



National Pg 3 Samia for sturdier ties, robust development



National Pg 4 Ulega inspects Morogoro-Dodoma highway



National Pg 6 Mwanga DC appeals to investors



'Govt monitoring recurrence of Kagera Marburg outbreak'

Contact with equipment and other materials contaminated with infectious blood or tissues, body fluids of infected people, and contaminated surfaces or materials

By Guardian Reporter

THE government has announced that it is closely monitoring the ongoing Marburg outbreak in the country.

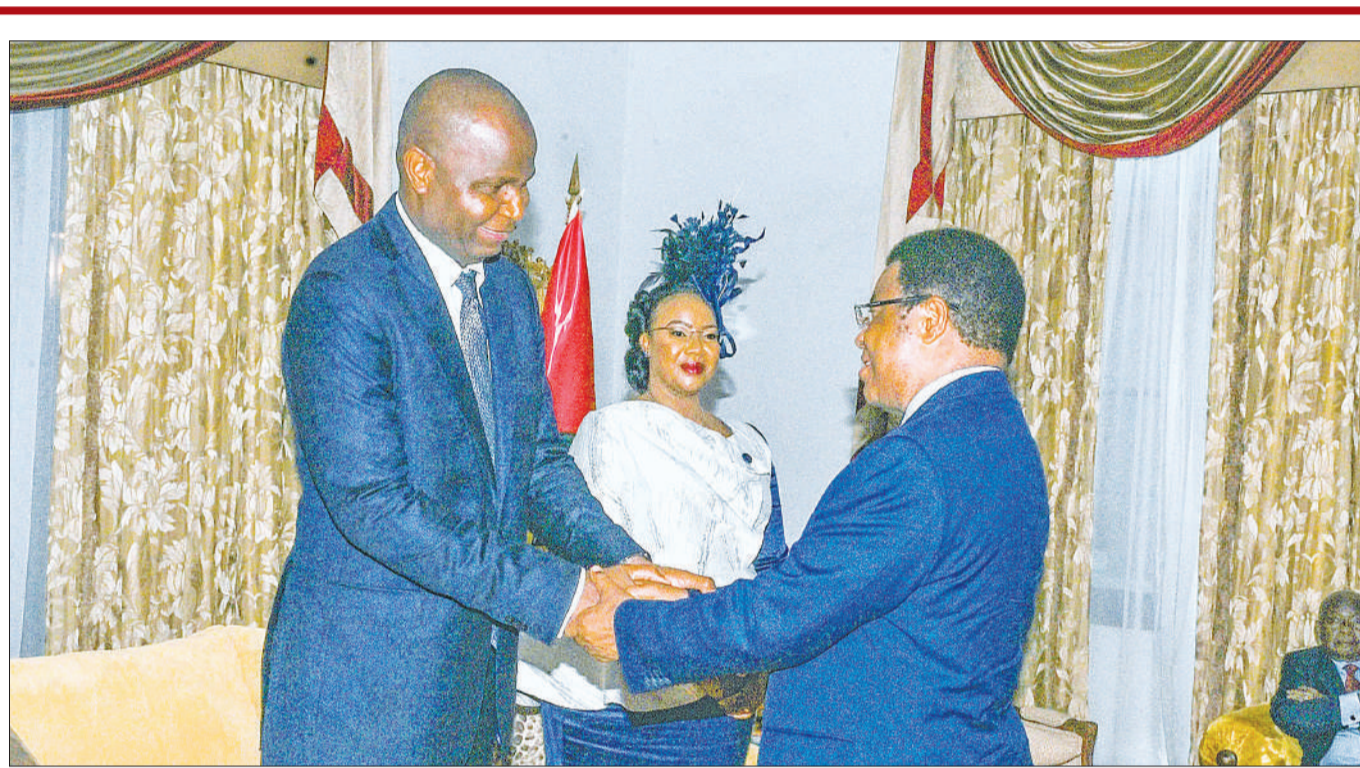
Roida Andusamile, the Health ministry spokesperson, said in an interview yesterday that health authorities are intensifying efforts to investigate the outbreak.

This follows reports from the World Health Organisation (WHO) indicating that eight people have died in a suspected outbreak of Marburg virus disease in Kagera Region.

The government trusts that once additional information and updates are available, details of the situation will be provided through official channels, she stated.

A WHO statement warned on Tuesday that the risk of further spread of the deadly disease in the country and in nearby countries is high.

Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, the WHO director general, said the statement that the UN agency had informed member states on



Prime Minister Kassim Majaliwa greets the newly inaugurated President of Mozambique, Daniel Chapo, shortly after his swearing-in ceremony at Independence Square in Maputo yesterday. Photo: PMO

Container handling cut from \$8,000 to \$3,000

By Correspondent James Kandoya

THE modernization of infrastructure at the port of Dar es Salaam has

reduced container handling costs from \$8,000 to \$3,000 in the past half year, stakeholders affirm.

Khamis Livembe, the national chair-

man of Tanzania Business Community Association, made this observation in Dar es Salaam yesterday while touring the port

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WHO has offered its full assistance to the government of Tanzania and to affected communities

Monday of an outbreak of suspected Marburg virus disease in Tanzania's Kagera Region.

"We are aware of nine cases so far, including eight people who have died. We would expect further cases in coming days as disease surveillance improves," the statement noted.

"WHO has offered its full assistance to the government of Tanzania and to affected communities," the agency affirmed.

In March 2023, Tanzanian health authorities announced that an outbreak of Marburg viral disease that had killed five people in Kagera Region was under control.

The highly fatal, zoonotic hemorrhagic disease is caused by the Marburg virus, while human-to-human transmission occurs through direct contact with body fluids from infected persons.

Contact with equipment and other materials contaminated with infectious blood or tissues, body fluids of infected people, and contaminated surfaces or materials.

PCCB, TRA solidify tax enforcement links

By Guardian Reporter

THE Prevention and Combating of Corruption Bureau (PCCB) has reaffirmed its commitment to work with the Tanzania Revenue Authority (TRA) to ensure comprehensive tax compliance to realise targets set by the government.

Crispin Chalamila, the PCCB director general, made this vow at a meeting with the revenue body's CEO Yusuph Mwenda, in Dar es Salaam yesterday.

PCCB will not only ensure taxes are collected but also guarantee that the funds are utilized for government-approved purposes, he stated.

Stressing the vital role of the two agencies in driving national development, he said that their partnership would significantly uplift government efforts to improve public welfare expectations.

Tangible development in sectors such as education, health and infrastructure as clear outcomes of the use of taxes collected by TRA, he stated, highlighting the need to support TRA and educate the public on recognizing it as an essential public institution.

The TRA CEO expressed appreciation for PCCB's unwavering support, underlining that the collaboration ensures efficiency and transparency in tax collection processes.

"We deeply value PCCB's cooperation in ensuring all taxes are collected for national development and strengthening oversight to prevent the misuse of public funds," he stated.

TRA works closely with PCCB to combat tax evasion and corruption, enabling enforcement of decisive action against offenders to uphold the integrity of the tax system, he asserted.

The government can curb tax evasion by implementing equitable tax policies, expanding the tax base and enhancing public awareness and education, analysts assert.

DPM hails energy summit readiness

By Getrude Mbago

A NEWLY formulated design known as the national energy compact is expected to be endorsed at the upcoming African energy summit, intended to enhance electricity access countrywide.

Dr Doto Biteko, the deputy prime minister and Energy minister, made the remarks in Dar es Salaam yesterday, shortly after inspecting preparation activities for the highly anticipated conference bringing together heads of government from across the continent and over 1500 stakeholders.

Explaining the compact as part of efforts to drive Africa's energy transformation, he said that by 2030, the number of households connected to electricity is projected to reach 13.5m, up from the current 5.2m.

The Mission 300 initiative, an aspect of the national energy compact, is designed to enable each country to enhance renewable energy access, reliability and affordability across the continent, he said.

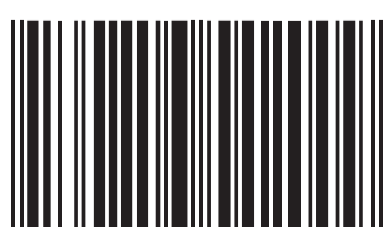
Without the Mission 300 initiative, spearheaded by the World Bank and the African Development Bank (AfDB), Tanzania's efforts to connect households to electricity could have remained limited to current levels for a while, he stated.

"We are fully prepared to ensure that the plans and strategies to be discussed during the summit are effectively implemented to meet these goals," he asserted.

Tanzania's selection as the host of the summit is due to its strong economic diplomacy



Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Energy, Dr. Doto Biteko (L), speaks with the organising committee for the upcoming African Heads of State energy summit while inspecting the ongoing renovation of the Julius Nyerere International Convention Centre (JNICC) in Dar es Salaam yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Jumanne Juma



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DPM hails energy summit readiness

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January 27-28 event will provide a platform for ground-breaking agreements.

The key aspect is expanding energy access to 300m people across Africa by 2030, a critical step toward addressing the continent's electricity gap, with 685m people currently lacking access, the senior minister intoned.

Albert Chalamila, the city regional commissioner, assured the deputy premier that the preparations committee is at work to ensure that the city is ready to host the summit.

Efforts include cleaning and renovating key infrastructure, such as the airport, roads and the Julius Nyerere International Convention Centre (JNICC), he said.

Accommodations for the guests, including heads of delegation and representatives from global institutions, were being coordinated with respective stakeholders.

Installation of additional streetlights and summit-related signage was progressing well, along with placing ready healthcare units and security systems in anticipation of urgent needs during the summit, he added.

Congo jails 3 Chinese citizens in illegal mining crackdown

BUKAVU

A Congolese court has sentenced three Chinese citizens to seven years in prison after they were arrested in possession of gold bars and \$400,000 in cash and found guilty of illegal activities linked to the artisanal mining sector.

The trio are the first Chinese nationals to stand trial since Democratic Republic of Congo launched its latest push to crack down on the unlicensed extraction of the many precious and strategic minerals buried in its conflict-torn east.

"This is an educational trial that should normally serve as a wake-up call to all Chinese nationals who think they can leave China, arrive in Kitutu, Kibe, Lugushwa, Kamituga or Mwenga and behave as if they were in their own room, without even paying the hotel fees," said Christian Wanduma, a lawyer representing local communities in the trial.

The judge in a court in Bukavu, the capital of eastern South Kivu province, found the defendants guilty on Tuesday of money-laundering, illegal purchase and possession of mineral substances, and other charges.

In addition to the prison sentence, the judge ordered them to pay a fine equivalent to \$600,000, and permanently banned them

from Congo once their sentences are served.

He acquitted them of charges including fraud and illegal mineral extraction for lack of evidence. The defendants had pleaded guilty to four of the seven charges against them, but said throughout the trial that they had not known they were breaking Congolese law before they were arrested on Jan. 4.

Their lawyers said they would appeal the ruling.

Congo has struggled to stop unlicensed companies and local armed groups exploiting its rich reserves of cobalt, copper, gold and other minerals.

Protesters took to the streets of Bukavu last week after Chinese men arrested on suspicion of illegal mining in a separate case were released.

"Our minerals are being plundered by companies that are mostly Chinese-owned and our people remain in extreme poverty, the roads are very dilapidated, we have difficulty accessing drinking water, health care, education, electricity, employment," civil society leader Nene Bintu said at the demonstration.

"This situation has gone on for too long and must end now."

In 2021, the authorities banned six small Chinese-owned mining companies, who it accused of operating illegally.

Mozambique: Chapo sworn in as president

MAPUTO

DANIEL Chapo of Mozambique's long-ruling Frelimo party was inaugurated as president at a ceremony in the capital on Wednesday.

Chapo succeeds Filipe Nyusi, who served the maximum two terms.

The inauguration followed an October election decried as rigged by opposition parties and after months of violent protests against the vote results.

International rights groups believe more than 100 people were killed by security forces, but some local groups put the death toll at more than 200.

Authorities said the protests were violent and needed to be subdued, but rights groups said security forces fired live bullets at peaceful protesters.

International observers reported irregularities in the vote and the alteration of some results, but the Constitutional Council upheld Frelimo's victory last month.

Frelimo is a leftist party that was once a guerrilla movement that liberated Mozambique from colonial

ism.

It has often been accused of rigging elections since the nation's first democratic vote in 1994.

That election followed a bloody 15-year civil war Frelimo fought after independence against rebel group Renamo, which is now an opposition party.

The street protests that rocked several major cities since October were the biggest threat to Frelimo's rule since the 1977-1992 civil war.



Authorities said the protests were violent and needed to be subdued, but rights groups said security forces fired live bullets at peaceful protesters



Small-scale traders at MR area in Iringa town block the MR-Mkwawa road yesterday, demanding that regional government officials come and address their grievances following the demolition of stalls and destruction of property by militiamen sent by the Iringa Municipal Council. Photo: Correspondent Francis Godwin

Container handling cut from \$8,000 to \$3,000

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with journalists to witness its upgraded operations.

Online sources say that the Tanzania Business Community Association primarily refers to the Tanzania Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture (TCCIA), the widest representative body for the business community countrywide.

TCCIA connects the private sector with the government to advocate for business-friendly policies and promote economic growth, where the chairman acknowledged that two port management firms hired to operate port facilities have played a crucial role in enhancing efficiency.

The average time to offload a sin-

gle vessel has dramatically dropped, from 23 to 24 days to just three days, he said, citing the introduction of modern cranes and other machinery.

This improvement has also boosted the port's daily offloading capacity to 1,000 containers, with plans to attain 1,500 containers per day in the near future, he said.

Efficiency at the port has significantly lowered freight costs, providing relief to end users, he asserted, while acting port director Abeidi Ngalusi accredited investor deployment for transforming port operations.

The waiting time for vessels to dock has been reduced to zero, while offloading times have decreased from ten days to three, he

said, hinting at a new challenge where many consignors are not clearing their cargo on time thus igniting congestion.

"The port is not a storage facility," he said, urging consignors to clear their shipments promptly to make room for others.

The Tanzania Ports Authority (TPA), which oversees all port functions, directly serves 30 percent of local cargo and 60 percent transit cargo destined for neighboring landlocked countries.

Elitumu Malamia, the DP World (T) corporate affairs manager, pointed at the company's ambitious goals for the port, hinting that by 2030, the port would be capable of handling 30,000 containers per day.

The port currently handle 16 large vessels per month berthing upwards of 1000 containers on a daily basis, while by 2030 the figure could be overly multiplied, he said.

In 2023, TPA signed a 30-year concession agreement with DP World to modernize port operations, including lease and operation of berths 4-7 and joint management of berths 0-3 for commercial and governmental activities.

The agreement was signed by TPA CEO Plasduce Mbossa and Sultan Ahmed bin Sulayem, the firm's group chairman and CEO.

The port improvements are set to strengthen Tanzania's position as a regional trade hub, benefiting local and international stakeholders and fostering economic growth.



Crispin Chalamila (L), the Prevention and Combating of Corruption Bureau (PCCB) director general, in conversation with the Tanzania Revenue Authority (TRA) commissioner general Yusuph Mwenda in Dar es Salaam earlier this week. The discussion focused on enhancing cooperation to ensure full tax compliance. Photo: Correspondent

NAIROBI,

Kenyan executives urge for policy reforms to foster intra-African trade

AFRICAN countries should accelerate policy and legislative reforms aimed at fostering cross-border trade in manufactured goods and services, unlock growth and new jobs for the continent's youth, Kenyan business leaders said Tuesday.

Currently, intra-African trade stands at 14 percent, but plans are underway to grow it to 52 percent by 2035, injecting an additional 450 billion U.S. dollars into the continent's economies, said Ahmed Farah, the chief executive officer of the Kenya National Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KNCCI), a trade lobby.

Farah spoke during the announcement of the upcoming World Chamber Forum-Africa Global Summit 2025 to be held in Nairobi, the Kenyan capital, from April 9 to 11.

Over 4,500 delegates from 70 countries including heads of State and government, policymakers, industry executives, innovators, and entrepreneurs are expected to attend the three-day event, Farah said.

The inaugural Africa Global Summit will bring on board over 500 small and micro enterprises, and provide over 350 opportunities for business-to-business as well as business-to-government engagements, said Farah.

