling approach combined with extensive on-the-ground data collection, the research team found that the average yield for Africa's rice sector represents less than half the

yield that could be achieved with improved agronomic practices," explained the scientists.

Currently, domestic rice production in Africa reportedly meets about 60 percent of the continent's demand, with the researchers highlighting that "import dependence places Africa in a vulnerable position" and "without a substantial increase in rice yields, meeting future rice demand will require more rice imports, as well as conversion of wildlife habitat to agricultural use."

"Africa's heavy reliance on imports not only poses a significant threat to food security, but also leaves the continent susceptible to external supply and price shocks, as has happened recently when India imposed bans on rice exports," said Martin van Isterum, a Professor of Agronomy at Wageningen University.

Boosting African rice yields as outlined in the study can go far in "meeting the future rice demand of 150 million tons by 2050 without increases in current rice exports while reducing the pressure to convert land for rice cultivation," said Shaobing Peng, a Professor of Agronomy at Huazhong Agricultural University who also contributed to the study. Meanwhile, Derek McLean, Dean of the Agricultural Research Division at Nebraska noted that the process-based crop simulation modelling approach used in the study "is a powerful tool to evaluate and determine opportunities for crop improvement" and has practical relevance for producers in Nebraska and nationwide.

"This study is an excellent example of our global presence and collaborative nature of researchers at UNL. Supporting crop improvement, food security and agriculture stability throughout the world is good for Nebraska and will eventually catalyse opportunities for our producers," concluded McLean.

Msomera: A once-dormant 'hamlet' deep in Tanga Region now a model satellite village

By Polycarp Machira, Dodoma

THE once sleepy Msomera village in Handeni District, Tanga Region has gained life, thanks to its iconic layout in effort to accommodate thousands of residents, most of who have voluntarily relocated from the Ngorongoro Conservation Authority (NCA).

Each family voluntarily shifting to Msomera is given a modern three-bedroom house built on a two-and-a-half-acre and a five-acre farm, all accompanied by certificates of occupancy.

Upon completion of the on-going constructions of houses and having all the planned infrastructures in place, the village is set to be a vivid example of a satellite village in the region and beyond.

According to Handeni District Commissioner, Albert Msando, the village was first registered in 1992. Before, residents were living there illegally as intruders, for agricultural and livestock activities, because the area was officially declared a Game Reserve Area through Government Notes (GN) in 1974.

He said that unfortunately it was a mistake to register the village within the Game Reserve Area (meaning the village had no legal status), and it was until the government decision to allocate the Maasai in the village, when the government cancelled the Game reserve area for the status quo of the village.

"The government, through the National Land Use Commission, has already planned for good use of land including, residencies, grazing and farming land, and community services," he said.

One of the on-going key projects that has transformed the village is the construction of the 5000 houses for residents relocating from Ngorongoro Conservation Area (NCA) being undertaken by the National Service (JKT).

The department has completed construction of 1000 houses in the second phase of the project that was allocated 2559 houses at the village.

Speaking during a visit to Msomera village, JKT's Head of Administration, Brigadier General Hassan Mabena who is also the project Taskforce Commander said some 1559 houses are at different stages of construction.

He noted that some 1000 houses in Sauni village in Kilindi District, Tanga Region and other 1500 houses in Kitwaibi village in Simanjiro District, Manyara Region.

Brigadier General said despite the difficulties caused by the continuous rain in various locations all sectorial institutions and ministries have continued to make sure that the construction is completed on schedule.

"The work is proceeding



Handeni district commissioner Albert Msando displays one of the title deeds to be issued to residents who have voluntarily relocated from Ngorongoro. Photo: Polycarp Machira



Project Taskforce Commander Brigadier General Hassan Mabena inspects one of the residential houses at Msomera village. Looking on is Operations Commander, Canal Sadick Mihayo. Photo: Polycarp Machira

smoothly, and we planned to complete the project within six months" he said, expressing hope that there will be no delays.

Suma JKT agreed to start the construction of 5,000 houses for those willing to relocate to Msomera village in Handeni District.

On Thursday, last week a group of 67 households with about 800 people who voluntarily relocated from NCA arrived at the village, joining others who have settled there.

"We have divided the construction at Msomera Village into A to D blocks. At Block B, we have completed construction of 1,000

houses and have begun working on block F, which has 768 plots prepared for excavation, after these blocks are finished, that work will begin shortly, he added.

According to the project's Taskforce Commander, JKT is implementing the project under 'special operations' programme in effort to reduce the cost of construction and timely completion.

The Operations Commander, Canal Sadik Mihayo on his part noted that the project that started in October, 2023 is progressing well. He said JKT mobilized its construction sites across the country to Msomera and is using

its staff, engineers, officers and youth undergoing trainings in the project.

He also pledged to closely oversee the project, which has been carried out in an effort to improve Tanzanians' quality of life, with every citizen having access to social services, vital structures and advanced techniques.

Despite ongoing construction of residential houses, the government has put in place other social services. The village now has primary and secondary school as well four livestock markets and a police station.

Some of the village residents, who have left the NCA, ex-

pressed their gratitude, thanking the government for such an initiative that seeks to strike the right balance between conservation and people's livelihoods.

Flora Othumo who lived in Ngorongoro Conservation Area (NCA) for more than 70 years described her voluntary relocation to Handeni District as a defining moment in her life.

"We don't want to regret when it has gotten too late, I've reached this decision of sound mind to reduce the pressure in the area and let conservation thrive," said the elated Flora.

The 72 years old mother of five children emphasized the need of limiting human activities in the area, a move that will save the Man and Biosphere Reserve from extinction.

She added that after moving to Msomera, they proved that their new surroundings is a striking resemblance of a place they called home for the last 60 years.

"Some of us were a bit skeptical about Msomera until we learnt that it also has grazing land and enough water for our livestock," quipped the excited Msomera resident.

While urging remaining NCA villagers to follow suit, Flora showered praise on President Samia Suluhu Hassan for coming up with such a move.

Judy Athuman, a teacher at the newly built secondary school at the village argued that residents have appreciated the government decision to build the school.

She said those still at Ngorongoro should consider relocating to the village, saying almost all the required infra-

structures are in place. Her counterpart, Charles Andrea who is the head teacher at Samia Suluhu Hassan Primary school said there has been steady increase of pupils at the school as more people move to the village.

He said at establishment in 2022, there only 621 pupils, including, 210 that moved with parents from Ngorongoro. In 2023, the number increased to 885 pupils and as at now, there are 956 pupils in the school.

"We are ready to receive more pupils, especially those coming to the village with their parents from Ngorongoro" said the head teacher.

At the recently launched Msomera Health Centre, Lidya Bulinge, a doctor in charge noted that availability of the facility has brought relief to residents who used to seek treatment some 40 kilometers away.

"This facility has improved provision of health services in the village as we receive between five and ten patients per day" she said, adding that some of the residents who relied a lot on traditional drugs now seek treatment at the centre.

Msomera village chairperson, Martin Oleikayo, commended the government under President Samia Suluhu Hassan for coming up with the project, saying it came at the right time because it has made it easier for residents to access critical services like roads, secondary schools, health centres and communication.

The government plans to relocate approximately 20,000 households, comprising about 115,000 people, from the NCA. This plan aims to protect the lives of people and animals and preserve the biodiversity of a well-known global heritage site.

The government provides food for 18 months, with every family receiving two sacks of maize every three months.

Conservation of Serengeti and Ngorongoro ecosystems started in 1959, when there were 8000 people and 260,000 livestock, according to the Ngorongoro Conservation Area Authority (NCAA).

NCAA was established by the Game Park Laws (miscellaneous amendments) Act, 1976, and owns the majority of Ngorongoro conservation area land, including the crater.

The area became a United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) World Heritage Site in 1979, originally inscribed for its natural significance.

2017 Data from the authority indicates that the number of people living in protected area increased to 110,000 with 800,000 livestock.

CAPITAL RADIO

RATIBA YA VIPINDI JUMATATU - JUMAPILI

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

Tembelea mitandao ya kijamii ya CAPITAL RADIO



CAPITAL RADIO

TANZANIA AND INDIA PLANNING EXCHANGE OF ANTIQUITIES EXPERTS

By Correspondent Beatrice Philemon

TANZANIAN and Indian antiquities officers are expected to gain knowledge and experience on how to document antiquities and cultural heritage, as part of promoting tourism sector in both countries, following the introduction of an exchange programme.

Angella Kariuki, Minister of Natural Resources and Tourism said this recently at the official launch of India-Tanzania Friendship Exhibition that took place at National Museum of Tanzania (NMT) premises as part of India's celebration of its 75th Republic Day.

"Tanzania has a lot of things and antiquities that are not documented, you can share the expertise you have to conduct more research on antiquities, history, cultural heritage, India and Tanzania cooperation and the impact that India and Indians have had in the Tanzanian society," she said.

Also, experts will conduct research on opportunities and challenges facing Tanzania - India co-operation and propose unique and constructive insights on how to seize opportunities, solve problems and push the co-operation to a new level.

During the implementation of the programme, Tanzanian antiquities staff can go to India to study on how India conduct research, protecting, preserving and document the country's antiquities in their museum and Indians can also come to Tanzania.

"We have a lot of elderly people in both countries, use them when conducting research to write report because they have a lot of things they know about India and Tanzania history that are not documented," she said.

"Conducting research will help both countries to have more new antiquities that will attract more people to visit the museum, raise revenue collection and boost tourism sector in both countries."

The obtained data should be conserved and preserved in museum for education and exhibition purpose, she noted.

Also Tanzania and India has been done a lot of things since 1960's, but they not documented, India has funded different projects to the Tanzanian economy but the impacts of those projects are not well-known.

She called upon staff from Indian and Tanzanian antiquities unit to work in partnership and later on come up with new things that will promote history and cultural heritage and later on find a best way to conserve and preserve it in museum for mutual benefits between our two countries and for commemoration purpose," she said.

Tanzania and India have been in a good bilateral relationship since early 1960's.

The relationship to a large extent was fueled by ideological inclination such as the stance and struggles against colonialism, the fight against racism and the desire to forming an egalitarian societies premised on the principles of socialism.



Bagamoyo ruins

CHINA BEGINS WORK ON BIOMEDICAL PLATFORM FOR DISEASE RESEARCH

BEIJING

China launched the construction of an innovative platform for molecular imaging and theranostic medical probes in Huairou Science City in the northeastern suburbs of Beijing on Wednesday, according to Peking University, which is leading the project.

The platform, with a planned construction area of 29,000 square meters and a total investment of approximately 630 million yuan (about 88.67 million U.S. dollars), is a key part of the multi-modal and multi-scale biomedical imaging project, one of the major national scientific and technological infrastructure, which was completed in Huairou Science City in 2022 and began trial operations last year, said Yang Zhi, a scientist at Peking University's National Biomedical Imaging Center.

The platform is scheduled to be put into operation in June 2026. Upon completion,

it will help the full-function operation of imaging facilities and facilitate technology transformation. It will also be able to observe the entire process of disease occurrence with more precision as well as panoramically study and analyze major scientific issues in biomedicine.

Molecular imaging technology can decode the occurrence and development mechanism of diseases in real-time and in vivo from different scales of molecules, cells and tissue, and realize the visual diagnosis and treatment of diseases. It has shown great clinical significance in the diagnosis and treatment of diseases such as prostate cancer and neuroendocrine tumors.

The molecular probe is a tracer with specific biological targeting properties, which is the key to the function of biomedical imaging facilities, and is also the core technology and international research frontier in the field of molecular imaging.

SEZs OFFERING POTENTIAL FOR GROWTH OF AFRICA'S INDUSTRIALISATION MOVE



Architectural design of proposed Bagamoyo Special Economic Zone

By Charles Macharia

THE continent has a huge potential to industrialise and make its manufacturing industry one of the most vibrant in the world.

However, despite this potential, the manufacturing sector in Africa has not fully realised its potential and instead still relies heavily on imports to meet its industrial needs.

According to the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), Africa's manufacturing output grew at an average annual rate of 4.6 percent between 2005 and 2018.

However, the sector still accounts for a relatively small share of Africa's GDP, with manufacturing value added

representing only 11 percent of total GDP, compared to 22 percent in Asia and 15 percent in Latin America in 2019.

There are significant variations in manufacturing performance across different African regions and countries. According to the African Development Bank, North Africa is the most industrialised sub-region, with manufacturing accounting for over 20 percent of GDP in some countries.

East Africa has also made significant progress in industrialisation, with manufacturing accounting for around 10 percent of GDP in some countries.

West and Central Africa, however, lag, with manufacturing contributing less than 5 percent of GDP in most countries.

Challenges

One of the major obstacles to the emergence of a flourishing manufacturing industry is the lack of access to affordable and reliable energy.

The high cost of energy makes it difficult for manufacturers to operate competitively. Inadequate infrastructure is another challenge that the manufacturing sector faces in Africa.

Poor transportation systems and inadequate storage facilities increase production costs, limit market access, and often discourage international businesses from entering the market.

Opportunities

Despite these challenges, several positive developments are driving the growth of the manufacturing industry in Af-

rica.

Many African countries have adopted policies to attract foreign investment into the sector.

Governments are also implementing policies that encourage local entrepreneurs to invest, and African countries are working together to create a conducive environment for investment.

One of the initiatives is the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) agreement, which aims to create a single market for goods and services, making it easier for African countries to trade with each other.

The manufacturing sector in Africa is also benefitting from the advancement of technology.

Adopting new technologies means African manufacturers

can compete more effectively with their global counterparts.

The use of digital technologies such as the Internet of Things (IoT) and Artificial Intelligence (AI) is increasing efficiency and productivity.

The rise of e-commerce in Africa has also made it easier for local manufacturers to promote and sell their products to a wider customer base.

Another positive development in Africa is the emergence of industrial parks and Special Economic Zones (SEZs) for manufacturing activities with incentives and benefits for investors.

They provide investors access to basic infrastructure and utilities, making setting up and running manufacturing operations easier.

Industrial parks also provide a platform for collaboration between investors, government agencies, and other stakeholders in the manufacturing sector.

SEZs in Africa have played a significant role in promoting industrialisation and increasing the manufacturing sector's competitiveness.

Some of the major SEZs in Africa include overall, the manufacturing industry in Africa has huge potential for growth and development.

With the right policies in place, we expect to see the international investment taps open further, and the continent retains the potential to emerge as one of the most vibrant manufacturing centres in the world.

African countries also need to work together to create a conducive environment for investment in the manufacturing industry.

Governments need to continue investing in infrastructure, education and technology to create a skilled workforce that can drive the growth of the manufacturing sector.

In turn, this has the potential to aid job creation, reduce poverty and achieve sustainable economic growth and development, reducing the often widespread reliance on hydrocarbons and minerals.

Owners to pay rent daily for city roadside structures



A Nairobi flyover that cuts across the University Way connecting pedestrians from Harry Thuku Road to Muindi Mbingu Street. FILE PHOTO | NMG

NAIROBI

OWNERS of temporary structures on road reserves in Kenyan cities will be required to pay a minimum fee of Sh3,000 daily under proposed regulations that will also allow the government to lease road reserve space.

And Kenyans will also be expected to pay a one-off fee of Sh50,000 to be allowed to direct storm water into public road drainages.

The charges, proposed in the draft Kenya Roads (Roadside Stations) Regulations, 2023, signal additional burden for families and business-

es with homes and premises along the roads.

The fees will be paid on top of what the county governments charge traders and other businesses operating within their jurisdictions.

If approved, a temporary settlement of up to six months will attract Sh100 for every square metre per day with a minimum of Sh3,000 if the road is within cities. Charges outside cities will be Sh50 per square metre daily subject to a minimum of Sh1,000.

Short-term leasing of road reserve space for between six months to four years will require Sh55,000 in applica-

tion, processing and administrative fees, followed by the annual rent of 15 percent of the unimproved site value and five percent annual rent escalation rate.

The Kenya National Highways Authority (KeNHA) is also proposing to start charging a Sh50,000 one-time fee for people seeking to construct access roads to their private premises. This is in addition to Sh5,000 application fees. Those seeking to construct access roads or lanes to their petrol stations will pay Sh200,000 as a one-off fee.

The fees, which will apply

for class S, A and B roads, are part of the charges being proposed for roadside developments, which include using any portion of the expansive road reserve across the country.

"Person may upon payment of the requisite fee apply to the Director General of the Road Authority for approval to construct a road to access his premises," says the draft.

Constructing an access road to a shopping mall, a departmental store or its equivalent will set one back Sh5,000 in application fee, followed by a Sh300,000 one-time charge once the approval is granted.

KeNHA will also allow the leasing of road reserve space to private individuals and businesses for up to 29 years as it seeks to raise money from undeveloped land earmarked for future roads. This could also hurt many informal businesses that have erected shops on road reserves.

Those seeking to lease road reserves within cities for between 10 and 29 years will pay Sh420,000 as application fee, processing and administrative fees. Charges outside cities will be Sh330,000.

The long-term leases will then attract 15 percent of the unimproved site value as

stand premium, followed by annual rent equivalent to 10 percent of the unimproved site value and rent escalation charge of 15 percent of the unimproved site value after every five years.

A five- to nine-year lease will require one to pay Sh310,000 in application, processing and administrative fees. One will incur 15 percent stand premium on the unimproved site value, annual rent equivalent of 10 percent of the unimproved site value and a rent escalation charge of 13 percent of the unimproved site value after every five years.

KeNHA is also proposing a Sh5,000 application fee for those seeking to erect any structure on a road reserve. Entities will pay Sh2,000 and Sh18,000 per square metre for non-digital and digital commercial billboards respectively.

There will be a Sh10,000 annual fee for approval to install water and sewerage pipes on road reserves. A similar amount will be paid to install underground power, telephone or fibre optic cables or any other structure on the road reserve. Erecting a communications mast on a road reserve will attract an annual Sh100,000 fee.

BID TO BLOCK INDIANA'S \$119MN COMPENSATION FALLS SHORT AT THE ICSID

By Guardian Reporter

THE International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID), has dismissed the majority of Tanzania's arguments aimed at annulling the \$119 million award granted to Australian mining company Indiana Resources and other claimants.

According to information made available to this paper, with such a decision by the ICSID, the Indiana Resources is edging closer to recovering its 'lost' investment in the Ntaka Hill nickel sulphide project though the government is yet to comment.

The ICSID's decision mandates the government to compensate

the claimants with US\$112.9 million plus additional costs of US\$4.2 million, with interest accruing monthly until payment is made or assets are seized, potentially totaling around US\$120 million.

With two of three annulment grounds already struck down by the ICSID, the government's case seems to weaken, though can only proceed on its remaining complaint - namely that the Tribunal seriously departed from fundamental rules of procedure.

On the other hand, as the annulment process unfolds, each side is said to prepare its arguments, with deadlines set for submissions and replies. Notably, prolonged proceedings incur additional costs, incentivizing timely resolution if the

annulment fails.

The Indiana Resources first lodged the claim with ICSID in July 2021 for compensation of USD93.7 million plus interest, which continues to accrue. In October 2022, the company met with a special government negotiation team.

In 2015 Tanzania issued a retention licence for the Ntaka Hill project. The licence has been valid for five years, but in 2017 the Mining Act was abolished, and the retention licence classification was removed with no replacement classification issued.

In 2018, Tanzania published the Mining (Mineral Rights) Regulations 2018, which clarified that Retention Licences no longer existed and that the underlying rights over all areas un-

der those licences, including the Retention Licence held for the Project, reverted to the Government of Tanzania.

Between January 2018 and December 2019, Indiana Resources Limited actively engaged with the Tanzanian government to develop a suitable tenure mechanism for the Project Licence to be reinstated.

The government reassured the company that its historical investment would be recognised and its rights would be respected and protected.

However, in December 2019, the Mining Commission of Tanzania announced a public invitation to tender for the joint development areas previously covered by the Ntaka Hill retention licence.

Egypt's developers get record US\$22.65bn in property sales in 2023

CAIRO

THE Board Consulting has released its annual real estate report that showcased the exceptional accomplishments of 20 leading developers, who collectively achieved over EGP 700bn in sales. This remarkable achievement surpasses last year's sales div of EGP 332bn, revealing the unwavering resilience and impressive growth of the real estate market, even amidst the numerous challenges faced throughout 2023.

The report attributes the remarkable surge in real estate sales to a combination of external and internal factors such as global inflation due to geopolitical conflicts and the rise in US interest rates. On the internal front, the price increases in Egypt created a sense of urgency and panic among individuals to purchase real estate as a means to sustain the value of their money.

Ahmed Zaki, Managing Director of The Board Consulting, said: "The 25% depreciation of the currency had a 'Domino effect,' resulting in increased inflation and economic uncertainty. This depreciation led to a rise in prices across various sectors, including real estate, causing individuals to scramble for secure and reliable investment opportunities."

Zaki added that the global unrest and disruptions in commercial routes have greatly affected raw materials, especially construction steel prices which surged to EGP 55,000 per tonne in the black market; with a notable disparity in availability compared to the official rate of EGP 39,000 per tonne. Consequently, construction materials have experienced an average increase of 80% (excluding the fully finishing materials), resulting in a corresponding 60% increase in overall construction costs. These costs typically represent about 35% of project investments, leading to an average 80% increase in selling prices.

Zaki concluded by highlighting the distribution of the top 20 developers' sales in 2023, stating: "The sales were generated in the following order: East Cairo, the North Coast, West Cairo and finally the Red Sea."

The report emphasizes that East Cairo takes the lead as the top destination of choice, particularly with the recent expansions in Al-Mostakbal City and the establishment of the government's headquarters in new urban areas.

In contrast, West Cairo has seen tremendous growth with over 70 residential projects sold in 2023. It has also witnessed a surge in land

acquisitions, particularly due to the booming expansions in Sphinx City and New Zayed City.

The North Coast has emerged as the trendiest and most sought-after second home destination. Its popularity has led to a frenzy of land acquisitions driven by the high return on investment (ROI) it offers. It has also become a favorite destination for investors.

The Red Sea region has experienced significant development, with destinations like Makadi Bay, Soma Bay, and El-Gouna evolving into attractive "first home" options for some. Additionally, new destinations like Tawila Island have also emerged.

In 2023, Talaat Mostafa Group (TMG) emerged as the top developer, achieving an unprecedented sales div of EGP 140bn. This remarkable growth of 322 percent over 2022 was exclusively driven by their projects in East Cairo, without the involvement of brokers.

TMG also expanded their presence by launching the mega project BENAN in Saudi Arabia, spanning over 10 million sqm, and acquiring a 39 percent stake in Legacy, further establishing their foothold in the hospitality sector.

Mountain View secured second place with sales of EGP 61.1bn, marking a significant increase of 98 percent over 2022. Naguib Sawiris's Ora and Palm Hills both claimed the third spot, each achieving remarkable sales divs of EGP 59.5bn. Ora witnessed a staggering 207 percent increase over 2022, while Palm Hills saw a substantial 129 percent increase.

According to the Board Consulting report, City Edge secured fourth place with sales reaching EGP 38bn, reflecting a 100 percent increase over 2022. Madinet Masr followed closely in fifth place, achieving sales of EGP 35bn, marking an impressive 212 percent increase.

Emaar Misr recorded sales of EGP 30.2bn, experiencing a slight decrease of -9% compared to 2022. SODIC achieved sales of EGP 29.4bn, representing a notable 38 percent increase. Founders recorded sales of EGP 27.6bn, marking a 35 percent increase. New Giza achieved sales of EGP 26bn, reflecting a 63% increase, while Tatweer Misr secured EGP 25bn in sales, experiencing an impressive 213% increase over 2022.

The report emphasized the significance of supporting the secondary market for the new generation. It also underscored the importance of implementing a well-designed mortgage system to effectively manage resale risks.