Farah predicted that the summit will showcase Kenya and the African continent as the next frontier for trade and investments especially in strategic sectors like agro-processing, mining, critical minerals, circular economy and clean energy.

He said with a combined gross domestic product of 3.4 trillion U.S. dollars, Africa could accelerate growth and unleash prosperity through the already established African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). "Africa should create platforms, initiatives, policies and advocacy for Africa to trade with Africa. The greatest beneficiaries are our future leaders, the youth who make up about 70 percent of our population," Farah said.

Africa's business and political leaders are united in their call for conducive policies to spur intra-African trade on value-added agricultural products, manufactured goods and tourism, said Erick Rutto, KNCCI president.

According to Rutto, Africa's share of global trade stands at 3 percent but has potential for growth through streamlined customs regulations, value addition and policy alignment.

He added that the green economy and digitization provide an opportunity for African startups to trade while sharing best practices that can propel their growth.

Dakawa, Kibaigwa towns to get streetlights, truck parking zones

By Correspondent Ashton Balaigwa, Morogoro

COMMERCIAL towns of Dakawa in Mvomero District, Morogoro Region and Kibaigwa in Kongwa District, Dodoma Region along Morogoro-Dodoma highway are set to benefit from installation of modern streetlights and truck parking facilities.

The initiative aims at enhancing safety, reducing accidents, and stimulating economic activities in the areas.

Directive for the major project was issued recently by President Samia Suluhu Hassan, who identified the towns as vital trade hubs due to their significant agricultural produce trade.

During an inspection of the highway yesterday, Works Minister Abdallah Ulega instructed regional managers for the Tanzania National Roads Agency (TANROADS) in Morogoro and Dodoma to implement the president's directive without delay.

"President Samia has instructed the installation of solar-powered streetlights in all developing towns along major highways, including the Morogoro-Dodoma highway. This initiative will enhance safety, reduce accidents, and promote local business activities," he said.

He emphasized the affordability and efficiency of solar-powered streetlights and highlighted how improved infrastructure serves as a catalyst for accelerated development and economic growth.

"To reduce congestion in Morogoro town, we will construct feeder roads from Nane Nane to Msamvu and Kihonda to Mkundi. We urge residents to support this improvement effort," Ulega added.

Additionally, the road from Stesheni to Kihonda is being upgraded to four lanes to ease traffic congestion and attract

further investment. Ulega tasked TANROADS Morogoro Regional Manager, Alinanuswe Kyamba, to oversee construction of a 200-meter truck parking area and installation of 50 solar-powered streetlights in Dakawa. Similarly, TANROADS Dodoma Regional Manager, Zuhura Aman, was instructed to implement the same in Kibaigwa to improve the towns' aesthetics and support 24-hour business operations.

The minister also directed Dodoma regional manager to ensure that emergency road projects include streetlights to beautify the city and develop bypass roads to alleviate traffic congestion in central Dodoma.

Regarding emergency projects, Ulega announced that the government had allocated 54 bn/- for repairing bridges damaged by El Niño rains in Morogoro and over 35 bn/- for similar repairs in Dodoma. Contractors were urged to expedite construction works to complete the projects promptly.

Kyamba confirmed that his team would immediately begin implementing the directives by dispatching experts to the sites to develop detailed work plans.



To reduce congestion in Morogoro town, we will construct feeder roads from Nane Nane to Msamvu and Kihonda to Mkundi. We urge residents to support this improvement effort

CBE celebrates 60 years of merit in business education

By Correspondent Joseph Mwendapole

THE College of Business Education (CBE) has achieved remarkable milestones in the past five years, with 288 research works authored by its experts published in international journals, reflecting the institution's commitment to high-quality, globally recognised standards.

Speaking in Dar es Salaam yesterday, CBE Rector Prof Edda Lwoga highlighted the college's achievements during a media briefing ahead of its 60th anniversary celebration. The event, scheduled for next week at the CBE main campus in the city, will feature Deputy Prime Minister Dr. Doto Biteko as the guest of honour, along with over 300 distinguished guests.

Prof. Lwoga attributed the college's success in research to strong collaborations with national and international institutions, which have significantly elevated the quality and impact of its research.

"Our partnerships with various global institutions have enriched our curriculum and contributed to the steady growth in student enrolment," she said.

Over six decades, CBE has produced thousands of graduates equipped with skills to become self-reliant entrepreneurs. In recent years, the college has introduced apprenticeship and incubation programmes, empowering graduates to secure employment and excel in business ventures.

CBE was established in 1965 through a bilateral agreement between the governments of Tanzania and Germany. Since its inauguration by the late President Julius K. Nyerere, the institution has grown into a leader in business education, continually adapting to market needs by expanding its programmes and facilities.

Prof. Lwoga noted that the college,

which began with one campus in Dar es Salaam and an enrolment of 30 students, now has four campuses and a total enrolment of 22,263 students. The Dar es Salaam campus accommodates 14,536 students, followed by Dodoma with 4,611, Mwanza with 2,098, and Mbeya with 1,018 students.

CBE offers 63 academic programmes, ranging from diploma to master's degrees. The institution employs 499 staff members, including 244 lecturers, ensuring delivery of high-quality education and services.

The 60th anniversary celebration will include the launch of CBE's 50-Year Vision, the signing of agreements with various stakeholders, gift distributions, entertainment, and a cake-cutting ceremony.

Prof. Lwoga emphasised the college's commitment to advancing research and innovation that supports Tanzania's sustainable economic growth.

"CBE remains a trailblazer in strengthening business education and fostering productive knowledge for national development. Our ongoing investments in innovative studies and research aim to build a resilient economy in Tanzania and the East African region," she stated.



Our partnerships with various global institutions have enriched our curriculum and contributed to the steady growth in student enrolment



President Samia Suluhu Hassan together with Minister for Foreign Affairs and East African Cooperation Ambassador Mahmoud Thabit Kombo and Dean of the Diplomatic Corps of Tanzania who is Ambassador of Comoros to Tanzania Dr Ahameda El Badaoui Mohamed in a group photo with members of the diplomatic corps representing their countries in Tanzania during the Diplomatic Sherry Party at State House in Dar es Salaam on Tuesday evening. Photo: State House

By Guardian Reporter

Samia for sturdier cooperation, robust economic development

PRESIDENT Samia Suluhu Hassan has reaffirmed that Tanzania will continue to play a vital role to foster international cooperation, driving economic growth, and maintaining peace and security in Africa and globally.

She made the statement during the New Year Diplomatic Sherry Party held at State House in Dar es Salaam on Tuesday. The event, organised annually, serves as a platform to exchange good wishes, reflect on the country's progress, and outline Tanzania's regional and international priorities.

Speaking on economic growth and strategic milestones, President Samia stated that in 2024, Tanzania achieved an economic growth rate of 5.4 percent. This growth was driven by increases in production, investments, and tourism. She noted that the country also made historic strides in implementing strategic infrastructure projects, particularly in the rail and energy sectors, which are expected to

transform Tanzania's economy.

On development planning and policy updates, President Samia highlighted that Tanzania is set to complete preparations for its new National Development Vision and a review of its foreign policy by 2025.

"These documents will define the country's priorities and guide its partnerships with international stakeholders. They will also strengthen international collaborations, with a focus on key sectors such as education, health, and energy to support sustainable development," she said.

On energy and regional integration, she announced that Tanzania will host the African Heads of State Energy Summit later this month. The summit will spotlight "Mission 300," a transformative initiative aimed at connecting 300

million Africans to electricity by 2030.

Key partners for the summit include the World Bank, the African Development Bank, and the African Union. The event will bring together leaders, policymakers, and experts to discuss strategies and collaborative solutions for Africa's energy challenges.

President Samia also underscored progress of the 2,115-megawatt Julius Nyerere Hydropower Project (JNHPP), which is nearing completion. She explained that the project, alongside energy grid integrations with neighbouring countries, positions Tanzania as a key player in regional energy trade.

She elaborated on current initiatives, including Tanzania's connection to the East African Power Pool (EAPP) with Kenya

(where energy transmission trials are ongoing) and integration with the Southern African Power Pool (SAPP) via Zambia. Collaborative projects like the Kikagati-Morongo Hydropower Project (with Uganda) and the Rusumo Hydropower Project (with Burundi and Rwanda) were also highlighted as significant developments.

President Samia added that the Africa Energy Summit will serve as a critical platform to foster partnerships, share innovations, and mobilise resources to address the continent's energy challenges.

Minister for Foreign Affairs and East African Cooperation, Mahmoud Thabit Kombo, also expressed gratitude to the diplomatic community for their support in strengthening Tanzania's international partnerships.



Neema Mukama (R), supervisor of a children's disability assessment, speaks to parents of children with special needs, seeking to enroll them at a primary school located at Nzuguni B in Dodoma City yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Peter Mkwavila

DC suspends VEO over habitual drinking, poor work performance

By Guardian Correspondent, Shinyanga

SHINYANGA District Commissioner Julius Mtatiro has suspended Sebastian Tungu, Ngaganulwa Village Executive Officer due to allegations of habitual drunkenness and poor performance of his duties.

The decision was made during

a public meeting yesterday where Mtatiro addressed concerns raised by villagers.

"It is unacceptable for a public servant to be consistently intoxicated," Mtatiro stated, directing the District Human Resources Officer to consider reassigning Tungu to duties outside the village and replace him with a more competent officer.

"We cannot continue with a

drunkard officer. He is being removed today, and a new officer will be assigned," Mtatiro added.

The DC also urged government employees to be proactive in their roles, emphasizing the importance of addressing citizens' concerns without waiting for directives from higher authorities.

During the meeting, Mtatiro listened to various complaints from villagers, including issues related to

water, electricity, land disputes, and poor road infrastructure. He assured the community that all concerns would be addressed in due course.

The villagers had previously appealed to the government to address the issues which they said had been neglected for far too long. They also reiterated their call for Tungu's removal, citing his drinking issues as a significant obstacle to resolving their problems effectively.

RITA reveals theft of 2bn/- at Dar Manyema Mosque

By Guardian Reporter

INVESTIGATION team formed by the Registration, Insolvency, and Trusteeship Agency (RITA) to examine the assets of Manyema Mosque based at Kariakoo in Dar es Salaam, has uncovered embezzlement and loss of assets worth over 2bn/-.

Speaking shortly after receiving the report on findings from an investigation conducted after an in-depth audit of assets and funds following complaints of embezzlement by mosque members and leaders, RITA Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Frank Kanyusi announced yesterday that legal actions would be taken against those involved.

"I would like to inform the public that the investigation team has completed its work and has uncovered evidence of financial mismanagement exceeding 2 billion shillings, the loss of institutional assets, including plots of land, and abuse of power," said Kanyusi.

He further stated, "All those implicated will be referred to the investigative authorities for further action."

Kanyusi noted that RITA convened a meeting on July 9, 2024, involving the secretaries of Bakwata (Supreme Muslim Council of Tanzania) for Ilala District in Dar es Salaam Region, the dissolved Board of Trustees, and members of Manyema Mosque. The meeting aimed to address the mosque's conflict, during which allegations of asset embezzlement surfaced.

"Using the authority granted to me under Section 14 of the Trustees Registration Act, Chapter 318, I established an investigation team to probe the allegations of

asset embezzlement at Manyema Mosque," Kanyusi emphasised.

He explained that one of the team's primary tasks was to verify and confirm the legitimacy of all assets owned by Manyema Mosque and review its income sources to determine if revenue collection was conducted in compliance with the law, regulations, and existing guidelines.

Kanyusi also urged the Boards of Trustees of all institutions registered with RITA to focus on fulfilling the responsibilities outlined in their constitutions, ensuring proper oversight and management of finances and assets to avoid legal consequences.

Muslim Council of Tanzania (Bakwata) representative, Rashid Salam, assured the RITA CEO that the governing Muslim body would continue collaborating with the agency to monitor institutions under its umbrella. He emphasised adherence to their constitutions and national laws, with integrity in managing followers' assets.

Meanwhile, chairman of the Manyema Mosque transitional committee, Said Bakari Isihaka, stated that mosque members and some leaders are awaiting legal proceedings and guidance from relevant authorities. He stressed that those involved in embezzling the mosque's assets and funds must be held accountable, return the stolen assets, and, if necessary, face court proceedings.

A member of the transitional committee, Ismail Aden Rage, expressed disappointment over the corruption by some leaders. He called for swift legal action to ensure the wrongdoers are brought to justice, return the assets and funds, and answer the charges against them in court.



RITA Chief Executive Officer Frank Kanyusi (2nd L) receives investigation report on assets of Manyema Mosque from Chairman of the committee, Alex Maleva (4th L) in Dar es Salaam yesterday, witnessed by clerics from the region. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

91 agricultural extension officers complete cashew refresher course

By Guardian Correspondent, Masasi

A TOTAL of 91 agricultural extension officers from Masasi and Nanyumbu districts in Mtwara Region have completed a refresher training designed to enhance their skills to promote advanced cashew farming techniques.

The training, organised by the Cashew Board of Tanzania (CBT), took place at the Masasi Town Council hall and was officially opened by Masasi District Information Officer Fikiri Lukanga, representing District Commissioner Louteri Kanoni.

Speaking on behalf of the District Commissioner, Lukanga urged the officers to fully utilise the knowledge gained from the training to benefit local farmers. He emphasised that proper agricultural education is a key driver in increasing cashew production and improving overall yields.

"The government has made significant investments in agriculture. Use this training to educate and empower our farmers," Lukanga said.

Geoffrey Mwambe, a senior agricultural officer at CBT, explained that the 91 officers

participating in the training, all employed by the cashew board, will work directly with farmers in their respective areas for one year, providing essential support and guidance.

Mwambe noted that the training is part of the Building a Better Tomorrow: Youth Initiative for Agribusiness (BBT-YIA), a programme led by the Ministry of Agriculture aimed at improving agricultural practices nationwide.

The officers trained included 53 from Masasi District, 14 from Masasi Town Council, and 23 from Nanyumbu District.

Mwambe highlighted that this initiative is pivotal to achieving the government's target of producing 700,000 tonnes of cashew nuts by the 2025/2026 farming season, a milestone that will significantly boost the country's cashew industry and improve farmers' livelihoods.

Zefenia Michael, speaking on behalf of the extension officers, expressed gratitude for the training, noting that it has equipped them with the skills necessary to improve agricultural practices and better compete in the agricultural labour market.

Irrigation scheme worth 16bn/- to benefit over 2,000 villages

By Polycarp Machira, Chamwino

AT LEAST 2,000 farmers at Membe Village in Chamwino District, Dodoma Region, are set to benefit from 16.2bn/- irrigation scheme, it has been revealed.

The 12-billion-litre project, undertaken by the National Irrigation Commission (NIRC), is expected to attract farmers to cultivate diverse economic cash and food crops on 7,500 acres of plantation.

The initiative is part of a series of state-sponsored projects aimed at enabling year-round crop production and reducing dependency on seasonal rainfall.

NIRC site engineer, Salehe Ramadhani, told The Guardian here yesterday that the project is now 86 percent complete. He explained that the funds for the project were sourced from the government and that construction is being carried out by the local Nakuroi Investment Company Ltd.

"The implementation of this project began on September 1, 2022, and, according to the agreement, the contractor was expected to hand over the project by this December," Engineer Ramadhani said. However, he noted that due to unfavourable weather conditions, the contractor is now expected to complete the project within the next two months.

"The commission has already disbursed over 10.4bn/- to the contractor, and we remain optimistic that the project will be completed on schedule," he added.

In addition to irrigation, the project is designed to support fishing activities and provide sufficient water for livestock, enhancing the livelihoods of the local community.

Masoud Chembe, the project's site engineer from Nakuroi Investment Company Ltd, expressed commitment to ensuring that the construction meets both quality standards and the timeframe.

"As a local company, we are very proud that the government entrusted us with this significant national tender. The project has also created job opportunities for many residents of Membe village," Chembe said.

Mariam Mziwanda, acting head of government communications unit at NIRC, highlighted that the Commission is also implementing similar projects in Ndogoe and Chinangali II in Dodoma Region.