Geita Gold Mining Limited's (GGML) Principal Reliability Engineer, Maftah Seif (R), briefs the Chief Financial Officer of AngloGold Ashanti, the GGML's parent company, Gillian Doran (L), on the substation project that will enable GGML to draw power from the Tanzania Electricity Company's (TANESCO) national grid. Other members of AngloGold Ashanti's senior management accompanied Doran and senior GGML staff on the visits to Geita in January 2024.

By Guardian Correspondent,

Geita

GEITA Gold Mining Company Limited (GGML) is set to start using electricity from the national grid after the Tanzania Electricity Company (Tanesco) constructed a substation and distribution lines to the mine.

The construction exercise for the project has reached 95-percent and is expected to cost \$24.4 million and expected to have the capacity to step down the power from 33 Kilovolts to 11 Kilovolts with a maximum power demand of 40 Megawatts.

Briefing the Chief Financial Officer from AngloGold Ashanti which is the parent company of GGML, Gillian Doran, GGML's Principal Reliability Engineer, Maftah Seif said the project is expected to be completed in the

Geita Gold's sub-station construction reaches 95pc

mid of March depending on Power availability from Tanesco for Hot Synchronization

He said that the major task left now is the commissioning of the power stabilization Units, STATCOMs which will be followed by Site Acceptance Test (SAT).

Initially explaining more about the project, the Vice President for Sustainability and Corporate Affairs (Africa) at AngloGold Ashanti Simon Shayo said Tanesco has recently completed the construction of a 220-kilovolt line from Bulyanhulu to Geita, is on the final stage to complete a 6.1-kilometre 33-kilovolt line to the GGML mine.

At the same time, the company is constructing a Substation to step down the power output to 11 kilovolts.

He also pointed out that many mining companies have relied on self-generated electricity since the 2000s. The government is now making a conscious effort to integrate the energy sector with larger manufacturing sectors by ensuring adequate power supply for large investors.

Shayo cited GGML as an example, which currently generates 40 megawatts of electricity from its installed Diesel-Powered Generators.

"Once TANESCO's electricity

project is completed, the mine will be able to rely on the national grid, resulting in a 50% reduction in electricity costs, which translates into annual savings of USD 19 million," he explained.

By stopping captive power generation and connecting to TANESCO's national grid, GGML also aims to reduce carbon emissions by 81 kilotonnes by 2030.

"As the country plans to invest heavily in the mining sector and establish mineral mines in various regions, TANESCO is expected to see a significant increase in revenue due to the increased electricity consumption of these mines," he said.

AVERAGE LAND PRICES IN NAIROBI SUBURBS RISE

NAIROBI

The value of land in Nairobi last year rose at the fastest rate in seven years on post-pandemic recovery and market correction.

Data released by Real Estate firm HassConsult suggests that an acre of land in Nairobi

suburbs grew by 3.96 percent last year on average, making it the fastest growth since 2016 when they grew by 5.14 percent.

The rise, partly attributed to a recovery from the dip occasioned by the pandemic, however, continued to trail inflation for at least a decade.

"The average price per acre in the suburbs has now crossed the Sh200 million mark, helped by the fast rise of prices in areas such as Langata, Ridgeways, Loresho, and Muthangari which offer a mix of affordability, ease of access and mixed-use zoning," said Sakina Hassanali, head of development consulting and research at HassConsult.

Despite beating returns on equities, prices continued to trail government papers, offshore investments, fixed deposits and land in Nairobi satellite towns that appreciated by an average of 9.27 percent.

Land prices surge in Nairobi's most sought after satellite towns

Land prices in the city contracted by a record 2.56 percent in 2020 pushing landholders to deeper losses but have since been rising for three consecutive years.

The rally in land prices is a sign of a recovering property

market that has been subdued by reduced demand as a result of low incomes and an oversupply of rental spaces.

The release noted that 14 out of the 18 sampled suburbs recorded positive price movements in the fourth quarter of last year as Loresho and Langata were the biggest gainers

in the year recording gains of 11 and 10.9 percent over the year respectively.

On the flip side Upper Hill, which was once the most coveted suburb in the city, has now seen its value contract for five consecutive years with an acre now averaging Sh478.2 million.



CONSTRUCTION

A JOURNEY TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT THROUGH TOURISM

By Edward Frontline Ruhinda

RECENT social-economic studies unveil the persistent poverty challenges facing the Kagera Region, which was one of the economic powerhouses in Tanzania back before 1980s.

For many years, the region has grappled with social setbacks, including the consequences of the HIV-AIDS pandemic that claimed many lives in the 1980s and 1990s.

The aftermath witnessed the highest orphanage rate, with little understanding of the long-term consequences.

On the economic front, a series of catastrophic events negatively impacted the region's household income dynamics, as well as overall regional economy.

Recent data by the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) show the region's per capita income level is the lowest among all regions of Tanzania, which need serious measures to rescue the regional economy.

According to data by NBS, the GDP per capita for Kagera region stands at 1.4mn/- per year, which is equivalent to half of the national average GDP per capita of 2.8mn/-.

Despite these challenges, Kagera Region, situated in North Western Tanzania, stands as one of the few regions blessed with abundant natural resources, a resilient history, and diverse ecosystems adorned with biodiversity hotspots.

The climatic conditions in the region support the cultivation of a wide array of annual and perennial crops, thriving in dense and diverse agroforestry farming systems.

Coffee, avocado, vanilla and banana are mostly grown in the region, as well as small ruminants, and the renowned long-horned "Ankole" cattle.

Embarking on a canvas of untapped potential within the region, a group of passionate entertain-

ers from Dar es Salaam, led by the acclaimed Bongo artist Goodhope Ntimba, known as Sepenga, have come in support for a transformative initiative.

Sepenga has rallied fellow entertainers and stakeholders to recognize and back a visionary project aimed at implementing an innovative approach to unveil hidden treasures - a venture they've aptly named The Grand Kagera Tour.

Their devotion to the initiative extends beyond the stage, as they organize stakeholders to embrace and contribute to a project that promises to redefine the narrative of the Kagera Region.

The Grand Kagera Tour, conceived as a vital component of the Kagera Eco-Cultural Tourism Acceleration, is a collaborative endeavor designed to explore the region's natural wonders and cultural heritage.

Beyond the surface, it aspires to tackle prevalent issues like poverty, acting as a catalyst for economic development.

This artistic venture is not merely a tour; it is a curated experience that aims to elevate the region's story.

As the entertainers bring their artistic flair to the initiative, The Grand Kagera Tour becomes more than just a journey; it transforms into a collective expression of hope and rejuvenation.

In this artistic collaboration, The Grand Kagera Tour emerges as a typical example of how the power of creativity can be harnessed to address societal challenges.

The entertainers have a shared vision of unlocking the region's potential. Together, they are crafting a narrative that goes beyond entertainment, capturing the essence of a community coming together to pave the way for a brighter, more vibrant future for the Kagera Region.

Spanning across a diverse array of sectors, the initiative has innovated to encompass natural resources and tourism, culture and sports, region-

UNVEILING TREASURES OF KAGERA

By Edward Frontline Ruhinda



al administration, local government, agriculture, industry, and trade.

The central objective is to involve every citizen in the tourism value chain, transforming them into potential stakeholders in the broader initiative.

The initiative underscores the importance of local participation and ownership of deliverables. Collaboration extends to governmental bodies at regional, district, ward, and village levels, aligning the project with overarching development strategies in place.

Their involvement is deemed essential for effectively communicating the project's objectives to communities, bridging the gap between initiatives and local understanding.

The anticipated impacts of this artistic venture are nothing short of a masterpiece, aiming to create positive socio-economic changes across Kagera.

The initiative foresees potential reduction in poverty levels, creating enhanced public-private partnerships and governance improvements.

The solution lies in the establishment of eco-cultural tourism infrastructure, weaving together threads of economic development and environmental consciousness.

More positive outcomes are increased employment opportunities, generated earnings, and the allure of attracting tourists, harmonizing with the rhythm of youth employ-

ment stimulation in the region.

The Grand Kagera Tour takes on the role of a skilled artisan, delicately unveiling hidden tourist attractions and elevating the Kagera Region to a distinctive and sought-after destination.

Exploring further the artistic landscapes of Kagera, its intricate waterways, including the Kagera and Ngoni rivers, cascade into Lake Lweru/Nyanza, Burigi, or Ikimba, which nurture biodiversity-rich wet-marshy lands, stretching like an expansive canvas across green valleys.

Historically, these watery boundaries delineated the ancient territories of Karagwe and Buhaya kingdoms. Today, these territories find resonance in the seven districts comprising the Kagera Region, with echoes assimilated into the broader strokes of Geita and Kigoma Regions.

In the artistry of Kagera's natural heritage, we witness not only a geographical but a living mural that continues to evolve over time.

Competitive advantage Kagera Region holds a competitive advantage. It borders four of the seven East African member states and is strategically positioned at an almost equidistant distance from the capital cities of Dodoma, Kampala, Kigali, and Bujumbura.

This unique positioning positions Kagera as a potential economic and business hub for East Africa, foster-

ing connectivity with the newly gazetted National Parks of Rumanyika-Ibando, Burigi-Chato, and Rubondo.

Furthermore, the region forms vital links with neighboring wildlife sanctuaries in Uganda, Rwanda, and Burundi.

The convergence of abundant natural resources, a rich cultural history, diverse ecosystems, and a strategically advantageous geographical location not only underscores the potential of the Kagera Region as an attractive tourist destination but also highlights the pressing need to unlock these assets to address pervasive challenges related to income poverty.

In response to this imperative, the Grand Kagera Tour is poised to catalyze Eco-Cultural Tourism acceleration and promotion. Encompassing Natural Resources and Tourism, Culture, and Sports, the tour aims to comprehensively tackle the multifaceted challenges faced by the region, with the overarching goal of fostering sustainable development.

In a tangible sense, every resident of the Kagera Region who engages and participates in any capacity within the tourism value chains emerges as a direct beneficiary of the tour's outcomes.

The project's inclusive nature ensures that the positive impacts of tourism development reach all residents, contributing to a more equitable distribution of benefits throughout the community.

Notably, the owners or overseers of sites significant for their ecology, cultural and heritage importance, and historic relevance are recognized as direct beneficiaries. This acknowledgment emphasizes the preservation and promotion of local culture, heritage, and natural wonders.

Additionally, various suppliers in the project value chain, including transporters, guesthouses, hotels, and local eateries (Mama/Baba

Lishe), are integral contributors, directly benefiting from increased economic activities generated by tourism.

The involvement of the 'Bongo-movies Stars-Wasanii troop' adds a layer of significance to the project.

This local entertainment and performing arts group will not only serve as a valuable resource but also play a crucial role in enhancing the internalization of the project's promotional messages.

Past experiences have highlighted that local entertainment and performing arts are effective vehicles for connecting with communities.

Their active participation is considered both critical and inevitable to ensure the resonance of the project's objectives with the local population.

The Kagera Region is poised to witness a surge in tourist numbers annually, unveiling its hidden attractions and elevating the region to a distinctive and coveted tourist destination.

This growth will be fueled by increased investments and an enhanced regional asset base, contributing significantly to the economic vitality of the area.

Emphasizing environmental sustainability, the project is dedicated to restoring ecosystems and conserving biodiversity, thereby offering heightened environmental services to the region.

Anticipated benefits include a boost in revenue for local government authorities through increased enterprise operations, fostering community development.

The initiative also envisions the revival of cultural and traditional principles, aiming to enhance societal well-being.

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US commercial real estate market faces serious troubles

NEW YORK

The troubles in the US commercial property market, which have already hit banks in New York and Japan, moved to Europe this week, elevating fears about broader contagion.

The latest victim was Germany's Deutsche Pfandbriefbank AG, which saw its bonds slump on concern about its exposure to the sector. It responded by issuing an unscheduled statement Wednesday that it had increased provisions because of the "persistent weakness of the real estate markets."

It described the current turmoil as the "greatest real estate crisis since the financial crisis."

Lenders are taking increasing provisions on debt extended to property owners and developers as loans begin to sour after rising interest rates eroded the value of buildings around the world. On Tuesday, Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen said that losses in commercial real estate are a worry that will put stress on owners, but added that she thinks the problem is manageable.

For offices in the US, where the return to work following the pandemic has been slower and less substantial, the value destruction has been particularly bad. And some predict the full impact might not even be fully priced in yet. Analysts at Green Street said that a further writedown of as much as 15% may be needed this year.

"Appraisal values remain much too high," they wrote in a note. "Lenders that base their decisions on these appraisals have greater odds of taking impairments" and some could face "strain" as a result.

The plunge in German lenders' bonds was the latest in a series of

warning signals. New York Community Bancorp was cut to junk by Moody's Investors Service after flagging real estate problems, while Japan's Aozora Bank recorded its first loss in 15 years due to provisions on loans extended to US commercial properties.

"There are serious concerns in the US CRE market," said Rabobank credit strategist Paul van der Westhuizen. "It's a not an issue for larger US and European banks but the smaller property-focused German banks are feeling a bit of pain. Right now it's more a profitability issue than a solvency issue for them though. They have sufficient capital and are less exposed to the threat of deposit runs than pure retail banks are."

In its results last week, Deutsche Bank AG recorded provisions for losses in US commercial real estate that were more than four times bigger than a year earlier. It warned that refinancing poses the greatest risk to the struggling sector as asset values suffer.

Elsewhere in Europe, Switzerland's Julius Baer Group Ltd. said it would write down huge loans to bankrupt property company Signa. While it was a specific issue, it's added to the broader worries about how far things could spread.

On Tuesday, Morgan Stanley held a call with clients recommending they sell Deutsche PBB's senior bonds. The notes due in 2027 tanked over 5 cents after that to 97, according to CBBT data compiled by Bloomberg. Meanwhile, the bank's ATI notes slumped as much as 15 cents to 36 between Tuesday and Wednesday.

Deutsche PBB said Wednesday that while it has increased loan-loss provisions to €210-215 million for the full year, it "remains profitable



thanks to its financial strength."

Sonja Forster, vice president of European Financial Institution Ratings at Morningstar DBRS, said PBB's "focus on prime locations and relatively conservative LTVs provide some downside protection."

"However, given that the refinancing risk is still high and fresh equity available to borrowers is limited we are monitoring the situation very closely," she said.

Concerns over PBB has spread

to other banks with CRE exposure. Aareal Bank AG bonds have lost about 10 points in the last two days and are now quoted at 76 cents on the euro. In November, it reported that the value of US non-performing loans had risen more than fourfold over the previous year.

A spokesperson for Aareal declined to comment.

Deutsche Bank shares were down about 3.7% as of 2:40 p.m. Frankfurt time and Commerzbank AG de-

clined 3.2%, both underperforming the Euro Stoxx Index.

Bafin, the country's banking regulator, said it's monitoring the situation, declining to comment on specific lenders.

Germany's central bank warned last year about the risks surrounding commercial real estate, saying there could be "significant adjustments" that lead to higher defaults and credit losses.

"The outstanding volume of

loans granted by the German banking system to the US commercial real estate market is comparatively small, but relatively concentrated at individual banks," the Bundesbank said.

Germany's Landesbanks have also felt the pain of their exposure to commercial real estate; in the first half of 2023, the major state banks - Helaba, BayernLB, LBBW and NordLB - posted provisions of about €400 million in total.

WORLD

January was world's warmest on record, EU scientists say

BRUSSELS

THE world just experienced its hottest January on record, continuing a run of exceptional heat fueled by climate change, the European Union's Copernicus Climate Change Service (C3S) said yesterday.

Last month surpassed the previous warmest January, which occurred in 2020, in C3S's records going back to 1950.

The exceptional month came after 2023 ranked as the planet's hottest year in global records going back to 1850, as human-caused climate change and the El Niño weather phenomenon, which warms the surface waters in the eastern Pacific Ocean, pushed temperatures higher.

Every month since June has been the world's hottest on record, compared with the corresponding month in previous years. "Not only is it the warmest January on record but we have also just experienced a 12-month period of more than 1.5 C (1.7 F) above the pre-industrial reference period," C3S Deputy Director Samantha Burgess said.

"Rapid reductions in greenhouse gas emissions are the only way to stop global temperatures increasing," she said.

US scientists have said 2024 has a one-in-three chance of being even hotter than last year, and a 99 percent chance of ranking in the top five warmest years.

The El Niño phenomenon began to



People sit along the ledge of the Tidal Basin on Jan 26, 2024 in Washington, DC. Temperatures in DC hit 81 degrees Fahrenheit, making it the hottest January day on record. AFP

weaken last month, and scientists, opens new tab have indicated it could shift to the cooler La Niña counterpart later this year. Still, average global sea surface temperatures last month were the highest for any January on record.

Countries agreed in the 2015 Paris Agreement to try to prevent global warming surpassing 1.5 degrees Celsius, to avoid it unleashing more severe and irreversible consequences.

Despite exceeding 1.5 C in a 12-month period, the world has not yet breached the Paris Agreement target, which refers to an average global temperature over decades.

Some scientists have said the goal can no longer realistically be met, but have urged governments to act faster to cut CO2 emissions to limit overshooting the target - and the deadly heat, drought and rising seas that this would inflict on people and ecosystems - as much as possible. **Agencies**

Russia doing its best to help hostages in Middle East – Putin

MOSCOW

MOSCOW is sparing no effort to help hostages in the Middle East and these efforts are yielding results, Russian President Vladimir Putin said.

"Following the escalation of the situation in the Middle East, Russia has been doing its utmost to help people who are held hostage," he said at a meeting with Russia's Chief Rabbi Berel Lazar and President of the Russia's Federation of Jewish Communities Alexander Boroda.

The Russian foreign ministry "is working via Hamas' political wing," Putin said. "And in general, there are certain results."

The president stressed that Russia is helping not only its nationals but also foreigners. "Of course, we pay primary attention to Russian citizens, but not only to them, but also to citizens of other countries, especially the elderly people and their families, who survived Holocaust," he said.

"Certain results are already seen, but I understand, I know that these efforts need to be continued," Putin said. "We are doing this and I would like to discuss details of this work with you."

Situation in the Middle East

Tensions flared up again in the Middle East on October 7 after militants from the Gaza Strip-based radical Palestinian group Hamas launched a surprise incursion on Israeli territory, killing many Israeli kibbutz residents living near the Gaza border and abducting more than 240 Israelis, including women, children and the elderly.

Hamas described its attack as a response to Israeli authorities' aggressive actions against the Al-Aqsa Mosque on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem's Old City.

Israel declared a total blockade of the Gaza Strip and launched bombardments of the enclave and some areas in Lebanon and Syria, as well as a ground operation against Hamas in the Gaza Strip. Clashes are also reported in the West Bank.

On November 30, 2023, Hamas released two women with Russian citizenship - Elena Trufanova and her mother Irina Tatti - "in response to the Russian president's efforts." **Agencies**

Xi extends Spring Festival greetings to all Chinese

BEIJING

CHINESE President Xi Jinping, on behalf of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee and the State Council, extended Spring Festival greetings to all Chinese yesterday at a reception in Beijing.

Xi (pictured), also general secretary of the CPC Central Committee and chairman of the Central Military Commission, delivered a speech at the gathering at the Great Hall of the People, greeting Chinese people of all ethnic groups, compatriots in Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan, and overseas Chinese.

The outgoing Year of the Rabbit marked the beginning of the full implementation of the guiding principles of the 20th CPC National Congress on all fronts, Xi said, noting that the country faced an exceptionally complicated international environment and arduous tasks of reform, development, and maintaining stability.

"We pooled strength from Chinese modernization, kept in mind both domestic and international imperatives, overcame multiple difficulties and challenges, and made solid progress on a new journey toward building China into a modern socialist country in all respects," Xi said.

Li Qiang presided over the reception. Zhao Leji, Wang Huning, Cai Qi, Ding Xuexiang, Li Xi and Han Zheng were also present at the event.

This year's Spring Festival, or the Chinese Lunar New Year, falls on Feb 10. **Xinhua**



US presidential election 2024: Who are the candidates?

WASHINGTON

TWO Republican candidates are jostling to be their party's presidential nominee for the 2024 general election, while President Joe Biden is the Democratic Party's presumptive nominee, and several third-party hopefuls have joined the fray.

Here is a list of the candidates.

Republican Party:

Donald Trump

Trump has embraced his indictments in four separate criminal cases - unprecedented for a former American president - and leveraged them to boost his popularity among Republicans and raise funds, helping to make him the Republican frontrunner with 49 percent in the latest Reuters/Ipsos polling. He won the party's first nominating contest in Iowa, taking more than half the votes.

Trump, 77, has called the indictments a political witch hunt to thwart his pursuit of a second four-year term, an assertion that the Justice Department has denied. If elected again, Trump has vowed revenge against his perceived enemies and has adopted increasingly authoritarian language, including saying he would not be a dictator except "on day one."

He has promised other sweeping changes, including gutting the federal civil service to install loyalists and imposing tougher immigration policies such as mass deportations and ending birthright citizenship.

Nikki Haley

A former South Carolina governor and Trump's ambassador to the United Nations, Haley, 52, has emphasized her relative youth compared to Biden,

81, and Trump, as well as her background as the daughter of Indian immigrants.

Haley has gained a reputation in the Republican Party as a solid conservative who has the ability to address issues of gender and race in a more credible fashion than many of her peers. She has also pitched herself as a stalwart defender of American interests abroad, and has argued Trump's management style is too chaotic and divisive to be effective.

She earned 12 percent support among Republicans, according to the Reuters/Ipsos survey and placed third in Iowa behind Florida Governor Ron DeSantis, who dropped out on Sunday.

Democratic Party:

Joe Biden

Biden, already the oldest US president ever, will have to convince voters he has the stamina for another four years in office, amid concerns about his age and poor approval ratings.

Biden allies say he believes he is the only Democratic candidate who can defeat Trump. The most recent Reuters/Ipsos poll put him at 35 percent, the same level of support as Trump.

In announcing his candidacy, Biden declared it was his job to defend American democracy, and referred to the deadly Jan 6, 2021, attack on the US Capitol by Trump supporters. Vice-President Kamala Harris is again his running mate.

The economy will factor in his reelection campaign. While the US escaped an anticipated recession and is growing faster than economists expected, inflation hit 40-year highs in 2022 and the cost of food and gas is weighing on voters.

Biden has led the response of Western governments to Ukraine conflict, persuading



allies to sanction Moscow and support Kyiv, and he has been supportive of Israel in its conflict with Hamas militants in Gaza.

However, he has faced sharp criticism from some within his party for failing to back calls for a ceasefire in the Palestinian territory, where Gaza health officials say more than 25,000 people have been killed, thousands of buildings have been damaged or destroyed and residents have insufficient food, water and medical supplies.

At home, he has pushed through massive economic stimulus and infrastructure spending packages to boost US industrial output, although he has received little recognition from voters for the latter.

Biden's handling of immigration policy has been criticized by Republicans and Democrats as migrant crossings at the US-Mexico border hit record highs during his administration.

Dean Phillips

Dean Phillips, a little-known US congressman from Minnesota, announced in October he would mount a long-shot challenge to Biden because he does not believe the president can

win another term.

The 55-year-old millionaire businessman and gelato company co-founder announced his bid in a one-minute video posted online, saying: "We've got some challenges. ... We're going to repair this economy, and we are going to repair America."

Independents:

Robert F. Kennedy Jr

An anti-vaccine activist, Robert F. Kennedy Jr, 70, is running as an independent after initially challenging Biden for the Democratic nomination, but he is far behind in polling.

But recent Reuters/Ipsos polls show that Kennedy could harm Biden more than Trump in the presidential election, where third-party candidates have affected the outcome of US elections even without winning. He won the backing of 18 percent of respondents when included as an option in the latest survey.