"In general, the Commission is working on several strategic irrigation schemes in different regions," she said, emphasizing the aim to enable farmers to cultivate crops in at least three seasons annually. This development is expected to boost both food security and the national economy.

Mziwanda expressed gratitude to the government for significantly increasing the commission's budget allocation from 17bn/- to over 400bn/-.

"This increased budget has allowed the Commission to carry out its core responsibilities more professionally, especially in project implementation," she added.



Pendo Matulanya, Head of Agriculture and Fisheries Division at Kahama Municipal Council, addresses female farmers from 20 wards of the municipality, urging them to work closely with agriculture officers to boost food and cash crop production during a ceremony to hand over ox-drawn plough donated by Dorfra Co. Ltd in collaboration with Meda held at Mbulu Primary School on Tuesday. Photo: Correspondent Shabani Njia

Ulega inspects Morogoro-Dodoma highway, urges bridge completion

By Guardian Correspondent, Dodoma

WORKS Minister Abdallah Ulega has inspected a crucial section of the Morogoro-Dodoma highway, calling for acceleration of a bridge construction to mitigate flooding ahead of the upcoming rainy season.

The site of a major bridge construction project has long been prone to frequent flooding, resulting

in fatalities and significant traffic disruptions between Morogoro, Dodoma, and neighboring areas.

The six-kilometer section is scheduled for completion by June this year.

During his visit to the site yesterday, Ulega emphasized the importance of completing the bridge to address the persistent transportation challenges faced by the local community. He directed

the contractor to repair any damaged sections and expedite the work to ensure the project is finished before the rainy season begins. "We must ensure the bridge is completed before the rains. The contractor should accelerate the pace of construction to prevent the adverse effects of flooding," Ulega stated.

He acknowledged the severe impact of heavy rains on the area,

including waterlogging and severe traffic congestion, which disrupt daily life and negatively affect the public. Ulega further noted that completing the bridge in the flood-prone Mtanana Italia region would significantly reduce the risk of fatalities and accidents caused by flooding.

Zuhura Amani, Dodoma Regional Manager for Tanzania National Roads Agency (TANROADS),

said that the project has already consumed 26bn/- and is 49.8 percent. Amani expressed confidence that the contractor is on track to meet the government's deadline, ensuring the bridge is ready before the rainy season.

"The contractor is progressing well, and we are confident the project will be completed on time, preventing disruptions during the rainy season," she stated.

Omary Rajabu, a resident of Mtanana, expressed gratitude to the government for funding the bridge, which he said would resolve the area's flooding issues and ease transportation difficulties.

Rajabu highlighted the severe challenges the community has faced, noting that previous floods have caused loss of lives and major disruptions to transportation during the rainy season.



Dar es Salaam Special Zone Police Commander, SACP Jumanne Muliro, briefs journalists in the city yesterday regarding the arrest of a traditional healer, Abdulkarim Shariff, who was found with two missing children, along with the arrest of traffic police officers seen in a viral video clip appearing to receive bribe. Photo: Correspondent Imani Nathaniel

Residents protest replacement of old indigenous trees with timber species

By Correspondent Nebart Msokwa, Mbeya

RESIDENTS of Iziwa Ward in Mbeya City have raised concerns over the Tanzania Forest Services (TFS) clearing indigenous forests that protect water sources, replacing them with timber trees they accuse of depleting water resources.

The community has raised concerns that the newly planted trees, once mature and harvested, could leave the land barren and dry up local water sources.

The issues were voiced during a visit by the Mbeya Regional Security and Defence Committee, which aimed to inspect development projects and address citizens' grievances.

Yoram Mkosole, a local resident, explained that the area was once home to extensive indigenous forests that helped preserve water sources. However, these forests have been replaced with pine trees, which he described as less water-friendly. He pointed out that some water sources have already dried up, while others have significantly lower water levels and risk drying up in the future.

"In the past, we had a flowing stream here called Insalala. I could hear it from my house. Now, even when I stand 10 meters away, it's barely audible," Mkosole lamented.

He also alleged that some government officials had been farming near water sources until local leaders intervened.

Iziwa Ward Councillor Kephas Sote clarified that the deforestation carried out by the Tanzania Forest Services Agency (TFS)

was directed by the government and did not directly affect water sources as claimed. He emphasized that indigenous trees had been replanted near water sources and that TFS continued to plant water-friendly trees along riverbanks.

Addressing the concerns, Mbeya Regional Commissioner Juma Homera directed District Commissioner Beno Malisa to form a team to work closely with the community on sustainable environmental management. The team will assess suitable tree-planting practices and submit its findings within a month to guide future actions.

"There's a real possibility these trees are drying up the water sources. DC, your team must consult with the elders and propose the best solution. No additional trees should be planted until we have a clear direction," Homera instructed.

He urged the community to take an active role in protecting the environment and water sources, emphasizing their importance for future generations.



In the past, we had a flowing stream here called Insalala. I could hear it from my house. Now, even when I stand 10 meters away, it's barely audible

Two traffic police officers in custody after viral clip points to bribes-taking

By Guardian Reporter

TWO traffic police officers have been arrested for allegedly taking bribes from commuter bus staff in Dar es Salaam.

The arrest comes after a video circulated on social media, showing two traffic officers accepting what look like money from bus drivers and conductors who they stopped.

Jumanne Muliro, Dar es Salaam Special Police Zone Commander, confirmed the arrest of the officers: Corporal John and WP Corporal Mgsi, who he said were in custody.

Muliro stated that discipline was being enforced against the officers while they await further legal proceedings. He condemned their actions, which he described as a violation of police code of conduct

and a blow to the reputation of the police force.

"These officers are in custody, and strict disciplinary measures are underway. Charges have been filed," Muliro said.

He assured the public that the police force would continue to take firm action against any conduct that breaches police ethics.

In a separate case, Muliro also

announced the arrest of Abdulkarim Sharif (43), a domestic worker and traditional healer resident of Kimara Baruti, who is suspected to have kidnapped two children, aged five and four, residents of Tandika in Dar es Salaam.

The children have been located, examined at a hospital, and are in good health. They have since been safely reunited with their parents.

KIGALI

THE African School of Governance (ASG), a graduate institution designed to offer world-class education programmes in public policy, research, governance, leadership, and management, was formally launched on Tuesday in Kigali, the capital of Rwanda.

Co-founded by Rwandan President Paul Kagame and former Ethiopian Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn, in consultation with other African leaders, academics, and philanthropists, the ASG initiative aims to address the continent's pressing governance challenges by equipping emerging leaders with the mindsets, skills, and knowledge necessary for effective leadership in Africa's future.

Speaking at the launch, Desalegn said the ASG would serve as a center for cultivating purpose-driven leaders prepared to tackle the continent's most significant challenges and opportunities by blending Africa's distinctiveness with global best practices.

"The first step for Africa to reclaim its greatness is to build an understanding and appreciation of its history, political economy, and empowered mindsets in its leaders. Based on this solid foundation, leaders can then shape Africa's trajectory," he said.

At the event, ASG President Kingsley Moghalu said the school would focus on creating

Rwanda proud host of maiden African School of Governance

a sustainable governance model rooted in African realities.

"Today's event is of profound historic importance. ASG, as an accredited pan-African graduate-level institution, is dedicated to leading the transformation of governance in Africa," he said, adding that the ASG would offer a comprehensive suite of academic programs to address governance, leadership, and policy deficits across Africa.

Joseph Nsengimana, Rwanda's minister of education, said at the launch

that the ASG has found a natural home in Rwanda, a country that reflects the very principles the institution seeks to cultivate.

"Hosting ASG is our shared responsibility to contribute to Africa's future by investing in the next generation of leaders. As we inaugurate ASG today, let us celebrate not only its opening but also the promise it holds for our continent and the globe at large. Together, let us invest in leadership that will steer Africa toward a prosperous future," said the minister.

**High Commission of India
Dar es Salaam**

**in Association with Shree Hindu Mandal, Dodoma
will be organizing
CONSULAR CAMP
on
Saturday, 18th January 2025
in Dodoma**

**Venue: Toyota Building
1 Nzuguni, Near Nane Nane Bus Stand
Time: 10.00 - 16.00 hours**

**Desirous applicants are welcome
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THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA
MINISTRY OF HEALTH
TANZANIA MEDICINES AND MEDICAL DEVICES AUTHORITY
ISO 9001: 2015 CERTIFIED

PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT
26th November, 2024

PAYMENT OF ANNUAL RETENTION FEES FOR THE YEAR 2025

- The Tanzania Medicines and Medical Devices Authority (TMDA) wishes to remind its esteemed stakeholders that pursuant to Section 55 (b) of the Tanzania Medicines and Medical Devices Act, Cap 219, the retention of products in the Register of registered products is upon payment of a prescribed fee.
- The Retention Fee is required to be paid by 31st of January of each calendar year as prescribed in the Tanzania Medicines and Medical Devices (Fees and Charges) Regulations, 2021.
- Please be informed that, in-line with the Regulations highlighted above, after 31st January 2025, **Import Permits** will not be issued to any product for which its Annual Retention Fee has not been paid for.
- All companies are therefore required to collect the respective invoices from TMDA Eastern Zone Offices (located at Off Nelson Mandela Road, Mabibo External, P.O. Box 77150, Dar es Salaam) or TMDA Headquarters (located at Plot No. 56/1. Block E, Hombolo Road, P.O. Box 1253 Dodoma) and pay the annual retention fees **effective from 1st December, 2024** for the calendar year 2025 before the 31st January, 2025.

Issued by:
The Director General
Tanzania Medicines and Medical Devices Authority,
P.O. Box 1253, Dodoma.
Tel; +255 222 450512/658 445222/777 700002
Fax; +255 222450793
Email: info@tmda.go.tz
Website: www.tmda.go.tz

Manufacturers advised to meet TBS standards

By Guardian Reporter, Zanzibar

MANUFACTURERS have been urged to produce products that meet quality standards set by the Tanzania Bureau of Standards (TBS) to overcome domestic and international trade barriers.

Maryam Abdulaziz, TBS marketing officer, made the call yesterday during the 11th National Trade Fair in Zanzibar.

She stressed the importance for manufacturers to ensure their products carry the TBS quality mark, which eliminates trade obstacles.

She said for example products made in Zanzibar bearing Zanzibar Bureau of Standards (ZBS) quality mark do not face trade barriers when sold in Tanzania Mainland as quality of the same is assured.

She added that TBS-certified products sold in Zanzibar also avoid trade restrictions due to a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between TBS and ZBS, ensuring the products are recognised as safe and of good quality for consumers' health.

She encouraged manufacturers to certify their products and display

the quality mark, as this guarantees market access.

She further explained that TBS-certified products are assured entry into the East African Community (EAC) market without issues.

"Manufacturers who have not certified their products should visit TBS as certification guarantees market access both locally and internationally," she said.

Additionally, she urged traders to take advantage of the free certification process, with only a letter of introduction from Small Industries Development Organization (SIDO) required.

"The government acknowledges the vital role of entrepreneurs in the economy and covers all certification costs for them," she added.

She also called on citizens to promote the use of quality products and avoid using expired items.

She advised the public to develop the habit of checking product packaging for expiration dates and TBS certification.

If consumers encounter products without the same, she urged them to report to the nearest TBS office or call the free service centre using the provided contact details.



Serengeti District Administrative Secretary, Anjelina Marko (R), inspects tobacco leaves during the opening of a tobacco auction officiated by the district's Executive Director, Dr. Maulid Madeni (2nd R) in Mugumu town earlier this week. Centre is Tanzania Tobacco Board (TTB) Market Supervisor Rajabu Hassan. Photo: Correspondent

By Guardian Correspondent,

Dodoma

CCM National Executive Committee (NEC) is set to kick off in Dodoma tomorrow, chaired by the party's national chairperson President Samia Suluhu Hassan.

According to a statement released yesterday and signed by CCM Secretary for Ideology, Publicity and Training Amos Makala, the meeting will be preceded by a session of the party's NEC Central Committee.

Samia set to chair CCM NEC meeting in Dodoma tomorrow

The meetings are part of preparations for the upcoming CCM national congress which will take place on Saturday and Sunday.

In a press briefing on January 7, Makala outlined three key agenda items for the upcoming meeting. The first item will be election to

fill the position of CCM Deputy Chairman for Mainland which became vacant after Abdulrahman Kinana stepped down. The second item will involve reviewing the party's progress report for the period between 2022 and 2025. This will cover activities since

the 2022 internal elections. The third item will focus on reviewing implementation of the party's election manifesto by both union and the government of Zanzibar.

"I also want to address the speculation in the media regarding who will succeed Kinana. Many

have been predicting possible candidates but I want to clarify the situation," Makala said.

He emphasised that the position of Deputy Chairman is not contested and no one had submitted nomination forms for the role, stating that 'competition'

term is inaccurate.

He added that the successor of Kinana will be selected through recommendations from the Political Bureau and the Central Committee, with the final decision made by delegates who will vote on the proposed candidate at the Congress.

"For those who have been speculating, the process is clear: the Central Committee and NEC will recommend a candidate and delegates will vote on the nomination at the Congress," he said.

Mwinyi pledges better business climate, more job opportunities

By Guardian Reporter, Zanzibar

ZANZIBAR President Dr Hussein Mwinyi has reiterated the government's commitment to enhancing investment climate to attract more investors hence more job opportunities.

Dr Mwinyi made the remarks on Tuesday during a meeting with Tanzania's Ambassador to Nigeria, Celestine Kakele who visited Zanzibar State House for a courtesy call and farewell.

The President emphasised that there are numerous economic and investment opportunities for collaboration between Zanzibar and Nigeria that have yet to be fully explored.

He urged Kakele to prioritise tourism and investment which he described as key drivers of Zanzibar's economy at the moment.

"The government is working to improve investment sector by removing barriers that hinder cooperation between our two nations," Dr Mwinyi said.

Another sector Dr Mwinyi highlighted was trade, noting that if managed well, both countries can benefit greatly.

"For a long time, many West African products have been sold outside Africa. Yet, they have not been marketed in the East African region. This is an area that needs more focus," he said.

He pointed out that both nations could establish significant trade relations by exchanging locally-produced goods, citing Zanzibar's abundant marine products.

Dr Mwinyi further encouraged Kakele to make special efforts in attracting investors to the country.

"The government continues its efforts to remove obstacles that slow down cooperation between our countries so that our collaboration can be sustainable," he added.

Kakele acknowledged that Nigeria is a large country with many economic and investment opportunities that both Tanzania and Zanzibar can tap into.

He also recommended enhancing the visa process between the two countries to facilitate smoother exchanges.

"The government is working to improve investment sector by removing barriers that hinder cooperation between our two nations"



Katerero Ward Officer Bwanku Bwanku (R), hands over a donation of school supplies and cash to Lameck Gibson, a Standard Four pupil at Lyamahoro A Primary School in Kaibanja Ward earlier this week following a social media post of his request for assistance. Looking on (C) is the pupil's mother, Winifrida Gibson. Photo: Correspondent

DC optimistic about investment surge after end of water problem

By Guardian Correspondent, Mwanza

MWANZA District Commissioner Mwanahamisi Munkunda has urged investors to consider the district as a prime investment destination following the end of a long-standing water supply challenge.

Munkunda made the statement yesterday during a meeting with water stakeholders and the management of Same Mwanza Water Authority (SAMWASA).

The meeting followed her visit to Mwanza - Same - Korogwe water project, where the first phase has been completed and water is now being supplied to both Mwanza and Same districts.

"Mwanza has faced a major water shortage for years that previously hindered investment. However, with leadership of President Samia Suluhu Hassan's government, we have now resolved this challenge," Munkunda said.

She highlighted that Mwanza - Same - Korogwe water project has significantly improved the situation, ensuring that water is available 24 hours a day.

"We recognise that residents have long struggled with water shortages, but this issue has been addressed and now the people of Mwanza have reliable water supply," she said.

The district commissioner emphasised that the goal of the project is to stimulate economic and developmental growth in Mwanza.

She urged the community to take ownership of the project to ensure its long-term sustainability.

Munkunda further called on staff SAMWASA to adopt a more proactive approach to their work and move away from complacency in order to meet the government's goal of better serving its citizens.

Rashid Mwinjuma, Director of SAMWASA, stated that water demand for both Mwanza and Same districts is 8 million cubic litres per day, while the project is capable of producing 55.5 million cubic litres per day, ensuring more than enough water supply.

Mwinjuma also noted that the authority is currently facing challenges, including delays in acquiring essential equipment like pipes for connecting the water network and a shortage of funds to meet the costs of ongoing project construction and maintenance.

He urged residents to continue paying their water bills and settle any outstanding debts to help sustain water services in both Mwanza and Same districts.



Hal-Hikima Institute Director General Nurdien Kishik addresses reporters about preparations for the upcoming Quran Recitation Competition in Dar es Salaam on Tuesday. The event is scheduled to take place in March this year at Benjamin Mkapa Stadium in the city. He is flanked by the competition's organising committee secretary general Salum Kiza. Photo: Correspondent Jumanne Juma

G20 framework summit kicks off in South Africa

CAPE TOWN

TECHNICAL meetings under the Group of 20 (G20) Finance Track began this week with the first Framework Working Group (FWG) meeting, the South African government news agency reported on Tuesday.

The virtual FWG meeting, held from Monday to Tuesday, followed South Africa's assumption of the G20 presidency, marked by the first G20 Sherpa and Finance Track meetings in December 2024.

According to the report, Monday's session focused on major global

growth headwinds, ongoing supply and demand risks to inflation, and main fiscal challenges. Delegates also assessed Africa's economic outlook. On Tuesday, discussions centred on the draft FWG work plan for 2025.

This meeting is the first of four FWG sessions scheduled for 2025. "The remaining three meetings for this working group are scheduled for April, June, and September, in person, in venues across the country," said the report.

South Africa's National Treasury and Reserve Bank are jointly overseeing the G20 Finance

Track. "The mandate of the FWG is to promote strong, sustainable, balanced, and inclusive growth, and does so by identifying, monitoring, and assessing global macroeconomic risks, vulnerabilities, and uncertainties, and recommending suitable policy responses to global shocks and cross-cutting global challenges," according to a statement by the National Treasury.

The G20 Leaders' Summit is expected to be held in Johannesburg, the largest city and economic hub of South Africa, in November 2025.

Kenya's horticulture export decline to \$1.06bn in 2024

NAIROBI

KENYA'S horticulture export earnings declined in 2024 due to reduced shipments to key markets in Europe and Asia, a government official said on Tuesday.

The nation earned \$1.06 billion from horticulture exports in 2024, down from 1.21 billion dollars in 2023, said Kipronoh Ronoh Paul, principal secretary of the State Department for Agriculture in the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock.

Speaking in Nairobi, the capital of Kenya, Ronoh said the drop was due to a stronger Kenyan shilling, which made exports more expensive and dampened demand. He also noted the challenges stemming from insecurity in the Red Sea that forced horticulture exporters to use

alternative routes.

"The change of export routes not only lengthened transit times for those highly perishable products but also increased airfreight costs," Ronoh said.

Kenya's main horticulture exports include vegetables, fruits and cut flowers. While vegetables account for the largest shipment volume, flowers, primarily sold in Europe,



We need to embark on market and product diversification to reduce overdependence on a narrow range of products and destinations

generate the bulk of the revenue.

Despite steady growth in recent years, Ronoh said that the industry faced significant hurdles in 2024, such as climate change, high production costs, pests and diseases, market competition, and stringent regulatory requirements in export markets, which negatively impacted the performance.

Okisegere Ojepat, chief executive officer of the Fresh Produce Consortium of Kenya, called for market diversification to mitigate reliance on traditional destinations in Europe, where shifting standards have limited Kenya's export opportunities.

"We need to embark on market and product diversification to reduce overdependence on a narrow range of products and destinations," Ojepat said.



POSITION ANNOUNCEMENT ASSISTANT DATA ANALYST – METEOROLOGICAL AGRICULTURAL IITA-TZ-2025 - R4D-001 -NRS-DSM

The International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) on behalf of the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI) invites application for the position of **Assistant Data Analyst – Meteorological Agricultural**.

The **Assistant Data Analyst – Meteorological Agricultural** job is to collate and analyze meteorological and agricultural data to support the ResComm2 project's goals of improving food security and livelihoods in central Tanzania. Additionally, the role involves assisting with coordination and communication tasks and working closely with the project coordinator

Duty Station: This is a Nationally Recruited Position, and the incumbent will be based in Dar es salaam - Tanzania.

Roles and Responsibilities:

- Collect, clean, and analyze meteorological data such as rainfall patterns, temperature variations, and other key factors affecting agricultural activities in central Tanzania.
- Analyze agricultural data including crop yields, soil quality, and farming practices to evaluate the impact of agroecological interventions on smallholder farmers.
- Conduct statistical analysis to identify trends, correlations, and patterns in meteorological and agricultural data, providing insights for the ResComm II project.
- Prepare reports and visualizations to communicate findings, trends, and recommendations based on data analysis to project stakeholders.
- Assist in conducting field surveys, interviews, and on-site data collection activities, ensuring accurate and relevant meteorological and agricultural data are gathered.
- Support coordination and communication within the project team and with external stakeholders
- Perform any other activity as assigned by the national coordinator.

Qualifications and Experience:

- A bachelor's degree in meteorology, agriculture, environmental science, statistics, or related field with a minimum of 1 year experience.
- Proficiency in data analysis tools such as excel, R, Python, or specialize packages for meteorological and agricultural data analysis.
- Experience in analyzing meteorological data, and agricultural datasets, and conducting statistical analysis.
- Good communication skills and ability to work collaboratively in a multidisciplinary team.
- Previous experience in analyzing meteorological and agricultural data in the context of development projects is advantageous

Additional skills:

- Knowledge of remote sensing technologies and their application in agricultural and meteorological data analysis.
- Experience with Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and spatial analysis for mapping and analyzing environmental data.
- Strong problem-solving skills with the ability to develop solutions based on data analysis.
- Basic project management skills, including the ability to manage timelines and coordinate data collection and analysis activities.
- Ability to work independently and take initiative, demonstrating good organizational and time management skills.

General information:

The duration of the contract is two years renewable subject to performance and availability of funds. This is nationally recruited position and IITA offers a competitive remuneration package.

The application pack should include an application letter, copies of certificates, and a curriculum vitae which contains a telephone number, email address, and contact details of two referees. Applications should be sent by email to IITA-Tanzania@cgiar.org and addressed to:

**The Country Representative, IITA-Tanzania,
Plot No. 25, Mwenge – Coca-Cola Road,
Mikocheni Industrial Area,
Dar es Salaam, Tanzania**

Applicants are requested to include the **reference number for the position** (as indicated on the heading of the announcement) in the subject of their application letter, as well as in the subject of their email. Please note that any applications without the reference number indicated will be automatically disqualified.

Closing date for applications: Wednesday 29th January 2025. Please note that only shortlisted candidates will be contacted.

THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA
MINISTRY OF WATER

LETTER OF INVITATION

Consulting Services
Investment Financing Facility – Output Based Approach (IFF-OBA): Implementation of IFF-OBA 2.0

Submission date / deadline:
14 February 2025

Country: United Republic of Tanzania
Tender No: 49/2024/2025/C/08
Reference: BMZ 2022 87110 / KFW 512117
Pre-Qualification Notice for Consultants

Reference: International open Tender for Consultancy Services for Implementation of Investment Financing Facility – Output Based Approach (IFF-OBA) 2.0

Financing Source: Federal Republic of Germany; Financial Cooperation through KfW Entwicklungsbank and Government of Tanzania (GoT).

Project Executing Agency (PEA): Ministry of Water, Maji Street, P.O. Box, 456 Dodo-ma, Tanzania.

Requested Consulting Services:
German Development Cooperation has been one of the traditional development partners of the United Republic of Tanzania in the water sector since 1973. Since 2007, German Development Cooperation has been supporting the Ministry of Water (MoW) in implementing the Water Sector Development Programme (WSDP).

One measure under the WSDP is the so-called **Investment Financing Facility – Output Based Approach (IFF-OBA)**. IFF-OBA is financed by KfW and operated under the MoW through the Department of Water Supply and Sanitation.

The approach provides incentives for urban water and sanitation authorities (WSSAs) to obtain loans from local banks to finance infrastructure investments that improve the level of service and revenue generation to utilities. After implementation and upon achievement of pre-determined output targets, the utility is entitled to receive up to 50% of the total eligible project costs as a grant element.

Phase 1 of the implementation of IFF-OBA started in 2016 and will run until October 2024 with possible extension until the end of Q1 2025.

Now, additional funding has been made available as a grant for a **second phase**. The re-requested Consulting Services aim at assisting the MoW in the implementation of Phase 2 of the IFF-OBA, the so-called **IFF-OBA 2.0**.

The design of IFF-OBA 2.0 shall principally remain the same as for IFF-OBA Phase 1.

The **objective of the requested Consulting Services** is to assist in IFF-OBA implementation on three dimensions:

- Assisting MoW in managing, guiding and monitoring the IFF-OBA Programme, including assistance to MoW in fulfillment of all related reporting requirements
- Assisting WSSAs in preparation of adequate investment project proposals and loan applications for commercial borrowing
- Soliciting the participating banks in establishing in-house capacities to develop a loan product to target WSSAs and to manage the infrastructure loans

The **general scope of Consulting Services** to be provided by the **IFF Implementation Consultant (IC)** for IFF-OBA 2.0 shall comprise but is not limited to:

- Completion of outstanding tasks related to IFF-OBA projects of Phase 1
- reviewing the Operational Guidelines and the Performance Grant Agreement Template and amending/ updating them
- reviewing the current Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP)
- support MoW in the establishment of an Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP) for IFF-OBA 2.0 according to the updated Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP)

- assisting the MoW in managing, guiding and overseeing the IFF-OBA 2.0 project in line with the Operational Guidelines
- supporting the MoW in attracting well performing WSSAs to participate in the Project
- assisting WSSAs in the adequate preparation of Investment proposals
- assessing eligibility and plausibility of WSSAs Investment proposals
- evaluating and verifying achievement of agreed performance targets that allow dis-bursement of Grant Payments to WSSAs
- luring participating Tanzanian commercial banks to actively market and provide loan facilities to WSSAs
- setting up and operating a newly established Preparatory Grant Facility to support WSSAs in their detailed project design to apply for IFF-OBA 2.0 including defining selection criteria
- ensuring knowledge transfer to the NWF
- supporting monitoring of the Project and reporting
- support the MoW in setting up and managing the Disposition Fund, including counter signing withdrawal applications for disbursement under the Disposition Fund and Simplified Direct Disbursement
- special audits, if required

The prequalification of experienced Consultants will follow the latest version of KfW „Guide-lines for the Procurement of Consulting Services, Works, Plant, Goods and Non-Consulting Services in Financial Cooperation with Partner Countries“ (please refer to homepage of KfW Development Bank www.kfw-entwicklungsbank.de).

It is foreseen to assign an independent consultant firm with proven international experience in programme management and in preparation and assistance in implementation of water infrastructure projects and having a regional experience record. In case of an international lead consultant it is recommended to enhance the international expertise by including relevant national expertise. The minimum annual turnover of the consultant is fixed at EUR 10.0 million, with – in case of a Joint Venture – the minimum annual turnover of the lead consultant being EUR 7.0 million.

An **“Invitation for Pre-Qualification”** (PO) with more detailed information on the pro-gram's components and measures, the type of services to be provided as well as the doc-uments to be submitted for prequalification, including the envisaged evaluation methodolo-gy, is available upon written request by email to the Secretary Ministerial Tender Board, Ministry of Water, email: pmu@maji.go.tz and copy to the Tender Agent, Prof. Dr.-Ing. Clemens Wittland, at the email: clemens.wittland@h-ka.de.

A complete set of Prequalification documents in English may be purchased by the interested Bidders on the submission of a written application to the address given in below and upon payment of non-refundable fee of Tanzania Shillings 50,000. Payment shall be made through electronic payment system, therefore interested bidders are invited to collect the control number for effecting the payment. The interested bidders shall request the Prequalification Document from 07th January, 2025 in writing at pmu@maji.go.tz and collect electronic copy physically to Ministry of Water, The Secretary Ministerial Tender Board, Government City - Mtumba, P.O. Box 456, 40473 Dodoma, Tanzania.

Applications for prequalification shall be submitted physically to the Secretary Ministerial Tender Board, Ministry of Water, Government City, Maji Street, P.O. Box 456, Dodoma, Tanzania, as well as to the Tender Agent at or before **11:00 hours (EAT) on Friday, 14 February 2025** clearly marked “Tender No. 49/2024/2025/C/08 – Application to Prequalify for “Implementation of Investment Financing Facility – Output Based Approach (IFF-OBA) 2.0”.

PERMANENT SECRETARY
MINISTRY OF WATER

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THURSDAY 16 JANUARY, 2025

Taking A New Look
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Foreign investment executives can help boost local initiatives

ANOTHER investment and business forum took place in Dar es Salaam at the start of the week, with a delegation of 20 Japanese investment companies visiting the country to explore opportunities in agriculture, tourism and industrial production. An Industry and Trade deputy minister officiated at the opening of the forum with Japan, describing the forum as vital for industrial investment efforts.

He similarly saw the broadening of investment initiatives as a significant effort to strengthen bilateral ties between the two countries. Still, observers would think that Japan's ties with Tanzania are anchored in development partnership rather than private sector investments. Yet, this aspect is changing to a certain extent, as companies in advanced countries seek to find openings in low wage countries, especially when there is a sizeable local market.

An affirmation that the Japanese companies have engaged with 50 Tanzanian firms to exchange knowledge, share technology and collaborate on joint business ventures was captivating, though its parameters remain unclear. A statistic that Japan's total investment in Tanzania has surpassed \$11.4m, with 24 projects registered, bringing up more than 1,000 jobs shows that there is a relatively shallow presence of its private sector compared with its public assistance department. There is plenty of potential

investment if all is set right.

At least there are discussions on making at the local level products that are currently imported, what experts in the past described as 'import substitution' industries. What was evident was that it is not clear that there is a substantive momentum towards putting up significant investment linkages, apart from exploratory talks on spheres of cooperation. From what top officials said, it was a matter of seeking advanced technologies from Japan, which is complicated.

Technology isn't a product like a computer that one purchases and starts using, but a series of techniques and instruments ordinarily tied to copyright, fetching royalties if one seeks to use it. The best means of obtaining technology is purchasing a company and making it a subsidiary of a technology owner. The reason is that this way the subsidiary will not have to pay for the technology but share profits.

There is need for research at the local level to see how foreign companies seeking a foothold in the local market implant their activities, as various methods can be imagined. The best would require an open market economy where most big companies would be on the stock exchange, in which case a considerable purchasing of shares is possible. With a predominance of state firms in key sectors this option is closed out. However, seeking startups to nurture can work so that local firms get the technology they need.

African countries need different approach to get more money from coffee value chain

CONSULTATIONS are being made ahead of Tanzania hosting the third G25 African coffee summit, aimed at exploring how African coffee-producing countries can maximise value addition. The idea is to boost Africa's share in the global coffee trade, that is, obtaining a 'fairer' share of income from global trade in coffee, especially the value realized in coffee tables of rich countries. It is a wish that hasn't materialized in the past 50 years.

Reports show that the summit is being organised in collaboration with the Inter Africa Coffee Organisation (IACO) on February 21 and 22, to pursue what is often known as 'fair trade'. There are organisations especially in the European Union which work to introduce organic growing of coffee, without pesticides, for export to Europe to assure farmers modestly higher prices. It is unclear if they find extra money by specific taxation or by transfer prices, where they can operate cafes for organic coffee, paying more.