He is the son of US Senator Robert F. Kennedy, who was assassinated in 1968 during his own presidential bid. Kennedy was banned from Instagram for spreading misinformation about vaccines and the COVID-19 pandemic but was later reinstated.

He lost a legal bid to force YouTube owner Google to reinstate videos of him questioning the safety of COVID vaccines.

Cornel West

The political activist, philosopher and academic said in June he would launch a third-party bid for president that is likely to appeal to progressive, Democratic-leaning voters.

West, 70, initially ran as a Green Party candidate, but in October he said people "want good policies over partisan politics" and announced his bid as an independent. He has promised to end poverty and guarantee housing.

Jill Stein, a physician, re-upped her 2016 Green Party bid on Nov. 9, accusing Democrats of betraying their promises "for working people, youth and the climate again and again - while Republicans don't even make such promises in the first place."

Stein, 73, raised millions of dollars for recounts after Trump's surprise 2016 victory. Her allegations yielded only one electoral review in Wisconsin, which showed Trump had won. **Agencies**

Newly installed solar photovoltaic (PV) capacity is expected to reach 375 gigawatts globally in 2023, growing 31.8 percent year on year, said an annual report recently issued by the International Energy Agency.

China's solar PV installations last year equaled to the world's total in 2022. Demetrios Papathanasiou, global director for the World Bank's Energy and Extractives Global Practice, believes that developing the solar PV industry is crucial for addressing climate change and promoting energy transition.

At the 28th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP28) held last year, the development of solar energy was one of the key topics discussed.

The agreement reached at the COP28 for the first time acknowledged the de-

China's PV industry contributes to global green development

creasing costs and technological innovations in solar energy, wind energy, and energy storage, recognizing their potential in achieving climate goals. It called on countries to transition away from fossil fuels in a just, orderly, and fair manner within the energy system.

In recent years, the global PV industry has been experiencing rapid growth. According to relevant statistics, the average annual growth of PV installations worldwide reached 28 percent from 2019 to 2023.

Consulting firm Wood Mackenzie said that solar energy has become the most cost-competitive energy source in most countries. The PV industry is expected to maintain a high growth rate over the next decade.

Former Vice Chair of the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, Mohan Munasinghe, noted that sustainable development is a crucial challenge for human society. The continuous innovation and growing advantages of solar PV technology provide developing countries with options for achieving economic sustainability, transitioning to clean energy, and protecting the environment.

The Francisco Pizarro PV plant in Extremadura, Spain, began operation in 2022 and is one of the largest operational PV power stations in Europe. All the solar panels used in this plant were sourced from China.

In Garissa County, Kenya, the Garissa solar power plant constructed by a Chinese company, has effectively addressed

the issue of electricity shortage in the local area, providing continuous clean electricity to local residents.

In recent years, the Bank of China (BOC) has been involved in various solar power projects, such as the Al Dhafra PV2 solar project in the United Arab Emirates and the 300 MW Sakaka solar PV project in Saudi Arabia. Last year, the bank issued a \$500 million green bond with a focus on the Belt and Road Initiative.

Pan Xinyuan, general manager of Bank of China Dubai Branch, said that China, as the world's largest producer of solar components, has a leading advantage in solar project construction. Chinese banks, as a bridge connecting production capacity and market demand, can play a positive role in promoting global energy transfor-

mation. Fatih Birol, executive director of the International Energy Agency, noted that China has achieved remarkable success in the development of clean energy, such as solar and wind power, as well as the electric vehicle industry, making it a champion in the field of clean energy.

Sultan Ahmed Al Jaber, minister of Industry and Advanced Technology of the United Arab Emirates and president of the COP28, emphasized that China's continuous leadership in clean energy technology is a crucial factor in facilitating global energy transition, addressing climate change, and promoting development. Xiao Jinyu, deputy director-general of Economic and Technology Research Institute, Global Energy Interconnection Development and Cooperation Organi-

zation, said in an interview with People's Daily that China has elevated the acceleration of renewable energy development to a level of ensuring national energy security and strengthening ecological progress, achieving rapid progress in a short period of time. It is exactly because of China's vigorous development of renewable energy that the cost of solar power generation has decreased by nearly 90 percent globally in recent years, and wind power cost by 80 percent.

Ahmed Mohamed Mohina, vice minister of Electricity and Renewable Energy of Egypt, said that the Chinese solution is of great significance to global energy transition and climate governance. It provides feasible solutions for African and Arab countries to promote energy transition, stimulate economic development, and improve ecological environment.

People's Daily

Indian, French Navy hold 17th Staff Talks

NEW DELHI

THE 17th Indian Navy (IN) and French Navy (FN) held discussions on the ongoing naval activities and new avenues of cooperation including operational, training and Subject Matter Expert exchanges in New Delhi.

The 17th Indian Navy and French Navy staff talks were held from February 6 to 7 in the national capital.

The meeting was co-chaired by Rear Adm Nirbhay Bapna, Assistant Chief of Naval Staff - Foreign Cooperation and Intelligence and Rear Adm Jean-Marc Durandau, Director of International Engagements, French Navy.

"Broadening the scope of naval engagements, the Staff Talks encompassed fruitful discussions on ongoing naval activities & new avenues of cooperation including operational, training & Subject Matter Expert exchanges," the Indian Navy shared a post on X.

Moreover, the talks witnessed active

participation from both sides.

According to the post by the Indian Navy, both sides acknowledged the growing cooperation between the two navies and agreed to enhance collaboration and interoperability in the maritime domain.

Meanwhile, on the sidelines of the staff talks, Rear Adm Jean-Marc Durandau, Director International Engagements, FN called on Vice Adm Tarun Sobti, Deputy Chief of Naval Staff on February 7.

They underscored the high level of synergy and interoperability between the Indian Navy and the French Navy.

He also visited the Information Fusion Centre - Indian Ocean Region (IFC IOR) on February 6.

The Information Fusion Centre - Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR), hosted by the Indian Navy, was established by the Government of India in 2018 to address this need to promote collaboration for maritime safety and security. **ANI**

Jaishankar, Bangladesh FM Mahmud hold delegation-level talks; discuss bilateral ties, defence, economic partnership

NEW DELHI

EXTERNAL Affairs Minister S Jaishankar held discussions with his Bangladesh counterpart Hasan Mahmud on wide-ranging areas of bilateral relations, including defence and economic cooperation, as well as people-to-people exchanges.

Bangladesh Foreign Minister Hasan Mahmud is on an official visit to India from February 7-9. This is his first foreign visit after assuming office last month.

EAM S Jaishankar held delegation-level talks with Mahmud and hosted a dinner in his honour on Wednesday.

"During their interaction, the two Ministers reviewed the progress in wide-ranging areas of bilateral relations, including cross-border connectivity, economic and development partnership, cooperation in defence and security, power, energy, water resources and people-to-people exchanges. They also discussed areas of future engagement in line with the national development goals of the two countries, including the visions of "Viksit Bharat 2047" and "Smart Bangladesh 2041," the Ministry of External Affairs said in a statement.

The two leaders also exchanged views on regional and multilateral issues of common interest. They expressed commitment to further enhance their collaboration to promote sub-regional cooperation within the framework of BIMSTEC, IORA and BBIN, the statement added.

Taking to his X handle, EAM Jaishankar said that the two leaders discussed steps to forge ahead in the vibrant and people-centric partnership between New Delhi and Dhaka. "Pleased to welcome Bangladesh Foreign Minister @DrHasanMahmud62 on his first official visit to India. Discussed steps to forge ahead in our vibrant and people-centric partnership. Also exchanged views on regional and international developments," the EAM posted on X. **ANI**

Resumption of dialogue on peace treaty with Japan impossible – senior Russian diplomat

MOSCOW

THE resumption of talks on the peace treaty with Tokyo is impossible in the current environment, Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Andrey Rudenko told TASS.

"In the current situation, the resumption of dialogue on the above-mentioned treaty is categorically impossible," he said, when asked about the prospects of the resumption of talks on the peace treaty in the foreseeable future.

According to the senior diplomat, relations with Japan are currently at an unprecedented low level "because of the short-sighted policy of the Japanese government." "The key condition for the beginning of the movement toward their normalization is Tokyo's refusal from the hostile policy in respect of Russia rather than any ephemeral 'signals.' So far, there are no topics for a serious political discussion with Japan," he said.

He noted that Russia and Japan had not been negotiating a peace treaty as an agreement, which is signed after the end of hostilities. "They were negotiating a modern fundamental and comprehensive document on peace, friendship and good-neighbourly relations geared to lay the basis for long-term development of the entire spectrum of Russian-Japanese ties, commit to paper the sides' intention to bring closer their approaches to the key international and regional problems, specify mutual guarantees of non-participation in third parties' hostile initiatives," the diplomat said.

"But after the beginning of the special military operation in February 2022, the Japanese government blatantly violated the norms of diplomatic ethics and principles of interstate relations and embarked on an openly unfriendly course toward Russia. More than 20 packages of illegitimate sanctions have already been adopted.

Russophobic moods are being deliberately fueled in the country, anti-Russian propaganda is being conducted in international and regional formats.



Military activity is being increased jointly with the United States and other NATO member states near our Far Eastern borders. Political, economic and logistics assistance is being extended to the Kiev regime in violation of Japan's constitutional and legislative restrictions," Rudenko added.

Russia and Japan have been negotiating a peace treaty after World War II since the mid-20th century. The main stumbling block to this is the issue of the ownership of the southern Kuril Islands.

After the end of World War II, all Kuril Islands were incorporated into the Soviet Union. However, Japan challenged the ownership of Iturup, Kunashir, Shikotan islands and a number of uninhabited islands of the Lesser Kuril Ridge called the Habomai Islands in Japan.

In 1956, the Soviet Union and Japan signed a joint declaration on ceasing the state of war. The two countries resumed diplomatic and other relations, however no peace treaty has been signed until now.

The Russian foreign ministry has repeatedly said that Russia's sovereignty over these islands, which is committed to paper in international documents, cannot be called to question.

The Russian foreign ministry said in March 2022 that Moscow was stopping peace treaty talks with Tokyo after it imposed unilateral sanctions on Russia over the situation in Ukraine.

Security experts say, 'Election in Pakistan is purely a sham election'

NEW DELHI

AS elections in Pakistan get underway, several security experts feel that this is a sham election where the Army continues to call the shots and one of the largest political parties the PTI has most of its leadership in jail.

Defence expert Brigadier (Retd) Anil Gupta has termed the elections in Pakistan "purely a sham" and stressed that Pakistan Army wants to bring back Pakistan Muslim League - Nawaz (PML-N) supremo Nawaz Sharif. He said that Pakistan army is once again trying to mainstream terrorist organisations.

"This election in Pakistan is a purely a sham election. The Pakistan army of late has got used to governing Pakistan through remote control. So that if things go wrong, they can blame the civil administration.

They already made up their mind. They want to bring in Nawaz Sharif. All this is being done, this exercise in futility is being done to bring back Nawaz Sharif. They have ensured that there is no opposition" Brigadier Gupta (Retd) said.

"Imran Khan and his party are already decimated. Imran Khan is in jail. All important leaders of his party are in jail. Hence, it's a foregone conclusion that the next Prime Minister of Pakistan is going to be Nawaz Sharif, who is having the blessings of the Pakistan Army.

But one thing more dangerous in this election is that Pakistan is once again trying, the army is once again trying to mainstream the terrorist organizations there," he added.

More than 17,000 candidates will be contesting today's elections in Pakistan, Dawn reported. Voters will elect 266 candidates to the Pakistan National Assembly, who will later, by a majority vote, elect the next PM. Simultaneously, voters will also elect representatives to their respective provincial assemblies, who will then elect the provincial chief executives under a similar process.

Former High Commissioner of India To Pakistan, Ajay Bisaria believes that the elections are rigged and the outcome predictable.



Nawaz Sharif (right), seen here with his daughter Maryam, is on the ballot aiming to become PM for the fourth time

"From all accounts, these elections on 8th February are not just the most predictable, but also the most rigged, because it's clear for everyone in Pakistan if you see the commentary that is coming from within the country, that the election results are clear, the army in various ways is doing pre-election engineering, it will probably do some election engineering and post-election engineering to get a government that it wants in place. It is said that it will possibly be a selection of Nawaz Sharif and his PMLN party, I think that is a widespread expectation, and that's fairly accurate" Bisaria said.

Defence Expert Qamar Agha also said that with the relations between the Army and the Sharifs having improved everything was pre-decided.

"The result of these elections is pre-decided, right from who will be the Prime Minister to how many seats will each party win. If you see there are 2 main candidates, former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and Bilawal Bhutto. On one hand, Nawaz Sharif is trying to emerge as the single largest party, but if he forms a government in coalition, then he might promote his daughter Maryam as Prime Minister. Nawaz Sharif's relations with the Pakistan Army have improved, his family has been rehabilitated, and he has been forgiven for his crimes. Violence is regularly going on in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan.

Even if the army manages these elections, running the government will be a very difficult task seeing the serious economic crisis and political instability in the country," Agha said.

Speaking on the attacks happening during the election process, Defence Expert Sushant Sareen said, "There was an apprehension that there will be these kind of attacks on the electoral process. In fact, the attacks have been happening for over a week now.

And there was an attack on a police station. Over a dozen policemen were killed. There have been a number of other attacks at smaller levels against candidates in Balochistan.

It's particularly bad, because both in the Baloch areas as well as the Pashtun areas, there's a lot of resistance to Pakistan out there, and people don't identify themselves with the elections. So, I think there is this wave of violence which has taken over."

He noted that there have been smaller attacks that have escaped the attention of many people on candidates on their offices and others. He said that there is some speculation about whether these attacks were being done as "false flag attacks" by the Pakistani army. He said that some of these attacks will ensure that voting is low and it allows the military to ensure that voting goes the way they want it to go.

"There have been smaller attacks, which have escaped the attention of many people on candidates, on their offices, and others. There is some speculation whether these attacks were being done as false flag attacks by the Pakistan army because there was some speculation that they might not want elections to go ahead in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan. So you carry out an election in Sindh and Punjab and then delay

the elections in the other two provinces where at least in KP, there was an apprehension that Imran Khan's party or his candidate might do much better and then create a problem out there" Sareen said.

"But, I think over the last couple of days, the military seems to have been convinced that they've managed to get a hold over the situation. And some of these attacks will ensure that the turnout at polling stations is low, which means that it kind of allows the military to ensure that voting goes the way they want it to go and their favorites and the people they are backing can actually win these elections. And I say win in inverted commas. So I think that is what is happening. It's unfortunate that there have been so many lives lost. There's been so much of violence. But, this was expected anyways," he added.

At least 26 people have been killed, and several others injured after two back-to-back blasts jolted Balochistan on Wednesday, as reported by Dawn. **ANI**

China's Spring Festival becomes international cultural event

THE 78th UN General Assembly has adopted a resolution by consensus to list the Lunar New Year, known as Spring Festival in China, as a UN floating holiday.

It's another example of the increasing international appeal of the Spring Festival, showcasing once again the influence of Chinese culture.

The festival, born in China, has become a global cultural event, bringing joy to people around the world.

The Spring Festival is becoming a global holiday. Some rough estimates suggest that the festival is a public holiday in almost 20 countries and is celebrated in various ways by about one-fifth of humanity.

In recent years, a "Spring Festival fever" has been heating up overseas. Every Spring Festival, dignitaries from various countries send greetings to the Chinese people.

Since 2010, a series of activities celebrating the festival have been hosted across the world, from New York in the United States to Tokyo in Japan, from Madrid in Spain to Belgrade in Serbia, and from Moscow in Russia to Auckland in New Zealand.

Splendid events such as traditional dragon and lion dances, Chinese New Year painting, dumpling making, and temple fairs have been hosted globally, allowing people of different nationalities and cultural backgrounds to experience traditional Chinese culture immersively and have a great time.

The adoption of the resolution shows that the Spring Festival has been warmly welcomed and supported by UN member states and staff of the UN Secretariat. The festival will become more and more international.

The Spring Festival is a window for the world to better perceive China. As the most ancient and important traditional festival in Chinese culture, the Spring Festival is a time for family reunions and ringing in the new year.

For Chinese people both at home and abroad, no matter where they are or how far they have traveled, going home for the Chinese New Year is a tradition always cherished.

The New Year's atmosphere comes with the warmth of a



A folk dance performance is staged on a square in Shijiazhuang, north China's Hebei province to celebrate the approaching Chinese New Year, Jan. 28, 2024. (Photo by Liang Zidong/People's Daily Online)

family reunion after a long journey, the hustle and bustle of visiting relatives and friends with gifts, the joyous celebrations in streets decorated with lanterns, and the wishes for a better life in the coming new year.

As times change, Chinese people have found more ways to celebrate the Chinese New Year. Digital red envelopes have become a new festive element, and many families are spending the festival on trips. Regardless of the changing forms, what remains unchanged is the deep-rooted family culture ingrained in the Chinese people.

A BBC documentary introducing the Spring Festival focused on the spectacular sight of hundreds of millions of Chinese people traveling home for family reunions. Understanding the Spring Festival means understanding the deep-rooted longing for family reunions and the strong sense of patriotism that binds the Chinese people together.

The Chinese Lunar New Year builds a bridge for exchanges and mutual learning among civilizations. It symbolizes joy, harmony and peace and its Chinese name "Spring Festival" conveys the greetings and warmth of the spring season. The festival embodies the core values of harmony, love and peace in Chinese culture, and carries the common values of humanity including harmonious family, social inclusion and sound relationship between man and nature.

China's promotion of the festival as a UN floating holiday is a pragmatic step toward implementing its Global Civilizations Initiative and advocating respect for the diversity of the world's civilizations, conveying the hope for harmonious coexistence, mutual reinforcement, and exchanges and mutual learning among different civilizations. The efforts also represent the aspiration for people from all countries to understand and befriend each other, and to work together hand in hand.

Egyptian Ambassador to China Assem Hanafi saw the similarities between the Egyptian and Chinese people in cherishing family and kinship through traditional Chinese festivals such as the Spring Festival.

He said that people from all countries are in greater need of the happiness that festivals bring in the turbulent world today.

Sitting together with family, listening to each other, and sharing laughter are the most comforting times for people. The Spring Festival is exactly a perfect opportunity for Chinese and friends from all over the world to share Chinese culture and enjoy wonderful moments together.

With the adoption of the UN resolution, the cultural significance of the festival will resonate more widely among people from different countries. This will effectively promote the exchanges and mutual learning among civilizations, and showcase the values of diversity and inclusiveness advocated by the UN.

People's Daily

Simba's new signings make immediate impact with NBC Premier League goals

By Correspondent
Seth Mapoli

SIMBA SC's new signings, Pa Omary Jobe and Freddy Kouablan, have made an impressive start in the team so far, swiftly making their mark after being recruited during the January transfer window.

The players showcased their prowess by each netting a goal in the squad's commanding 4-0 triumph over Tabora United in the NBC Premier League.

Tasked with filling the void left by departed attackers Moses Phiri and Jean Baleke, Jobe and Kouablan seamlessly integrated into the Msimbazi Reds' lineup. Their notable contributions were evident in the match held at Ali Hassan Mwinyi Stadium against Tabora United, where they clinched the crucial goals that secured the team's victory.

The promising performance of Jobe and Kouablan signals a bright future for Simba, injecting fresh energy into the squad and bolstering their offensive capabilities. With their early success, they have demonstrated their potential to become key assets in the team's pursuit of further triumphs in the league.

Jobe has already made his mark with the Simba SC jersey, tallying a total of two goals in two matches thus far. Notably, he showcased his scoring prowess in the Azam Sports Federation Cup encounter against Tembo FC, where he found the back of the

net once helping his team to win 4-0.

Meanwhile, Kouablan, who came from Green Eagles of Zambia, has been a prolific goal scorer, boasting an impressive record of 14 goals in 16 matches. However, since joining Simba, he has managed to score just one goal for the team in three encounters.

Simba showcased their dominance as they triumphed over Tabora United with a resounding 4-0 victory on Tuesday.

The win propels Simba to 29 points in 12 Premier League matches, positioning them just two points shy of second-placed Azam. The match saw a series of noteworthy moments that underscored Simba's prowess on the field.

This impressive performance marked Simba's second consecutive away win, following their previous 1-0 triumph over Mashujaa. The back-to-back victories highlight Simba's consistency and determination to maintain their position at the top of the Premier League standings.

Overall, Simba's commanding display against Tabora United not only secured three crucial points but also showcased their strength, skill, and determination to emerge victorious in the fiercely competitive world of football.

As they continue their campaign, Simba will undoubtedly be a force to be reckoned with, poised to challenge and triumph against any opponent that crosses their path.

With an impressive re-



Simba SC's new signing Freddy Kouablan (R) scores the fourth goal for his side during their NBC Premier League match against Tabora United at Ali Hassan Mwinyi Stadium in Tabora on Tuesday. Simba won 4-0. PHOTO: COURTESY OF SIMBA SC

cord of nine wins, two draws, and only one loss, the team's consistency and determination have positioned them as strong contenders in the league.

Their upcoming match against Azam at the CCM Kirumba Stadium in Mwanza presents an opportunity

for Simba to further assert their dominance and close the gap between them and the league leaders, Young Africans and Azam.

As they prepare to face the ice cream makers, Simba will rely on their formidable lineup and strategic gameplay to secure another

vital victory.

With their eyes set on climbing higher in the league table, the team is poised to showcase their skill, resilience, and ambition on the field, aiming to maintain their glory and emerge triumphant in the league.

Legislators urge treasury to remit funds for construction of Afcon 2027 stadiums

By Francis Kajubi, Dodoma

TANZANIA is on the brink of not hosting the African Cup of Nations in 2027 (AFCON 2027) unless new stadiums are constructed immediately.

The National Assembly yesterday resolved that the treasury immediately remit funds for the construction of the approved three new stadiums in Mwanza, Arusha and Dodoma.

The Education, Culture and Sports Committee has resolved that the government should quickly complete the construction of three stadiums with the capacity to accommodate 30,000 football fans in the three cities.

Tabling the Committee's report in the National Assembly, the Committee's chairperson Husna Sekiboko said that the government should prepare a strategy to build the new stadiums.

She said that Tanzania has qualified to host the AFCON championship in 2027, but it does not have stadiums with acceptable status.

Sekiboko said that if the government's measures started with the aim of building football stadiums in Dodoma, Arusha and Mwanza are not successful, it will be impossible to host the AFCON championship.

She said that important economic opportunities may not be seen if AFCON 2027 is not held in Tanzania because of poor stadiums and it will affect the country's honor and status in terms of sports.

"The Committee resolves that the government should provide funds to complete the construction of the stadiums and plan to have strict management during the implementation of the projects in order to have a construction with a real value of money," she said.

She pointed out that making the country the host of AFCON 2027 with the cooperation of Uganda and Kenya, is an opportunity that will help the country to be a sports hub.

Debating the report, most of the legislators urged the government to allocate the required funds.

Mussa Sima, Singida Town legislator-CCM, said that the three stadiums need a budget of 187.5bn/- each.

According to him, the stadiums need recreation centers that are likely to fetch up to 32bn/- for each stadium.

"Even renovation of the Benjamin Mkapa Stadium requires 31bn/-, but so far only 7bn/- has been disbursed by the treasury," said Sima.

Festo Sanga, Makete legislator, also blamed the government for delaying the disbursement of the funds while time was flying.

"Let's be serious with this matter because it carries both sports and economic interests," said Sanga.

Mohammed Said Issa, Konde legislator-ACT Wazalendo, doubted the readiness of hospitality services in the regions where the stadiums will be constructed if they were considered in the government's plans.



Benjamin Mkapa Stadium

Deputy minister commends Yanga's milestone achievement

By Correspondent Seth
Mapoli

YOUNG Africans have unveiled their new offices located at the club's headquarters at Jangwani Street in Dar es Salaam.