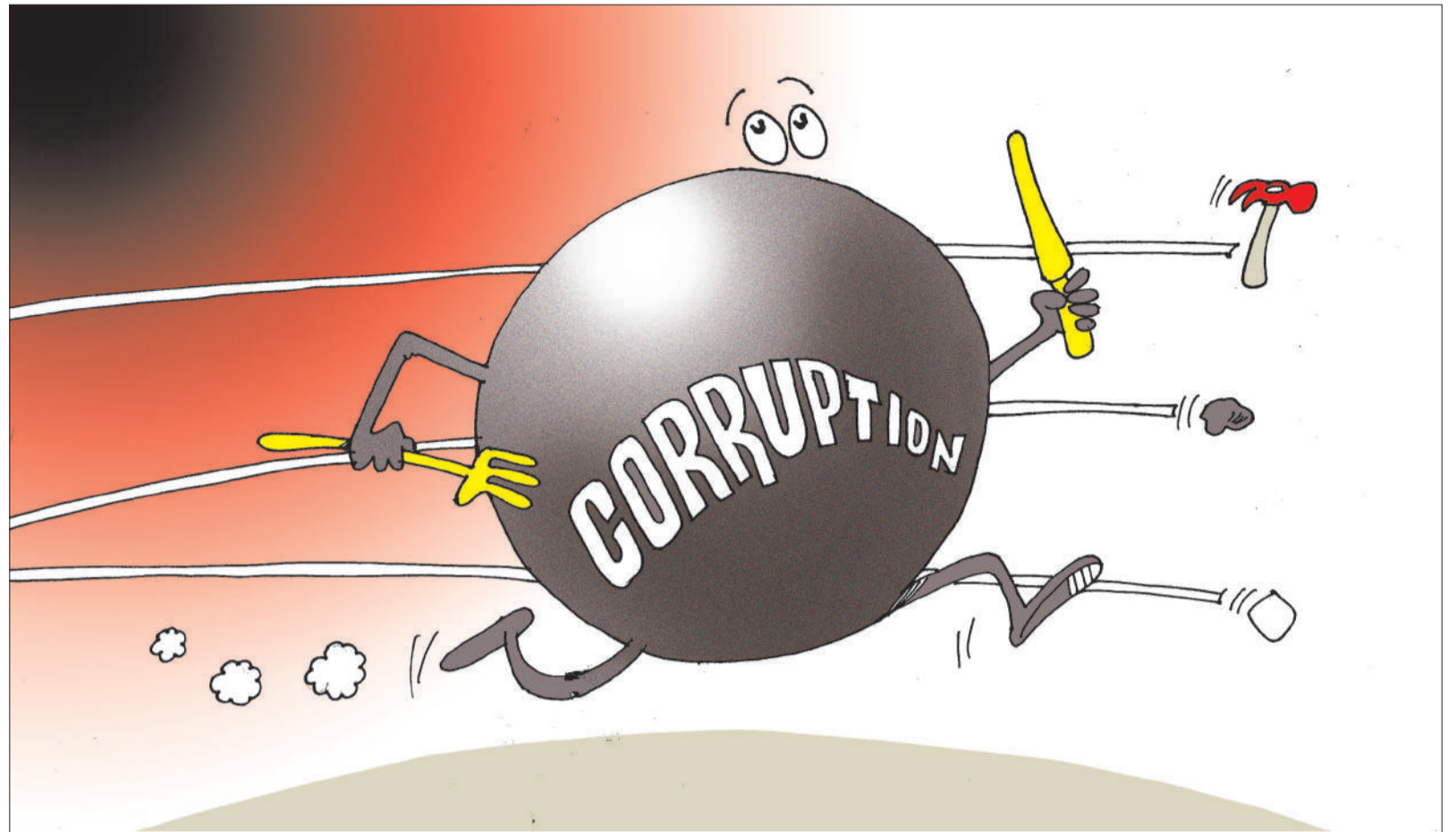
What troubles coffee pricing is not ill will as scores of fair trade advocates often assert but competition, as plenty of raw coffee if available at 'throw away' prices, and as coffee is taken just once or twice a day, raising prices can be undermined by competition. While Africans lament at how much Europeans are ready to pay for coffee, no one asks why salt that a family can use for a month is sold at 200/-, or indeed why cashewnuts are locally produced and few can afford the same. The whole idea of fairness doesn't arise but quantity of supply and prices, which can prompt the producer may cut the trees, grow beans, etc.

Still, the promised theme is a far cry from what appears to be possible, as to "unlocking employment opportunities for the youth through regeneration of the African coffee industry." There is an apparent attempt to get youth into

coffee farming on condition that Europeans will raise the prices, thus assuring the youth improved income in due course. Yet, this appears to be pegged on too many hypotheses, as youth here means small investors as in the graduate agribusiness start-ups upwards of two years ago. It can definitely be a niche business for some, as with avocados, not a new occupation.

The trouble is that practically each marketing or business issue of a regional or continental character is being discussed under one or other summit initiative, which shows that we have least trust or ability to rely on markets, to make use of what markets offer, to prosper. The reason is that most countries seek public sector ways of solving such problems by starting projects, asking for multilateral credit for a tiny section of coffee farmers. Even after 20 years the issue still appears to be new as it is an effort to assist groups of youth with all sorts of enticements. It is a symbiosis of export efforts tied with fair trade, not agro-sector transformation tied to land ownership change, where money flows to buy it, raising millions from regular coffee consumers and at pleasure, not basically exports.

All the key players in the coffee subsector, such as growers, processors, traders and others in the coffee value chain will be seeking some minor or additional advantages. Were it that Africa was ready for reform, such initiatives would not need a collaborative framework involving the African Union, its agencies, the African Development Bank and regional financial institutions. All this is premised on the need to develop programmes focused on youth employment and entrepreneurship or other babysitter agro-sector initiatives, instead of becoming partners with someone who takes the village land after they form an agricultural cooperative and each household or family has defined shares, then leave for town



Plugging illicit financial flows are among solutions mooted by experts to bring the poverty rate of Africa down.

African countries advised to reduce wealth loss, fix illicit financial flows

By Ignatius Banda, Bulawayo

AFRICA loses billions of dollars annually through illicit financial flows, resulting in the continent failing to improve the lives of millions of people despite vast mineral wealth, according to experts.

Agencies say more needs to be done to turn the continent's natural resources into prosperity at a time governments are struggling to address challenging economic conditions that have spawned high poverty levels.

According to the African Development Bank (AfDB), poverty levels increased in 2022, with 281 million people affected by hunger, up by 11 million the previous year.

The grim data was a cause for concern among experts during the recent African Economic Conference in Gaborone, Botswana, who lamented that despite the continent's undisputed mineral deposits, such high levels of poverty have persisted.

By tapping into existing natural resources, experts believe this will result in better debt management as countries remain saddled with unserviceable loans.

This is also coming against the background of growing calls for debt forgiveness, as critics say loans from international lenders will burden the continent's future generations.

"We cannot eat diamonds or bauxite," said Said Adejumo, Director of Strategic Planning at the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA).

"Other regions with fewer

resources have transformed their economies by adding value to what they produce. Why not us?" Adejumo added in an address during the Gaborone conference.

The ECA estimates that Africa loses USD 90 billion annually through illicit financial flows, and the plunder has crippled services such as the health sector and infrastructure development.

This loss is also being felt in the continent's efforts to address lingering debt and unserviceable loans, with ECA noting that the external debt of more than half of African countries will soon exceed USD 1 trillion.

"Sometimes we borrow just to repay previous loans, which is unsustainable," said Sonia Essobmadje, Chief of the Innovative Finance and Capital Markets Section at the Economic Commission for Africa.

"There's a need for economic diversification, fiscal discipline, stronger public debt management strategies, and, above all, the establishment of domestic capital markets," said Essobmadje.

Researchers have long raised concerns about the loss of potential mining revenue to international criminal syndicates where African countries have failed to plug holes that have seen billions of dollars being lost.

However, experts note that for Africa to succeed, robust policymaking will be crucial to ensure adherence to continental protocols that seek to both protect and reclaim lost wealth.

"Policy is not first aid," said Raymond Gilpin, the United Nations

Development Programme (UNDP) Africa's Chief Economist.

"It's about building structures for the future," Gilpin said, highlighting the lack of adequate long-term planning to protect the continent's wealth.

It is, however, not all gloom and doom, as experts have pointed to Africa's young population as offering hope for potential growth despite the lingering challenges.

"We are optimistic because Africa has unique assets: a young, dynamic workforce, vast renewable energy potential, and urbanization," said Caroline Kende-Robb, Director of Strategy and Operational Policies at the African Development Bank (AfDB).

"It's not all about crises—it's about opportunity," she added.

As part of broader efforts to plug the continent's wealth loss, regional technocrats must innovate for governments to adopt implementable evidence-based solutions.

"As leading institutions on the continent, the AfDB, ECA, and UNDP must step up, not just in articulating smart ideas, but in fundamentally rethinking how we operate. The Africa of today is dynamic and evolving—our strategies must evolve with it. This is about action, not aspiration," said Gilpin, the UNDP economist.

For Africa to move past its many challenges, solutions must emerge from within the continent itself, believes Zuzana Schwidrowski, Director of the Macroeconomics, Finance, and Governance Division at the Economic Commission for Africa.

"Africa is not asking for handouts," Schwidrowski said.

"Every challenge brings with it an opportunity. Amidst global fragmentation and trade wars, Africa has the chance to carve out new niches and seize emerging opportunities. We must work together to capitalize on them."

Going beyond safeguarding Africa's abundant wealth, more still needs to be explored to spread the continent's revenue base, some experts contend.

"We have the tools to create change, but tools alone are not enough," said Anthony Simpasa, Director of the Macroeconomic Policy, Forecasting, and Research Department at the AfDB.

"We need practical, evidence-based solutions to transform economies, diversify growth drivers, and build shock absorbers for future crises. Political commitment and policy coherence are critical to creating an environment that fosters growth and resilience," Simpasa told the conference.

The African Economic Conference, held under the theme Securing Africa's Economic Future Amidst Rising Uncertainty, was yet another platform where policymakers and experts gathered to map Africa's future, and was met with guarded optimism among some delegates.

"Make sure that this conference does not degenerate into merely a generous exchange of flattery," said Botswana's president, Duma Boko. "We must act to lift our people from poverty and raise our continent to take its rightful place as a leader in the world, and not just an emerging frontier."

HUMAN beings are both emotional and rational. They are made to be efficient when they have time to gather energy to effect positive changes. It is a fact that the ultimate goal of education is to produce individuals who can stand on their own, making informed decisions that benefits themselves and the society at large.

Achieving this requires educators who are well-prepared and have ample time to evaluate and plan effectively. Thus, the pursuit of well-educated and knowledgeable individuals must also prioritize the well-being of teachers.

A teacher's mood and opportunity to embrace new approaches in education are crucial to effectively facilitate the learning process. Teachers are responsible not only for imparting knowledge but also for ensuring students absorb it.

The way a teacher presents themselves and conducts lessons significantly impacts learners' understanding. Since students prefer capable teachers, it is vital to ensure educators do not face conditions that drain their energy or motivation.

Students need teachers who can spark their interest and make lessons engaging. Assertive learners quickly assess a teacher's ability, which can either motivate or demotivate them. Therefore, being a good teacher beyond possessing extensive knowledge—it also involves effectively conveying that knowledge, with mood and composure playing essential roles.

Efforts must be made by teachers and their supporters to ensure educators are both knowledgeable and skilled at transferring knowledge. Achieving this requires a conducive environment where teachers can maintain a positive mood and composure.

Teachers need adequate space to prepare, particularly as they navigate directives from higher authorities that may interfere with their responsibilities. Teachers thrive when allowed the freedom to teach without undue constraints.

Students have diverse learning needs and expectations, and teachers must address these equitably. For this, educators require stability, motivation, and the ability to manage their classrooms effectively. This stability stems from having time to prepare both academically and psychologically. The quality of a teacher is determined by their knowledge and their ability to convey it to learners.

Effective teaching: Need for teachers to conduct research, self-evaluation



If a teacher can prepare lesson materials but not their mindset, the teaching process may suffer. Hence, it is essential for teachers to prepare mentally before

stepping into the classroom.

Effective classroom management involves addressing learners' varied needs and utilizing suitable teaching methods to achieve excellence. Both the content and delivery of lessons play a significant role in engaging students.

When lessons are well-prepared but delivered without a positive mood and composure, learning objectives may not be achieved. Thus, maintaining composure and a positive mood is crucial for the two core aspects of teaching: research and self-evaluation.

Research is vital for teachers to remain relevant. New teaching methodologies, curricula, and syllabi frequently emerge, necessitating continuous learning to enhance psychological and academic capabilities.

Research also empowers teachers to address diverse learner needs through increased understanding gained from reading, expert discussions, or observation.

Self-evaluation is equally important. One scholar remarked, "We are what we think we are, what others think we are, and what we think others think we are." The teaching process is inherently interactive, involving the exchange of ideas. Misunderstandings can hinder teaching effectiveness, but self-evaluation allows teachers to reflect, filter information, and

improve.

Research and self-evaluation is crucial for teachers since enhances their their growth, adaptability and effectiveness in the teaching profession.

When teachers conduct research they stay updated. Education is constantly evolving with new teaching methodologies, curricula, and technologies. Through research, teachers can better understand the diverse needs, learning styles and behaviors of their students, enabling them to tailor their teaching strategies effectively.

Research equips teachers with evidence-based solutions to classroom challenges, such as managing diverse learners or introducing innovative teaching techniques.

Self-evaluation encourages teachers to reflect on their teaching methods, identify areas of improvement, and implement changes to enhance their effectiveness. It helps teachers process this feedback constructively, ensuring it leads to positive changes.

By evaluating their strengths and weaknesses, teachers can better manage challenges from students, parents, or authorities, maintaining composure and professionalism. Self-evaluation fosters a mindset of continuous learning and self-improvement, vital for long-term success in the profession.

Handling constructive challenges from parents, authorities, or others also requires composure and preparation, which demand time and space. Teachers must analyze new information thoughtfully to contribute meaningfully to the educational sector.

Teaching is the art of fostering positive mental change, empowering individuals to master themselves and their environment for social and economic development.

Educational goals are best achieved when teachers have the opportunity to prepare thoroughly. By setting objectives and designing effective methodologies, teachers can ensure greater success in their classrooms.

Given the critical role of education in society, every effort should be made to provide teachers with adequate time and space they need to learn, reflect, and grow.

The mental effort required for teaching demands periods of meditation and evaluation to generate innovative ideas. Supporting teachers' mental resilience is essential for enhancing the teaching and learning process. Teaching, at its core, requires space.

CLASSROOM MATTERS
By **Thomas Lyimo**
lyimo.thomas@yahoo.com

Five actions people should prioritise to protect their mental health, well-being

By Raymond Mgeni

LET me start by extending my warmest wishes for a prosperous and healthy 2025. My hope is that you prioritize caring for your physical and mental health this year.

Often, we overlook setting health related goals when planning for the year, yet health is the foundation upon which our aspirations are built. Even minor health disruptions can derail our plans, and in some cases, poor health can lead to financial and emotional strain for individuals and their families.

This year, let us commit to learn more about mental health, understanding mental illnesses and most importantly, prioritizing our mental well-being.

Mental health is the cornerstone of overall health, shaping how we think, feel, act and make decisions. When mental health suffers, it can impair productivity, pose personal risks and strain societal harmony.

Focusing on mental health is not just an individual commitment but a collective effort to enhance community and national resilience.

To kick start 2025, here are five key actions to prioritize for safeguarding your mental health. Let us learn, reflect, and take meaningful steps to ensure this year is one of 'Mental Health First' campaign.

Act before problems escalate

Many people struggle with mental health issues because they hesitate to share their challenges. Stress and anxiety often build gradually, affecting productivity, happiness and social connections.

These struggles may seem manageable at first but can spiral into more significant problems if left unaddressed. Tragically, some people resort to self-harm or suicide because they feel overwhelmed and isolated.

This year, don't wait for difficulties to overwhelm you. Address issues as soon as they arise by speaking with trusted individuals or seeking professional support. Early intervention makes challenges more manageable and prevents them from escalating into crises.

Avoid substance abuse as a coping mechanism

It is common for individuals under stress to turn to alcohol or drugs as a way to escape or numb their feelings. However, substance use often exacerbates mental health issues, leading to addiction, strained relationships, financial problems and impaired work performance.

Risky behaviours, such as unprotected sex, can further complicate matters by increasing the likelihood of contracting STIs, including HIV/Aids and hepatitis.

Young people are particularly vulnerable to experimenting with substances, which can lead to long term dependency. Avoiding or quitting substance use is one of the most effective ways to protect your mental health and overall well-being.

Build a support system, share your challenges

Social connections are a vital part of life. Unfortunately, when faced with difficulties, some people isolate themselves, fearing judgment or a lack of confidentiality. A seminar participant once shared, "We fear opening up because those who help us might later expose our struggles."



If you have someone you trust, don't hesitate to share your burdens with them. If you lack such a confidant, seek help from mental health professionals or spiritual leaders. Talking about your challenges can provide relief and perspective, reducing the emotional weight you carry.

Asking for help is a sign of strength, not weakness. Reaching out for help when over-

whelmed is not a sign of weakness but an acknowledgment of your humanity. No one can face every challenge alone, and asking for assistance demonstrates self-awareness and courage.

Whether you feel lost, burdened, or emotionally drained, seeking help can offer solutions and support. Don't let pride or fear hold you back but take the step to connect with others who can guide you through difficult times. Stay connected during hard times

Being part of a community is crucial for mental wellbeing. People who maintain social connections are more likely to receive support during challenging times. Build and nurture positive relationships, participate in community activities, and contribute meaningfully to the spaces you occupy.

Isolation can make tough situations feel even more overwhelming, while staying connected provides a safety net of emotional and practical support. This year, let these principles guide your journey toward improved

mental health. While these five steps are foundational, there is much more to learn and practice in safeguarding our well-being.

If you have questions or feedback about mental health and mental illnesses, don't hesitate to reach out. Remember to make mental health a top priority.

Dr Raymond Mgeni is a Psychiatry and Mental Health Resident at the Muhimbili University of Health and Allied Sciences (MUHAS)

By Mike Stobbe

Doctors worry that iodine insufficiency, a historical dietary problem, is coming back

THE 13-year-old boy came to the clinic with a rapidly ballooning neck. Doctors were puzzled. Testing ruled out their first suspicion. But further tests pinpointed what they – and the boy – had been missing: iodine.

A century ago, iodine deficiency affected kids across large swaths of the country. It essentially disappeared after some food makers started adding it to table salt, bread and some other foods, in one of the great public health success stories of the 20th century.

But today, people are getting less iodine because of changes in diet and food manufacturing.

Although most people are still getting enough, researchers have increasingly been reporting low levels of iodine in pregnant women and other people, raising concerns about an impact on their newborns. And there is also a very small, but growing, number of reports of iodine deficiency in kids.

“This needs to be on people’s radar,” said Dr. Monica Serrano-Gonzalez, a Brown University doctor who treated the boy in 2021 in Providence, Rhode Island.

This article is part of AP’s Be Well coverage, focusing on wellness, fitness, diet and mental health. Read more Be Well.

What is iodine?

Iodine is a trace element found in seawater and in some soils – mostly in coastal areas. A French chemist accidentally discovered it in 1811 when an experiment with seaweed ash created a purple puff of vapour. The name iodine comes from a Greek word meaning violet-coloured. Later that century, scientists began to understand that people need certain amounts of iodine to regulate their metabolism and stay healthy, and that it’s crucial in the development of brain function in children.

One sign of insufficient iodine is a swelling of the neck, known as a goiter. The thyroid gland in the neck uses iodine to produce hormones that regulate the heart rate and other body functions. When there’s not enough iodine, the thyroid gland enlarges as it goes into overdrive to make up for the lack of iodine.

At the beginning of the 20th century, goiter was very common in children in certain inland parts of the United States, especially in a “goiter belt” that stretched from Appalachia and the Great Lakes to the northwest United States. Some of the kids were unusually short, deaf, intellectually stunted and had other symptoms of



Iodized salt is displayed for a photograph in Philadelphia on Monday, Jan. 6, 2025

a syndrome once known as “cretinism.” Adding iodine to salt Public health experts realized they couldn’t solve the problem by feeding everyone seaweed and seafood,

but they learned that iodine can essentially be sprayed on table salt. Iodized salt first became available in 1924. By the 1950s, more than 70% of U.S. households used iodized table salt. Bread and some other foods also were fortified with iodine, and iodine deficiency became rare.

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But diets changed. Processed foods now make up a large part of the American diet, and though they contain a lot of salt, it’s not iodized. Leading bread brands no longer add iodine. In the case of the 13-year-old boy, he has mild autism and was a fussy eater, mostly only eating specific brands of bread and peanut butter.

And for people who do salt their food, the fashion now is to use kosher salt, Himalayan rock salt or other noniodized products.

“People have forgotten why there’s iodine in salt,” said Dr. Elizabeth Pearce of Boston Medical Center. She is a leader in the Iodine Global Network, a nongovernmental agency working to eliminate iodine deficiency disorders.

She noted a reported 50% drop in U.S. iodine levels in surveyed Americans between the 1970s and the 1990s.

How much iodine is enough?

Though iodine consumption is falling overall, most Americans are still getting enough through their diet, experts say. But doctors worry that’s not the case for women and children, who are most vulnerable to iodine deficiency.

The American Academy of Pediatrics and other medical societies recommend that all pregnant and breastfeeding women get 150 micrograms of iodine each day. You can get that from one-half to three-quarters of a teaspoon of iodized table salt.

In the last 15 years or so, U.S. researchers have increasingly reported seeing mild iodine deficiency in pregnant women. A Michigan State University study of about 460 pregnant women in the city of Lansing found about a quarter of them were not getting enough.

Many prenatal vitamins don’t contain iodine, noted Jean Kerver, the study’s lead author. That’s why doctors recommend that pregnant or breastfeeding women check labels to ensure they are taking multivitamins or prenatal supplements with iodine.

Some studies have linked even mild iodine deficiency to lower IQs and language delay in children, although there is debate about at exactly what levels problems start, Pearce said.

Experts say there hasn’t been enough research to establish what impact that iodine deficiency has actually been having on the U.S. population in recent years.

Serrano-Gonzalez said she and her colleagues have seen four other cases in children in their clinic in Providence.

“We’re concerned this may be increasing, especially in patients with restricted diets,” she said.

AP

Rents surge after disasters: A federal programme can help restrain excesses

By Anthony W. Orlando

THE wildfires raging across Los Angeles are setting the scene for a real estate nightmare.

Thousands of homes and other structures are destroyed and hundreds of thousands of residents have been evacuated at various times. Many will not return for months, if ever. Homeless in an instant, they are now flooding the housing market, desperately seeking shelter.

The Los Angeles housing market is poorly equipped for this crisis. It is already one of the nation’s most expensive markets to buy or rent a place to live, largely due to a significant and growing shortage of affordable housing. That shortage will become only more dire with the destruction of so many fire-ravaged buildings.

For the past two years, I have been studying the effects of natural disasters like this one on rental housing markets. As a professor of real estate, I have analyzed the question from a distance, sifting through data.

This time, however, as a resident of Pasadena, I have seen the carnage up close. I watched the Eaton Fire spread across the moun-

tains from my back porch. I helped friends evacuate before their neighborhood was consumed in flames. Now, they’re sitting at my dining table as they process what they’ve lost and search for a new place to live.

Unfortunately, from my research, I have no doubts about what comes next.

Why disasters drive up rents

Scarcity is the enemy of affordability. This is one of the central tenets of economics. When too many people chase too few goods, prices rise.

So, you might expect that a natural disaster, which destroys housing and inundates the remaining units with new renters, would drive up rents, at least in the short run.

That is exactly what my research has found – but it’s not just the short run.

Two years ago, I worked with a team of researchers to prepare a report for the Brookings Institution, where we compiled a database of natural disasters across a variety of major markets throughout the country from 2000 to 2020. We measured the change in rents in places such as Atlanta, Detroit, Miami and San Francisco that landlords were asking for apart-



Two people embrace on Jan. 9, 2025, in Altadena, Calif., amid property destroyed by the Eaton Fire

ments in disaster-impacted neighborhoods. We then compared those cities with similar neighborhoods that weren’t impacted by the disasters.

We found that natural disasters increased rents during those two decades by 4% to 6%. That means rents were at least 4% higher than they would have been in the absence of the disaster.

These rent hikes were especially clear and pernicious after wildfires in Cali-

fornia. These weren’t just short-term effects. It took 18 months for the full effects to be felt in the market, and they never fully went away. Even four years after the disaster, renters were still paying 2% to 3% more than they would have been without the disaster.

In short, we found that disasters permanently change rental housing markets. They eliminate older, affordable housing, allowing

developers to build newer, higher-end and even luxury housing in its place. Those changes drive up insurance costs, and the disasters motivate cities to adopt stricter building codes that in turn add to construction costs for the sake of weathering future disasters better.

How much rents increase, however, depends on how communities and the authorities respond to the disaster.

Federal aid can slow the

growth of rents

We found that rents did not grow as fast when the government stepped in to help.

Specifically, we investigated markets where Congress had used the Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery - CDBG-DR - program, providing grants through the Department of Housing and Urban Development. This federal funding typically comes with strings attached and “rental requirements” often mandating that a significant portion of the money be used to build affordable housing.

At least one of these disaster relief grants was issued every year from 2003 to 2020. In some years, Congress allocated as many as 27 different grants across the country to different disaster-impacted areas.

In these markets, we found that rents still rose after disasters – but at a significantly slower pace than in the markets where Congress didn’t send these disaster relief funds.

We dug deeper into several case studies in 2024 to understand why the CDBG-DR program is associated with lower rent hikes over the long run. In this new study, we found that hous-

ing markets that benefited from these disaster relief grants were able to build more rental units, easing the housing shortage. They improved affordability by tackling the scarcity problem directly.

Rental units were the key to solving the rent crisis. These cities, where affordability was better post-disaster, didn’t build more single-family homes than the other cities. They built more apartment units.

In these markets, these disaster relief grants saved the average renter between \$780 and \$1,080 in annual housing costs in 2023.

We believe that this finding shows why it is important not only to rebuild the houses destroyed in disasters like the Los Angeles fires but also to create new rental opportunities in all kinds of housing.

Hope in the aftermath Here in Los Angeles, the clock is already ticking.

News reports are mounting of landlords raising rents to eye-popping levels.

Fortunately, there are government policies and programs that can help Angelenos find shelter today and that may help the Los Angeles housing market not get even less affordable tomorrow.

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 ZAIIDI YA UMUJAWYO 16:00-18:00HRS ALIVEVUMA 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

African countries adopt strategy to unlock agricultural potential

By Glenneis Kriel

AFRICAN Union members recently adopted a strategy and action plan aimed at unlocking the agricultural potential of Africa at the African Union's Extraordinary Summit in Kampala, Uganda.

The 10-year CAADP strategy has reportedly been developed over the past 10 months, following directives from African heads of state and government, and is set to run from 2026 to 2035.

It builds on the Malabo Declaration on Accelerated Agricultural Growth and Transformation for Shared Prosperity and Improved Livelihoods, adopted in 2014.

As part of the commitment to intensify sustainable food production, agro-industrialisation and trade, countries undertook to increase agrifood output by 45 percent, reduce post-harvest losses by 50 percent, triple intra-African trade in agrifood products and inputs, and raise the share of locally processed food to 35 percent of agrifood GDP by 2035.

In terms of investment and financing for accelerated agrifood systems transformation, commitments include the mobilisation of US\$100 billion (about R1,9 trillion) in public and private sector investment in African agrifood systems, while ensuring that at least 10 percent of annual public expenditure is allocated to agrifood systems and at least 15 percent of agrifood GDP is reinvested into the sector.

In terms of food security, there is a commitment to achieve zero hunger in all African Union member states, ensuring that 60 percent of the population can afford a healthy meal and reducing stunting, wasting and overweight-

ness by 25 percent by 2035.

Other commitments touch on inclusivity and equitable livelihoods, the building of resilient agrifood systems, and the strengthening of agrifood systems governance.

John Steenhuisen, South Africa's minister of agriculture who attended the event, told Farmer's Weekly that the strategy and plan was important for South Africa and the rest of Africa because it aligned agricultural priorities on the continent, fostering greater trade, standard setting and knowledge sharing.

"The plan and strategy encourage member states to foster policy coherence, enhance coordination across sectors, and strengthen national ownership of initiatives. This will result in improved policies that build infrastructure, improve agricultural practices and strengthen food systems."

Steenhuisen added that CAADP focused on partnerships with partner and donor countries, allowing access to financial opportunities for investment in infrastructure, research and development to strengthen domestic manufacturing and repair food processing machinery for the smallholder sector, for which access to finance was a critical enabler.

Steenhuisen said South Africa was the leading agricultural country on the continent and for this reason played an important leadership in the continental agricultural agenda.

Wandile Sihlobo, chief economist at Agbiz, said CAADP set ambitious goals and urged member countries of the African Union to allocate 10 percent of their annual budgets to agriculture.

Far too many demands for re-



sources in most of these countries, however, resulted in agriculture spending remaining below these targets. "Even South Africa doesn't score well in the targets," he said.

He said big conferences such as these helped to stimulate discussion and evaluate the sector's profile, but real progress would require the private sector and dedicated government support to boost each African country's agricultural output.

"We have seen first-hand the benefit of a robust private sector in South Africa. Looking at the data, it is clear that South Africa is an outlier in Africa. The sector has more than doubled in value and volume terms since 1994 thanks to the adoption of new production technologies, better farming skills, growing demand, and progressive trade policies," he said.

He said other African countries should see what they could learn from the South

African success story of private sector-led growth if they were serious about agricultural development.

This would include the extension of title deeds or tradable leases to farmers and agribusinesses for attracting investment, investments in infrastructure for improving value chains, an embrace of technological advancements in seeds, genetics and agrochemicals to boost productivity, limited trade and commodity price interventions, and support for commercial farming.

Sudan's strategic city still deserted days after recapture by govt forces

WAD MADANI

DAYS after the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) recaptured Wad Madani, the capital city of Gezira State in central Sudan, the city's streets remain largely deserted, with only a few celebrations.

On the roads leading to Wad Madani and the internal streets, remnants of destroyed buildings bear witness to the violent battles the strategic city has experienced.

Dozens of citizens gathered in front of the headquarters of the Gezira State government to celebrate the recapture of the city with some soldiers after it had been controlled by the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) for more than a year.

"We have the right to celebrate the defeat of the militia and their exit from our city," said Abdul-Qadir Hussein, a Sudanese citizen.

"We have suffered for more than a year, and we have been exposed to all kinds of torture, violations, hunger, disease, and insecurity. Now it is all over," he said while soldiers were firing into the air.

Zahraa Mohamed, a resi-

dent of Wad Madani, said that while struggling to hold back her tears, expressing her delight over the city's recapture by the army.

"We have suffered, endured hunger and pain, and witnessed various forms of humiliation. We lacked comfort inside our homes, but thank God, we have finally won," she said.

For her part, Afraa Al-Toum, another citizen, recounted what she and her family had come through while Wad Madani was under the RSF control.

"We are one of the families that had remained in the city since it was captured by the RSF in December 2023, and our house was raided," she recalled.

"My brother was brutally beaten, and when my mother intervened to protect him, she was also beaten," she added, noting that the RSF denied them access to clean drinking water or go to the markets.

On January 11, the SAF announced the entry of its forces into Wad Madani after it had been controlled by the RSF for more than a year.

The city holds strategic significance due to its proximity to the Sudanese capi-



tal Khartoum, and its connection to five Sudanese states.

Abdul-Jalil Ismail, a Sudanese military expert, said that the retaking of Wad Madani represents a shift

in the course of the armed conflict between the SAF and the RSF.

Sudan has been gripped by a devastating conflict between the SAF and the RSF since mid-April 2023, which

claimed at least 29,683 lives and displaced nearly 15 million people, according to international organizations.

South Africa sees strong recovery, growth in tourism sector

JOHANNESBURG

SOUTH Africa's tourism sector has continued to show strong recovery and growth, with a 5.7 percent increase in inbound visitors in the first 10 months of last year, the South African Tourism (SAT) said Tuesday.

"Between January and October 2024, South Africa welcomed 7.2 million visitors -- an impressive 5.7 percent increase compared to the same period last year," the SAT said in a statement. "Early indicators from the recent festive season suggest strong sector performance, with

high occupancy rates and strong participation in events across the country."