The Deputy Minister for Culture, Arts, and Sports, Hamis Mwinjuma, who graced the event on Wednesday, commended the club for the achievement and said the unveiling of the new offices marks a significant milestone for the Jangwani and Twiga streets side.

"This accomplishment is significant; a club of Young Africans' caliber rightfully deserves such commendable progress, and I take pride in your achievements," he said.

He also emphasized the importance of such developments for the club's stature, expressing pride in their accomplishments.

Mwinjuma also highlighted the significance of renovating the facility as a form of respect to the elders who were instrumental in the building's construction back in 1971.

He emphasized the historical continuity of the premises, which have been in use since then.

Young Africans president Hersi Said detailed the layout of the new offices, noting that the ground floor houses the



The Deputy Minister of Culture, Arts and Sports, Hamis Mwinjuma (3rd R), cuts the ribbon to launch the new Young African Sports Club's office at Jangwani in Dar es Salaam on Wednesday. The second left is the club's president, Engineer Hersi Said. PHOTO: CORRESPONDENT JUMANNE JUMA

club's management offices, while the second and third floors serve as player hostels.

"The second and third floors are used as hostels for players...we are happy that at last, all official activities will be done here," Hersi said.

He expressed satisfaction that all official activities will now be centralized in the newly unveiled premises.

The relocation of the offices to Jangwani in Dar es Salaam signifies a strategic move for the club, con-

solidating their presence in a central location.

This shift aligns with the club's vision for expansion and modernization, providing a more efficient and conducive environment for both administrative and player-related functions.

Hersi said the event not only celebrated the physical manifestation of progress but also underscored the club's commitment to honoring its heritage and legacy.

He added that, by acknowledging the contri-

butions of past generations, the club reaffirms its cultural roots and sense of identity within the community.

He also said the investment in modernizing the facilities reflects the club's dedication to enhancing its operational capabilities and fostering a supportive environment for its members.

With the state-of-the-art infrastructure now in place, the club is poised to further elevate its standards of professionalism and service delivery.

The unveiling ceremony served as a testament to the collective efforts of the club's leadership, members, and stakeholders in realizing the transformative initiative.

It symbolizes a new chapter in the journey of Young Africans, characterized by growth, innovation, and a steadfast commitment to excellence.

As the club enters the exciting phase of development, it remains steadfast in its pursuit of sporting glory and community engagement.

National cross country championships to be held tomorrow in Arusha

By Correspondent Joseph
Mchekadona

THE National Open Cross Country Championships, which will be used to select athletes who will represent the country at the World Championships, get underway tomorrow in Arusha, the Athletics Tanzania (AT) has disclosed.

Athletics Tanzania's Acting Secretary General Jackson Ndaweka said the open championships will kick off from Iliboru Secondary School and they expect many athletes to compete.

"The National Open Cross Country Championships will be held on Saturday in Arusha and all preparations are over. We expect a good number of athletes to compete. It will be used as trials for the World Cross Country Championships which will be held in Serbia on March 30, this year," he said.

He said originally, the World championships were planned to be held on February 10 and 11, this year.

Meanwhile, Ndaweka has thanked President Samia Suluhu Hassan for sponsoring the national athletics team camp, which is preparing for the coming All Africa Games which will be

held in Ghana in March.

The 13th African Games will be held between March 8 and 23, this year, and will be held in three cities of Accra, Kumasi and Cape Coast. This is the second time in history that the games are decentralized.

He named the male athletes camping for the All African Games as Twarhi Haji Ame, Peter Gidoska, Josephat Gisemo, Samir Sululu, Mao Hando, John Wele, Ally Gulamu and Gasisi Geagase while female athletes are Mwanaamina Mkwaju, Transfora Musa, Anastazia Dolomongo, Winfrida Makenji, Elizabeth Ilanda, Hamida Nassoro and Neema Kisuda.

The coaches of the team are Maseelina Gwandu, Francis Nade, Alfredo Shahanga and Makame Hassan Juma.

"To be honest, we are very grateful to President Samia Suluhu Hassan's government for sponsoring the team camp in Arusha. This is the first time in recent years that the athletics team has been camping for a long time. The All Africa Games will be held in March but the camp has started now. This shows the commitment of our government to develop sports," he said.

Nigerians celebrate tense Africa Cup semi-final win

LAGOS

AFROBEATS tunes competing with cheers, Nigerians celebrated a tense penalty victory over South Africa on Wednesday night as their team advanced to the Africa Cup of Nations finals after a scrappy semi-final match.

Substitute Kelechi Iheanacho handed Nigeria a 4-2 penalty shootout victory over South Africa after their knock-out game in Bouake, Ivory Coast.

The match ended 1-1 after extra time and Nigeria, the three-time African champions, will now face hosts Ivory Coast in the final on Sunday.

At the Tiger Bar in the Ikoyi district of Nigeria's economic capital Lagos, the last penalty triggered an eruption of celebrations and dancing as their team secured a place in the continental finals.

"For a first time for a long time we are excited, we are happy Nigeria beat South Africa," supporter Peace Nwanro said. "Nigeria will keep winning."

Both regular-time goals came from penalties with captain William Troost-Ekong scoring after 67 minutes for Nigeria and Teboho Mokoena equalising from a spot-kick. One Nigerian goal was disallowed, adding to the drama.

"From the onset, I felt pressure," said Nigerian caterer Kayode Qudus. "Many people are expecting more from them. Nigeria is not really happy these days, but I think this will fetch us more happiness... we must win."

Nigeria, Africa's largest economy, is struggling with high living costs after the government introduced economic reforms aimed at reducing spending and bringing in more foreign investment.

For some, the victory over South Africa in football also added to the rivalry between the African giants, after Nigerian performers like Burna Boy and Davido failed to win a Grammy at the recent music awards.

Nigerians dominated nominations for the new Best African Music Award category at the Grammy's, but South Africa's Tyla won the prize. In Johannesburg, South Africa's economic capital, supporters of the national team "Bafana Bafana", some dressed in the green, black and gold of the country's flag, said they were still proud of their team.

"Right now, it's bad. But we're gonna forget, we will get back on our feet and we'll try again," Kenneth Mgipa, 53 said. "We need that cup."

Whitney Langa, 37, said South Africa did not have what was needed to win.

"We had the opportunity, we were just not strong enough. Our team changed its game and now tries to play like European football," she said. "But what we know is street football, we go fast and we get to the goal. We forgot who we are, that's why we've lost."

Others were more pragmatic pointing to the Grammy's win and South African host Tevor Noah guiding the music awards as evidence of the country's global influence, despite the football loss.

"We've just been very unfortunate. Penalties are any man's game," said Sello Phatso, a businessman. "But there's already a lot happening in our country: we won the Rugby world Cup, Tyla just won a Grammy and Trevor hosted."

AFP

Defeat to Nigeria difficult for coach Hugo Broos to take

ABIDJAN

SOUTH Africa head coach, Hugo Broos feels his side played better against Nigeria in their semi-finals encounter which they lost 4-2 on penalties in the TotalEnergies CAF Africa Cup of Nations Côte d'Ivoire 2023.

The Bafana Bafana came back from a goal down to take the game to penalties but ended up losing.

Reacting to their defeat, Broos explained his side played much better and deserved to win the game.

"Football can be hard sometimes, when you see the performance of my team today, and then there is penalties, and then you lose the penalties and you are not in the finals, it's hard to accept that because we play very good game today.

"I think we were the best team in the first half, we got the best chances, Nigeria didn't have any chance. Second half they have few chances which resulted in a goal and we changed something tactically, and we could comeback," he said.

He added, "We created more chances which means if we had scored, we would have been in the final and not Nigeria.

The Belgian tactician hailed his team for what has been a great tournament for them.

"It's a big disappointment for everyone, we believe we played a very good game, not just today but throughout the tournament. I'm proud of my players, the disappointment is this but the proudness is that," he concluded.

South Africa will now face D.R Congo in the third place playoff on Saturday, February 10.

Meanwhile, Nigeria's penalty shootout hero Stanley Nwabali was quick to deflect personal praise onto his teammates after steering the Super Eagles to reach the TotalEnergies CAF AFCON final.

CAFOnline

Nigeria set up AFCON final against hosts Ivory Coast



Ronwen Williams of South Africa clears ball from William Troost Ekong of Nigeria during the 2023 Africa Cup of Nations semifinal between Nigeria and South Africa held at Peace Stadium in Bouake, Cote Divoire on 07 February 2024. Agencies

ABIDJAN

SUBSTITUTE forward Kelechi Iheanacho and goalkeeper Stanley Nwabali played key roles as Nigeria beat South Africa 4-2 on penalties on Wednesday in an Africa Cup of Nations semi-final thriller.

The three-time champions will face hosts Ivory Coast, who dominated the Democratic Republic of Congo but had to settle for a 1-0 win in Abidjan, in the final on Sunday.

Nigeria triumphed after a 1-1 draw following extra time in Bouake in the latest of many dramatic matches at this biennial African football showpiece.

"Our team has a huge state of mind. The team fights together. There are 25 of us (in the squad and) it's difficult to beat us," said

Nigeria coach Jose Peseiro.

"Deep down, thinking about that second cancelled (Nigerian) goal and the (South African equaliser), a lot of teams would have given up.

"I am very happy, the players are happy, they deserve it, we deserve it, the Super Eagles deserve it, the Nigerian people deserve it."

South Africa coach Hugo Broos said: "Football can be cruel. You play a bad match against Cape Verde, you win on penalties. You play a very good match against Nigeria and lose on penalties."

Iheanacho from English second-tier club Leicester City had been an unused substitute in the five group and knockout matches that took the Super Eagles to the semi-finals.

He was thrust into action by Portuguese Peseiro for the first

time after 102 minutes against South Africa and calmly converted the decisive spot-kick.

Nwabali, who plays for South African top-flight club Chippa United, saved shootout kicks from Teboho Mokoena and Evidence Makgopa.

Peseiro, a long-time backer of under-fire incumbent shot-stopper Francis Uzoho, dropped him for the opening group match against Equatorial Guinea and Nwabali has been an ever present.

Nwabali conceded once in a draw with the Equatoguineans, then kept four clean sheets before being beaten by a Mokoena penalty in the 90th minute of regular time.

- Mudau miss -

Nigeria had taken the lead 23 minutes earlier, also from a

penalty, which captain William Troost-Ekong converted.

Khuliso Mudau had a great chance to win the match for South Africa just before extra time, but blazed over from close range.

South Africa captain and goalkeeper Ronwen Williams, who saved four kicks in a quarter-final shootout win over Cape Verde, could not stop a single kick.

Before Iheanacho netted, fellow substitutes Terem Moffi and Kenneth Omeruo and Troost-Ekong converted penalties and Ola Aina blazed over.

In an absorbing match watched by a 32,000 crowd, Nigeria thought they had taken a two-goal lead on 85 minutes when star forward Victor Osimhen scored.

But play was called back to the other end and, after the Egyptian

referee checked the pitchside VAR monitor, he awarded South Africa the penalty that Mokoena netted.

Reigning African Player of the Year Osimhen, who started the match after recovering from abdominal discomfort, was substituted in extra time after another tireless performance.

South Africa played the final seven minutes with 10 men after Grant Kekana was shown a straight red card for a last-defender foul on Moffi.

The win sparked celebrations back in Nigeria.

"For a first time for a long time we are excited, we are happy Nigeria beat South Africa," supporter Peace Nwanro said in Lagos. "Nigeria will keep winning."

It will be the eighth final appearance by Nigeria, who were champions in 1980, 1994 and 2013, and the fourth by 1992 and 2015 title winners Ivory Coast.

Later, after the seesaw struggle for supremacy in Bouake, the Ivory Coast continued a remarkable comeback in the tournament by defeating DR Congo.

Sebastien Haller was the 65th-minute match-winner as his boot connected with a cross and the ball struck the ground, then rose over goalkeeper Lionel Mpsi and into the net.

Haller had missed the group stage through injury before making his first appearance in a shock last-16 victory over Senegal.