"In the business events space, South African Tourism has so far secured 53 bids for international events in the 2024/2025 financial year.

These events are expected to generate 616 million rands

(about 33 million U.S. dollars) for the economy and attract over 24,000 delegates between 2024 and 2029, further cementing South Africa's position as a premier destination for global conferences and events," said the official national tourism marketing agency of the South African

government.

South Africa's 2024-2025 financial year, which started on April 1, 2024, will terminate on March 31, 2025.

"The SAT remains focused on driving sustainable growth in the sector, and we are unwavering in our commitment to showcasing our

country's unparalleled beauty including our rich cultural and natural heritage to the world, while driving inclusive economic growth, and contributing to the reduction of unemployment," the statement said.

On Monday, President Cyril

Ramaphosa said South Africa's nature-based tourism sector has great potential to drive inclusive and sustainable growth, and that as the host of the first G20 summit on African soil this year, South Africa will showcase what the country can offer in terms of tourism.

Consumerism is aggravating Africa's poverty, indebtedness

By Telesphor Magobe

COUNTRIES, which used to be at the same level of development with African countries in the 1960s, have reportedly made great strides in development, while the majority of African countries are still on the list of least developed countries (LDCs).

For instance, African Business (2022) says in the early 1960s, South Korea had the same GDP per capita as Kenya and Ghana. But today it has a strong (high income) economy and high standard of living.

Looking at poverty, which still engulfs African countries, while there is a lot of money both promised and received for development projects it is puzzling why poverty is still prevalent on the African continent.

Let's look at poverty incidence since 2022. Global Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) 2022 estimates 579 million poor people at the time lived in sub-Saharan Africa followed by South Asia (385 million).

MPI 2022 surveyed 111 developing countries (comprising 23 low-income countries, 85 middle-income countries and 3 high-income countries) across the world and found that the most common profile, affecting 3.9 per cent of poor people, included deprivations in four indicators, namely nutrition, cooking fuel, sanitation and housing.

"Moreover, for the first time since the global MPI was introduced (in 2010), the number of poor people in sub-Saharan Africa is larger than the combined number for South Asia and East Asia and the Pacific (494 million)."

MPI was launched in 2010 by the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative at the University of Oxford and the Human Development Report Office of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

MPI 2023 says 10 million of the 12 million poor people with the highest deprivation scores (90-100 per cent) live in sub-Saharan Africa. Moreover, it says 534 million out of 1.1 billion poor people – half of all poor people – lived in sub-Saharan Africa in 2023. According to MPI 2023, about half of poor people lived in sub-Saharan Africa, and over a third lived in South Asia.

The report suggests that the higher the incidence of poverty, the higher the intensity of poverty that poor people tend to experience. "In sub-Saharan Africa the intensity of poverty is particularly serious. The region is home not only to the highest number of poor people, but also to the poorest of the poor," it says.

MPI 2024 says 83.2 per cent of the world's 1.1 billion multidimensionally poor people live in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. It adds that sub-Saharan Africa has 553 million people living in poverty, and South Asia, 402 million. MPI 2024, which surveys 112 countries, says 1.1 billion people out of 6.3 billion are living in poverty.



"Nearly half (48.2 per cent) of these poor people live in sub-Saharan Africa (553 million), and over a third (35.0 per cent) live in South Asia (402 million)." Although there are tremendous efforts to reduce poverty, progress is very slow.

Amidst Africa's poverty incidence almost all African leaders drive expensive vehicles, have long motorcades and many delegates when they visit other countries. This shows how consumerism can be manifested in many forms. Above all, corruption diverts the money, which should have been injected into development projects, for personal use. These factors aggravate poverty and indebtedness.

A UNDP paper titled "Africa Governance and Development Outlook 2024" says in 2024, 17 million Afri-

can citizens (9 per cent of the population, of which over one million are children) will be at risk of severe food insecurity.

Summarising Africa's human development indicators in 2023, the paper says 3 in 4 sub-Saharan Africans lack access to safely managed sanitation services, 53 per cent lack access to electricity, 52 per cent lack primary healthcare and that Africa has the highest child mortality and maternal mortality rate in the world.

While acknowledging the gains achieved so far, the paper says sub-Saharan Africa has the highest rates of education exclusion globally. "More than 30 per cent of adults cannot read. However, four in every five primary school-aged children are in school."

On Africa's international debt, the paper says Africa's external debt stock has risen significantly over the past decade estimated at \$1.13 trillion in 2023, with 25 countries at risk of being in high debt distress or already in debt distress.

"The average government debt ratio in sub-Saharan Africa has doubled over a decade, rising from 24 per cent of GDP at the end of 2013 to 51 per cent of GDP by 2023. The ratio is estimated to decrease to about 46 per cent of GDP in the next five years," the paper says. It also says Africa's interest payments to revenue ratio more than doubled since the 2010s and is now four times the ratio in developed economies.

Expounding on this, the paper says from 2024 to 2028, African countries will be expected to pay about \$363 billion in debt service payments. "In 2024, debt service payments are expected to be equivalent to 12 per cent of GDP," the paper stresses. However, reports show Tanzania is not in low, high or distress, but in moderate debt status.

With rising indebtedness, it is necessary to cut down unnecessary costs and increase investment in development projects and in the provision of social services. In light of this, the UNDP paper says continental leaders in government and business alike must individually and collectively address and navigate complex domestic, regional and international risks and challenges.

Ghana's visa-free policy to set the stage for a united Africa

By Adonis Byemelwa

GHANA has made a bold move that could reshape the continent's future by announcing that, starting in early 2025, it will eliminate visa requirements for all African passport holders.

This groundbreaking decision positions Ghana as the fifth African nation to offer unrestricted entry to citizens from across the continent, following Rwanda, Seychelles, The Gambia, and Benin.

President Nana Akufo-Addo declared this policy as a testament to Ghana's commitment to Pan-African unity, stating, "This move aims to build stronger ties across Africa."

By breaking down barriers, Ghana is paving the way for economic growth, cultural exchange, and deeper regional integration.

The significance of this policy cannot be overstated. For years, African nations have struggled with the challenges posed by restrictive borders, which have stifled trade, tourism, and social interactions.

Ghana's decision not only facilitates the free movement of people but also symbolizes a broader push for unity on a continent historically divided by colonial borders.

Aliko Dangote, one of Africa's wealthiest entrepreneurs, has long criticized the cumbersome visa processes across Africa. In a 2024 interview, he lamented, "As an investor, as someone who wants to make Africa great, I have to apply for 35 different visas."

For business leaders like Dangote, Ghana's decision marks a pivotal shift, potentially making the country a hub for investment and entrepreneurship.

The potential economic benefits are immense. By removing visa barriers, Ghana is opening itself to increased intra-African trade, a key pillar of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

The continent's free trade ambitions have long been hampered by restrictive immigration policies, which complicate cross-border business operations. International trade expert James Karanja remarked, "Streamlining movement across borders is the cornerstone of any successful economic bloc. Ghana's policy could catalyze a ripple effect across Africa."

Indeed, the free flow of goods and people is essential for boosting commerce, creating jobs, and fostering innovation.

Ghana's policy also aims to capitalize on its vibrant tourism sector. With its rich history, cultural heritage, and iconic landmarks, the country stands to attract more visitors from across the continent.

Landmarks like Cape Coast Castle and Elmina Castle, which bear witness to the transatlantic slave trade, offer profound historical insights. By making travel easier, Ghana hopes to encourage Africans to reconnect with their shared heritage.

Paul Kagame, Rwanda's president and a vocal advocate for visa-free policies, has championed similar initiatives in his country, highlighting how open borders can enhance tourism and foster unity.

"When we open our borders, we open our minds and hearts," Kagame once said, emphasizing the transformative power of such policies.

However, Ghana's progressive move also shines a light on the continent's challenges. South Africa, for instance, has faced widespread criticism for its xenophobic attitudes and restrictive immigration policies.

The country's reluctance to embrace visa-free travel for fellow Africans stands in stark contrast to Ghana's open-door approach. Xenophobic attacks in South Africa have targeted migrants from neighboring countries, highlighting deep-seated divisions that undermine the vision of a united Africa.

If South Africa were to adopt Ghana's model, it could signal a commitment to regional solidarity and economic collaboration, rather than perpetuating isolationist tendencies.

The East African Community (EAC) also has lessons to learn from Ghana's bold steps. Tanzania, for instance, has often been slow to fully embrace the East African Common Market's principles of free movement.

Critics argue that bureaucratic inefficiencies and protectionist poli-



cies have hindered the region's economic integration. By studying Ghana's proactive approach, Tanzania and its neighbors could advance their common market goals and unlock the region's economic potential.

Rwandan academics, like Professor Emmanuel Habimana, have lauded Ghana's move as a model for the rest of the continent, emphasizing that "regional cooperation is the key to Africa's development."

Globally, the success of visa-free policies in developed nations underscores the potential impact of Ghana's decision. The European Union's Schengen Area, which allows passport-free travel across 27 countries, has been instrumental in fostering economic growth and cultural exchange.

Equally, agreements like the Trans-Tasman Travel Arrangement between Australia and New Zealand highlight the benefits of seamless mobility.

International relations scholar Dr. Maria Gonzalez pointed out, "The economic and social strides achieved in regions with open borders demonstrate that Africa's potential can only be realized through similar initiatives." Ghana's policy could catalyze a broader continental shift, inspiring other nations to rethink their immigration strategies.

Despite the optimism, challenges remain. Effective implementation of Ghana's policy will require robust infrastructure, streamlined immigration processes, and enhanced security measures. The African Union's Free Movement of Persons Protocol, designed to facilitate cross-border travel, has yet to be fully embraced by most member states.

As of 2024, only Rwanda, Seychelles, The Gambia, and Benin had fully implemented the pro-

ocol. Without widespread adoption, the continent risks perpetuating fragmented borders that hinder economic integration. Migration expert Dr. Kwame Mensah warned, "Ghana's policy is a step in the right direction, but it must be complemented by regional cooperation to achieve its full potential."

Critics also argue that visa-free travel alone may not address deeper systemic issues. For instance, while Ghana's policy promotes unity, it does not resolve the infrastructural deficits that plague many African countries.

Improved transportation networks, digital connectivity, and trade facilitation measures are essential to complement open-border policies. Additionally, political will and mutual trust among African nations will be crucial to ensuring that the policy's benefits are equitably distributed.

The stakes could not be higher as the world watches Ghana's bold experiment unfold. If successful, this policy could redefine how Africans move, trade, and interact, laying the foundation for a more integrated and prosperous continent. Ghana's decision sends a powerful message: that Africa's future lies in unity, collaboration, and shared purpose. However, for this vision to materialize, other nations must step up, embrace change, and work together to create a seamless, borderless Africa.

In the coming years, Ghana's leadership on this issue could inspire a wave of similar policies across the continent. As President Akufo-Addo noted, "The dream of a united Africa is within our grasp. It is up to us to make it a reality." With determination and collective effort, Ghana's groundbreaking policy could mark the beginning of a new era for Africa—one defined by

unity, opportunity, and shared prosperity.

The European Union offers a striking example of the transformative power of visa-free travel. The Schengen Agreement allows passport-free movement across 27 countries, fostering unprecedented economic integration and cultural exchange.

As European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen once remarked, "Free movement is the cornerstone of European unity. It strengthens our economies and enriches our societies." This policy has not only facilitated seamless trade but also enabled millions of Europeans to explore job opportunities and cultural connections without bureaucratic hurdles.

The global success of visa-free policies offers a roadmap for Africa's aspirations. Countries like Singapore, Japan, and Germany have leveraged streamlined immigration to attract talent, boost tourism, and drive investment. The benefits are clear: in 2023, Germany reported a record 40 million international visitors, a testament to the advantages of openness.

As Ghana's visa-free policy takes effect, it sends a powerful message: Africa is ready to chart a new course. The onus is now on other nations to rise to the occasion, dismantle outdated barriers, and embrace a future where borders no longer define opportunity.

"This is not just Ghana's moment," asserts Rwandan academic Dr. Jean Ntibajayo. "It is Africa's chance to lead the world in proving that unity and progress go hand in hand." The winds of change are blowing across the continent, and with bold leadership and collective action, Africa can redefine its destiny. The time to act is now.



Thursday 16 January 2025

Economy records an average growth of 5.6 pc in 9 months

By Guardia Reporter

THE Gross Domestic Product (GDP) expanded by an average of 5.6 percent during the first three quarters of last year, which indicates that the second largest East African economy will grow at a projected 5.4 percent in 2024 by the Bank of Tanzania (BoT).

Latest quarterly data for the third quarter of last year published yesterday by the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) shows the economy grew by 5.9 percent at 2015 constant prices, an increase from 5.6 percent recorded in Q3, 2023.

However, the NBS's quarterly growth is higher than 5.6 percent projected earlier by the central bank's monetary policy committee.

The NBS report shows tertiary activities (services) contributed the largest share of 42.2 percent, followed by primary activities by 33.7 percent, while secondary activities accounted for the remaining 24 percent.

The major contributors of the economic growth were agriculture (13.6 percent), finance and insurance (12.2 percent), construction (10 percent), mining and quarrying (8.6 percent), transport and storage (8.5 percent), manufacturing (7.8 percent) and trade and repairs (6.5 percent).

Sectors which recorded highest growths during the reported quarter were electricity (27.8 percent), finance and insurance (18.2 percent), information and communication (12.5 percent), other social services (8.8

percent), mining and quarrying (8.6 percent) and education (6.6 percent).

Other sectors that contributed to growth were public administration and defense, transport and storage as well as accommodation and food services. The NBS report shows the quarterly GDP, at 2015 constant market prices, amounted to 37.5trn/-, compared to 35.4trn/- recorded in Q3, 2023, although was lower than 38.3trn/- recorded during the second quarter of last year.

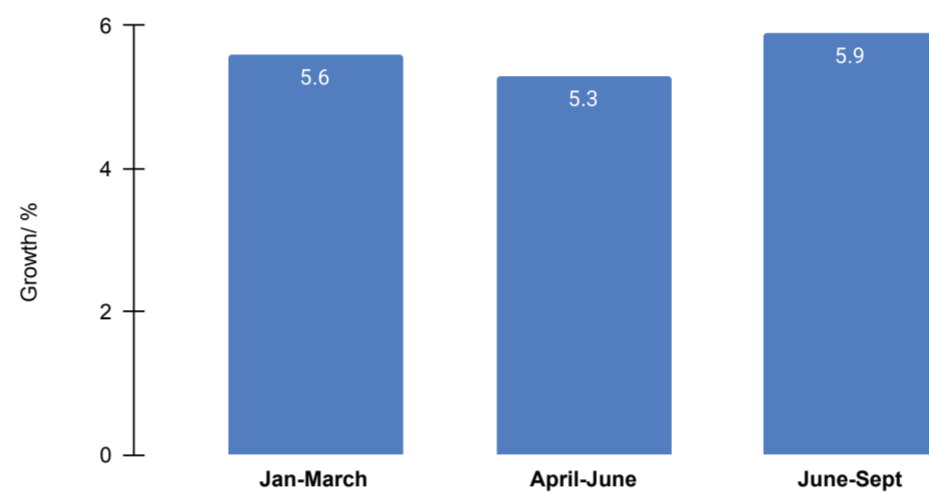
Agriculture continue to remain the largest activity during in size with 7trn/-, followed by construction with 5.6trn/-, manufacturing 3.4trn/-, trade and repairs 3.2trn/- and transport and repair which its size was 3trn/-.

However, at current market prices, the NBS report shows the size of the economy during the third quarter of last year was 48.7trn/- an increase from 44.6trn/- recorded during the third quarter of last year, although was lower than 51.9trn/- recorded in Q2, 2024.

According to the BoT's monetary policy report for January, the economy performed satisfactorily in 2024, due to supportive global economic conditions and to sustained implementation of prudent fiscal and monetary policies as well as economic reforms.

An assessment made by the Fitch Ratings in December 2024, also confirmed the improvement in the macroeconomic environment, thereby affirming the country's B+ rating with a stable outlook.