After a humiliating 4-0 thrashing by Equatorial Guinea in the group stage, the Ivorians squeezed into the knockout phase as the last of the four third-placed teams who qualified.

But the embarrassment of a record home loss to the Equatoguineans was forgotten as Franck Kessie was denied by the woodwork and Haller missed a great chance before becoming the hero.

AFP

Ivory Coast run to AFCON final 'like a dream' for coach Fae

ABIDJAN

IVORY Coast coach Emerse Fae described his team's achievement in winning through to the final of the Africa Cup of Nations as being "like a dream" after the tournament hosts beat the Democratic Republic of Congo 1-0 in Wednesday's last-four encounter.

Sebastien Haller scored the only goal of the game in the 65th minute at the Ebimpe Olympic Stadium to take Ivory Coast through to Sunday's final against Nigeria.

It is a remarkable turnaround for the Elephants, who were on the brink of elimination after losing 4-0 to Equatorial Guinea at the same stadium in their final group match on January 22.

"We are happy, we're really moved. It's like a dream, when you go back two weeks to the defeat here against Equatorial Guinea," said Fae.

"It was hard then to imagine that we might qualify for the final of our own AFCON."

That defeat was Ivory Coast's heaviest ever home loss and they looked certain to be eliminated in the first round, only to scrape through as the last of the four best third-placed teams thanks to Morocco winning their last group game against Zambia.

Coach Jean-Louis Gasset was sacked following the Equatorial Guinea debacle and so Fae, who had been an assistant, was promoted to the role of interim coach.

Under him, Ivory Coast beat holders Senegal on penalties in the last 16, and then came from behind to beat Mali in extra time in the quarter-finals, despite playing most of that match with



Jubilant Ivory Coast players celebrate making the Africa Cup of Nations final on home turf. Agencies

10 men.

"As long as you still have a five or 10 percent chance you need to keep believing, because that is what makes football beautiful," said midfielder Franck Kessie, who was named man of the

match against DR Congo.

"After the Morocco result we knew we had qualified and that changed everything.

"It gave us the strength we needed, it boosted us. We knew we couldn't do worse than in the

first round.

"We need to keep going like this because you can't go all the way to the final only to then give up."

Sunday's final will be a repeat of the group game between Ivory

Coast and Nigeria on January 18, which the Super Eagles won 1-0.

Meanwhile, DR Congo will have to settle for a third-place play-off in Abidjan on Saturday against South Africa.

They had been hoping to win through to a first Cup of Nations final since they were champions as Zaire in 1974, half a century ago.

If they beat South Africa they will take the bronze medal, which would match their performances in 1998 and in 2015.

"The first feeling I have is one of disappointment, but when it comes to reflecting on our tournament it will be positive whatever happens," said their French coach, Sebastien Desabre.

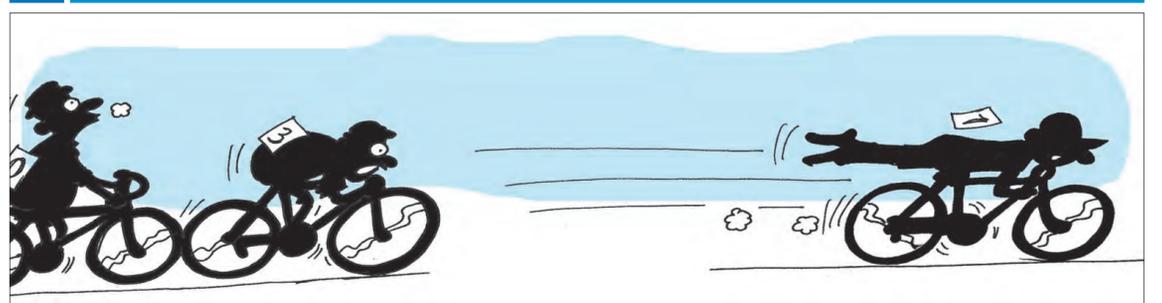
"Even if we lost a game of football tonight, we did everything to try to win it.

"The spirit in the team is extraordinary. Of course they are disappointed but this will help us going forward.

"We are competitors. We are disappointed and we will need to remobilise quickly to try to get a medal."

AFP

Gwiji by David Chikoko



SPORT

Ivory Coast run to AFCON final 'like a dream' for coach Faé

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Ivorians say God is on their team's side after 'miracles' at 2023 Africa Cup

ABIDJAN, Ivory Coast

IVORY Coast's unlikely – some would say miraculous – progression to the Africa Cup of Nations semifinals has convinced locals that God is on their side.

The host nation has survived several close shaves with elimination thanks to fortune with results in other games and scarcely believable comebacks.

Late goals in remarkable wins in the knockout round against defending champion Senegal, then Mali, have no other explanation for devout locals other than being the will of God. They're sure now he will guide Ivory Coast to its third Africa Cup title.

"Inshallah, God will do it, no doubt," Simion Diakité told The Associated Press. "It's a miracle of God."

At the Chapelle de l'externat Saint Paul for a service hours before Wednesday's semifinal against Congo, many worshippers wore the national team's distinctive orange jersey. The preacher, Fr. Aristide Djedje, couldn't let the service pass without mentioning the Elephants' game that evening.

"The way the Elephants, the national team, have been advancing is only a miracle and only God can do that," Ange Assamoi, one of the congregation, said after the service.

Ivory Coast's progression has been anything but typical. Its federation fired the team's coach after a 4-0 loss to Equatorial Guinea left it on the verge of elimination, then unsuccessfully tried to hire another coach when results in other games meant Ivory Coast squeezed into the last 16 with the last available qualification spot.

The win over Senegal came despite conceding in the fourth minute. The win against Mali came despite playing with a player less for the entire second half and extra time. Oumar Diakité (no relation to Simion) scored in extra-time stoppage-time to send Ivory Coast to the semifinals.

Assamoi said worshippers take their own personal hopes to church, "but today we also have the match in our prayers, that God will give us victory this evening. And God will give us victory this evening."

Assamoi's confidence is shared among Ivorians of different faiths.

Sy Modeste, one of the many yellow t-shirted security men in Abidjan, said both Muslims and Christians were praying for the same thing.

"Everybody is praying to God to win the game, and the cup," Modeste said. "We suppose that we live in Côte d'Ivoire by grace of God. God supports us."

"It's thanks to God," said Yama Cambera, a vendor selling water and refreshments at the side of the road in Treichville, Abidjan. "We're going to win. Côte d'Ivoire will be having a party."

Ivory Coast will be without four important players who are suspended against Congo. But the fans are not concerned – no setback is insurmountable anymore.

"God is supporting us. Because when you're Ivorian, when you love your country, you have to have confidence," said Lionelle Kuakou. "We think that the trophy will stay here in Ivory Coast because this is a country of love, of joy, of peace. We welcome everyone here and God knows, so the cup stays here, it's not going anywhere else, it stays here with us."

Mosques and churches never seem far away in Ivory Coast, where Islam and Christianity are together professed by just over 80% of the population, co-existing with those who have no religion, and those who follow the animism that pervaded pre-colonial societies in West Africa.

The various faiths get along well together in Ivory Coast. The country's constitution calls for tolerance of all spiritual perspectives and a separation of church and state.

During games at the tournament, many fans use the halftime break to find a quiet corner or space at the back of the stands to lay down their prayer mats and pray. Supporters kneel with their heads bowed in the same direction.

But Ivory Coast's interim coach Emese Faé is not putting his faith in miracles to get to Sunday's final. "We'd rather rely on our mental strength and to tell ourselves that we are in the right spirit. Because it was our spirit that allowed us to achieve miracles like that. But we can't relax and hide behind the fact that we progressed thanks to a miracle, that it is a sign of destiny," Faé said at the pre-match press conference.

AP

Mwanza City braces for a thrilling encounter as Simba battle Azam



By Correspondent Michael Mwebe

THE Lake zone City of Mwanza will come to a standstill today that could redefine the upper echelons of the NBC Premier League as Simba brace for a monumental home clash against Azam.

This isn't just any match; it's a battle where the stakes are sky-high, and the ramifications are immense for third-

placed Simba and second-placed Azam.

Rejuvenated by recent victories that have closed the gap with Azam to a mere two points, Simba eye a chance to climb to second place in the table.

A win today will put them back in the title race.

Last season's memory of defeat at the Nangwanda Sijona in the Federation Cup at the hands of Azam still lingers among the Msimbazi Street side's faithfuls.

Simba, driven by the sting of that loss, now seek redemption at CCM Kirumba.

A defeat in this upcoming duel could potentially derail their title aspirations, leaving Abdelhak Benchikha's (pictured) men with a proverbial mountain to climb.

They could potentially be staring at a seven-point gap with leaders Young Africans.

On the flip side, Azam head into this showdown with confidence after overcoming their early season slump. They have now won all their six previous league games.

They have been more clinical in the attacking third and airtight in the back end, conceding in only two of their last six matches in all competitions while scoring 22 goals in the process.

Head coach Bruno Ferry gave his

thoughts on the upcoming encounter.

"Everybody knows this is an important game in the championship. It is not a final but it is an important game for the season. Since we restarted training, we told the players to work very hard, so now I think we are ready to play this game."

"We know that we are playing against a big team. When I say a big team it

means top players in each line, good coach who won a lot of trophies in Africa and a technical bench with a lot of experience," he said.

"We know that when you are Simba you have the pressure to win every game but Azam doesn't have this pressure, we have ambition."

"I hope tomorrow the decisions of the game will be sportive, nothing else because we know sometimes things can happen. We want fair decisions for the two teams. We don't want to lose because of a wrong decision and we don't want to win because of a wrong decision," he added.

Azam's Senegal international Malickou Ndoye is absent, while Abdallah Kheri, Sospeter Bajana, and Ali Ahama-da are out injured.



Young Africans Sports Club (Yanga) President, Eng. Hersi Said (2nd L) and NMB Bank's Chief of Retail Banking, Filbert Mponzi (2nd R), launching a special card for premium Yanga members dubbed 'NMB - Yanga World Debit Card' at the bank's headquarters in Dar es Salaam yesterday. Others are the bank's Head of Card Business, Philbert Casmiir (R) and Yanga's Chief Executive Officer, Andre Mtine (L). PHOTO: CORRESPONDENT

NMB Bank, Young Africans unveil new black debit card for premium customers

By Guardian Reporter

NMB Bank in partnership with Young Africans Sports Club yesterday unveiled a new black card christened 'NMB - Yanga World Debit Card' that targets premium customers.

The black debit comes with many benefits to Young Africans Sports Club fans that include 10 VIP tickets for home matches and six jerseys each year.

Speaking during a press conference held at the bank's headquarters in Dar es Salaam, NMB Bank's Chief of Retail Banking Filbert Mponzi said the partnership between the bank and the club launched in July, last year, seeks to increase the club's value proposition.

"NMB Bank has partnered with MasterCard and Young Africans SC to launch this unique black card that comes with a lot of opportunities, including

full access to VIP lounges for travelers, insurance covers upon purchasing air tickets with up to \$3000 in case of baggage loss and \$300 in case of baggage delays," he said.

Mponzi said the black NMB - Yanga World Debit Card will also be entitled to the bank's instant cash ser-

vice dubbed 'NMB Mshiko Fasta', where they can get loans of up to 500,000/- through their phones without visiting the bank branches.

The Young Africans Sports Club President Engineer Hersi Said described the launch of the NMB - Yanga World Debit

Card as a revolution in the country's football industry.

He said the move follows several partnership meetings held between the two parties to explore and embrace available opportunities.

"It is a new dawn in the history of the soccer industry as we launch this new

black card in partnership with NMB Bank, Tanzania's most profitable bank. I believe this initiative is a win-win situation and will add a lot of value not only to the club but also to our loyal fans," Eng. Said said.

He added: "Our initial partnership sealed with the bank last year has al-

ready started to bear fruits. We have seen a surge in fans registration since NMB Bank has a very big branch network across the country."

Said urged the club's loyal fans to continue to pay their annual fee of 24,000/- to enable the club to operate effectively.

Flexibles by David Chikoko