Quarterly Gross Domestic Product Growths 2024 in Percent



SOURCE: NATIONAL BUREAU OF STATISTICS

BoT report published on January 5, this year shows the growth of the economy in Tanzania mainland is expected to be in line with a projection of 5.4 percent for the entire year, while the Zanzibar economy being projected to grow at 6.8 percent.

The growth was primarily driven by strong performances in agriculture, transport, construction, and trade activities.

Projections for 2025 indicate continued strength in both economies. Mainland Tanzania is expected to grow at around 6 percent, says BoT's report.

The positive outlook is underpinned by several factors, including agricultural production, progress in construction projects, improvements in transport and logistics, reliable power supply,

and supportive fiscal and monetary policies.

The African Development Bank (AfDB) outlook published early last year indicated that the Tanzania's real GDP growth was projected at 5.7 percent in 2024 and 6 percent 2025, driven by agriculture, manufacturing, and tourism and supported by public investments and reforms to improve the business environment.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) update published in December last year said GDP growth is projected to pick up to 5.4 and 6.0 percent in 2024 and 2025, respectively, and projected to reach about 6.5 percent over the medium-term supported by successful implementation of the authorities' reform agenda, improvements in the business environment, and improvements in the global economic environment.

Cooperatives, large SACCOs directed to hire internal auditors

By Correspondent Paul Mabeja, Dodoma

THE Registrar and Chief Executive Officer of the Tanzania Cooperative Development Commission (TCDC), Dr. Benson Ndiege has directed cooperative unions and large SACCOs in the country to hire and effectively utilize internal auditors to enhance efficiency.

Launching the TCDC Audit Committee yesterday in Dodoma, Dr. Ndiege emphasized that these auditors are key personnel required to identify challenges within cooperatives and provide recommendations on how to address them to ensure strong management of the sector.

The audit of cooperative unions in Tanzania plays a critical role in ensuring transparency, accountability, and efficiency in the management of cooperative societies, which are a key part of the country's socio-economic structure.

He further noted that the government has placed significant importance on the cooperative sector, highlighting that the Commission is an essential body aimed at empowering Tanzanians to unite.

Currently, approximately eight million people in the country are involved in cooperative societies.

"The government is committed to strengthening cooperatives for the broader interests of the nation. This Commission is a vital institution viewed with special focus for the country's greater good. As of now, there are around 7,000 cooperative societies, of which 6,500 are registered in the electronic system. Later, we will release statistics on any inactive societies," he stated.

Dr. Ndiege stressed the need for the Commission, which oversees the cooperative sector, to remain strong.

He noted that the appointed committee members were selected based on their qualifications and ability to support the management of TCDC effectively.

"I direct the management to ensure this committee receives full cooperation to perform its duties effectively. In many organizations, you'll hear that the Internal Auditor is someone to be cautious of because they look for gaps and recommend corrections.

"If you encounter individuals who deviate, fail to follow procedures, and resist correction, it is inevitable that their office will face challenges. Members of the Audit Committee must avoid superficial work; instead, stand firm and perform your duties with professionalism," he said.

Earlier, the committee's outgoing chairperson, CPA Evance Assenga, stated that their role had been to provide recommendations and ensure proper use of resources, transparency, and accountability within the Commission to enhance the sector's efficiency.

He also advised the new committee to carefully utilize internal audit reports, as they will be instrumental in their oversight work.

The new committee chairperson, CPA Elihuruma Lema, pledged to execute the role with efficiency and professionalism to boost the cooperative sector, which involves a significant portion of the population contributing to the national economy.



The government is committed to strengthening cooperatives for the broader interests of the nation. This Commission is a vital institution viewed with special focus for the country's greater good. As of now, there are around 7,000 cooperative societies, of which 6,500 are registered in the electronic system

SA financial watchdog seeks to tackle complaints against credits providers

JOHANNESBURG

WITH consumers showing growing confidence about their financial future, access to credit is still considered essential for achieving financial goals.

However, the growing demand for new credit - with personal loans, credit cards, and "buy now, pay later" services among the most sought-after options - is also resulting in some consumers facing hardship because of credit, says Howard Gabriels, credit lead ombud at the National Financial Ombud Scheme (NFO).

He said as the New Year unfolds, many South Africans find themselves grappling with financial distress and uncertainty about their financial rights, exacerbated by over-indebtedness and the complexities of credit agreements.

Fortunately, for those who must contend with credit woes, the NFO is ready to help consumers with their challenges, ensuring financial fairness, transparency and justice in credit-related matters. The NFO offers free alternate dispute resolution, thus protecting and empowering credit-active consumers.

Credit market growth

"With the Government of National Unity bringing hope and optimism; the easing of inflation; and an interest rate cut; consumers are gaining greater financial stability. Thus many consumers access credit for individual and family economic stability.

"According to TransUnion which explores

financial trends in South Africa, the country's credit market stood at an outstanding balance of R2.37tn in the second quarter of 2024," said Gabriels.

The Credit Division of the NFO has jurisdiction on non-bank credit disputes, covering credit agreements such as store and furniture accounts, microloans, non-bank credit cards, non-bank vehicle finance, non-bank home loans and other forms of credit not issued by banks.

"Credit consumers can rest assured their complaints are in capable hands with our dedicated and qualified adjudication team that has the expertise to resolve non-bank credit disputes such as reckless lending and issues relating to over-indebtedness and inaccurate credit reporting."

Credit report awareness

"Many South Africans are still unaware of the importance of regularly reviewing their credit reports. An estimated 87 percent of South Africans who take credit have errors on their credit reports which can adversely affect a consumer's creditworthiness," Gabriels said.

Identity theft has also become a significant threat to South African consumers with the Southern African Fraud Prevention Services reporting a 356 percent increase from April 2022 to April 2023, and a 400 percent increase in 2024, thus highlighting the need for greater vigilance.

Gabriels said by checking your credit report, you can identify inaccuracies, detect potential fraud, and take proactive steps to not only prevent fraudulent financial losses but also improve your credit standing. Er-

rors on credit reports could negatively affect credit active consumers' financial opportunities.

"Identity theft surged by 337 percent in 2023 which often manifests on credit reports. The micro finance sector, the clothing retail sector and the banking sector customers are targeted.

"Your credit report is not just a summary of your financial activities. It is a tool that empowers you to protect your financial future. All South Africans are entitled to one free credit report per year from each registered credit bureau. The NPO will act to ensure that errors on credit reports are investigated and corrected.



"Creditors who lend irresponsibly and recklessly to consumers who cannot afford repayments, will also be held accountable. Credit providers have a duty to assess your affordability before granting credit. In some instances, we can recommend for the debt to be written off. Each complaint is assessed and resolved on its own merits.

"January is a time of reflection and resolution for many; we encourage all South Africans to take this opportunity to review their credit reports, understand their rights, and reach out to us if they believe they have been treated unfairly in the credit space," he said.

months has been shifting away from the so-called MLF and its rate as the main policy tool, shifting instead to the seven-day reverse repo rate to guide market borrowing costs.

The MLF operation date has been delayed until later each month and the PBOC typically uses reverse repo to moderate money market volatility in between MLF maturities and new

operations.

The central bank has also been using liquidity measures to expand its support for the yuan, which has come under pressure from a strengthening dollar. It sold a record 60 billion yuan of six-month bills in Hong Kong on Wednesday, a move which will drain liquidity offshore to support demand for the currency.

operations.

China's central bank pumps \$131bn into financial system

BEIJING

CHINA'S central bank pumped a near-historic amount of short-term funds into its financial system on Wednesday, dialing up liquidity support amid a cash squeeze with the new-year holiday looming.

The People's Bank of China injected a net 958.4 billion yuan (\$131 billion) of cash via seven-

day reverse repurchase agreements in daily open market operations, the second highest on record in data compiled by Bloomberg going back to 2004.

The operation is aimed at offsetting the impact of the expiration of medium-term lending, peak tax season and cash demand before Lunar New Year holidays, and to keep banking system liquidity am-

ple, the central bank said in a statement.

The sizable liquidity support will come as a relief for Chinese lenders after a cash crunch earlier this week pushed seven-day interbank funding rates to the highest in more than a year.

The PBOC's increasing determination to defend the under-pressure yuan has led to fears it may be restrained in providing

sufficient liquidity support for the economy, especially as it has decided to suspend government bond purchases in a bid to cool a bond market frenzy.

"The PBOC will likely continue to ramp up open market operations in 2025 as they have aimed to increase use of these tools as part of their monetary policy toolkit," said Lynn Song, Greater China chief economist

at ING Bank. "This is also a way to affect the liquidity environment outside of the big headline rate and reserve requirement ratio moves, which have likely been held in reserve to use at a more suitable time."

The reverse repurchase agreements in part replaced a monthly expiry of medium-term financing of about 955 billion yuan. The PBOC in recent

months has been shifting away from the so-called MLF and its rate as the main policy tool, shifting instead to the seven-day reverse repo rate to guide market borrowing costs.

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Cashless era: Why CBDCs become the future of money

By Abdulla Ali al-Siddiqi al-Emadi

WHAT makes money valuable? For centuries, it was tied to tangible assets like gold or silver. Today, however, money has evolved into something entirely different; it derives its value from trust.

Modern money, whether paper bills or digital balances, is valuable because people trust the institutions behind it. Governments play a central role in this process, backing fiat currencies (paper money) to ensure stability.

But as technology advances, money is evolving once again. Cryptocurrencies and Central Bank Digital Currencies (CBDCs) are reshaping the future of the financial system.

This transition towards digital currencies is not as radical as it might seem. Traditional banks have already embraced digital money. For instance, when a bank issues a loan, it doesn't hand out physical cash. Instead, it credits a borrower's account, digitally creating money in the form of deposits.

This process demonstrates that the shift to digital transactions has already spread throughout our financial systems. The difference with CBDCs is that they are government-backed, ensuring stability while also taking advantage of the speed and efficiency that digital systems offer.

Given this background, it's natural to wonder: why not simply adopt something like cryptocurrencies, which offer many of the same digital benefits? To understand why CBDCs are the future, we need to examine the flaws of cryptocurrencies and why they fall short as a reliable form of money.

Cryptocurrencies are often described as decentralised, innovative, and the future of money. But do they meet the essential criteria of money? The answer is no, and here's why.

First, cryptocurrencies are highly volatile. Their value can rise and fall dramatically in a short period, making them unreliable as a store of value or medium of exchange. Imagine receiving your salary in cryptocurrency, only to find out your wallet is empty by the next morning. This volatility makes cryptocurrencies unsuitable for daily transactions.

Second, cryptocurrencies are not backed or regulated by any government. While some see this as an advantage, it creates trust issues. If a crisis occurs, who guarantees the value of cryptocurrency? Without oversight, cryptocurrencies remain digital assets rather than currencies that cannot provide the same level of stability as government-backed currencies.

Third, the idea of decentralisation (the absence of a central authority) is often promoted as one of the core characteristics of cryptocurrencies, but this decentralisation introduces significant flaws. While decentralisation promises freedom from government or institutional control, it also means there is no central authority overseeing transactions, which leads to a lack of transparency. We do not know who the issuers or controllers of the currency truly are, making it vulnerable to manipulation.

In fact, the reality is that a small number of individuals control a large portion of the cryptocurrency supply, which erodes the ideal of decentralisation. These entities can create a monopoly while manipulating prices. Furthermore, the lack of regulation associated with decentralisation in cryptocurrencies complicates the accurate monitoring of transactions and money circulation in the economy. This lack of financial oversight is a critical issue in maintaining economic stability.

Finally, cryptocurrencies are limited in supply, restricting money creation while reducing the central bank's flexibility in managing the economy and increasing production. Unlike CBDCs, where central banks can monitor every transaction, cryptocurrencies are largely unregulated, and the lack of a central authority means that they cannot respond to illegal activities, such as fraud or money laundering, effectively.

While cryptocurrencies have revealed these limitations, central banks have taken their innovation seriously and sought to integrate it into a more stable and secure system. CBDCs are digital tokens that



address the many concerns raised by cryptocurrencies while offering a more controlled and reliable form of currency issued by a central authority. By introducing CBDCs, central banks can combine the best elements of both digital currencies and traditional financial systems, ensuring stability and trust.

CBDCs represent a major leap forward in modern financial systems. They eliminate intermediaries, significantly improving transaction efficiency. Unlike cryptocurrencies, which rely on a decentralised network, CBDCs are built with government-backed value stability and enhanced transparency. By using secure digital systems, central banks can maintain full oversight of transactions while balancing privacy with traceability to meet regulatory standards.

One of the key advantages of CBDCs is their transparency. Unlike physical cash, which can circulate without leaving a trace, CBDCs create a verifiable record of each transaction. This ensures financial oversight and helps prevent illegal activities such as fraud and money laundering.

However, there's an important distinction between cash and CBDCs when it comes to transaction flow. With physical cash, we can track gross transactions, the total volume of money exchanged, but we can never know the exact amount of money in circulation. For example, a QR100 bill may pass through several hands, yet the actual circulation of that QR100 remains unknown, despite us tracking the number of transactions.

With CBDCs, this traceability can be more precise, allowing central banks to know exactly how money flows through the economy and manage the money supply with greater accuracy. Furthermore, CBDCs streamline transactions by removing unnecessary intermediaries. This not only reduces costs and processing times but also strengthens central banks' ability to manage the economy during periods of financial instability.

In the past, central banks acted as lenders of last resort by providing liquidity to commercial banks, which would then distribute it to the economy. With CBDCs, this process can be done instantly by injecting liquidity directly into digital wallets,

ensuring faster and more effective support during crises. By bypassing intermediaries, CBDCs can reduce transaction costs, making it more affordable for banks, businesses and consumers to conduct payments.

Another major benefit of CBDCs is their potential to improve financial inclusion. In many regions, people do not have access to traditional banking systems. CBDCs offer a way for governments to provide financial services to underserved populations. By directly issuing digital wallets, CBDCs can ensure that all citizens have access to essential financial services, including payments and savings.

While concerns about privacy and accessibility remain, these challenges can be addressed in the design of CBDCs. Some critics worry that CBDCs could give central banks too much control over personal transactions. However, privacy and transparency can coexist. CBDCs can include safeguards to ensure only essential data is collected. This protects individuals' privacy while helping to monitor to prevent illegal activities.

Concerns about technology accessibility are also valid, but the adoption of CBDCs can happen gradually. Initially, CBDCs can be implemented for interbank use before expanding to the public, giving time for infrastructure development and ensuring that no one is left behind.

In conclusion, CBDCs represent a transformative step forward in the evolution of money. They combine the stability and trust of traditional banking with the speed and transparency of digital technology. By eliminating intermediaries, CBDCs can improve transaction efficiency, financial inclusion, and economic stability.

As central banks continue to develop and refine these systems, CBDCs will become an increasingly integral part of the global financial system, paving the way for a more secure and efficient future of money.

In fact, the Qatar Central Bank has already started its investments in CBDCs.

Abdulla Ali al-Siddiqi al-Emadi (pictured) is a Finance and Economics honor student at Qatar University

Performance-based incentives boost growth of women-owned businesses

By Elizabeth MacBride

DESPITE progress in many areas, only about one in four businesses globally is owned by a woman - a number that has remained stagnant for two decades according to gender-disaggregated data from the World Bank. This inequality is a human rights issue, an economic drag and a constraint on innovation.

However, emerging evidence suggests that performance-based incentives could be part of the solution. These measures can aid development banks and other funders in creating tangible social outcomes and financial returns as well as motivating organisations to allocate more resources to address inequality in business ownership.

Some development banks, impact investors or philanthropic funders include incentives when they support projects designed to meet specific targets for financing women-owned businesses. Typically, these incentives involve interest rate reductions or cash payouts that kick in when the investee or lender meets a particular outcome, such as the number of loans extended to women-owned businesses or the number of women-owned companies in a supply chain. The International Finance Corporation and

others are expanding the use of these incentives.

A recent publication by IDB Invest, the private-sector arm of the Inter-American Development Bank, examined the outcomes of 23 projects incorporating incentives aimed at fostering gender equality. The research, co-sponsored by the Women Entrepreneurs Finance Initiative at the World Bank, which uses performance-based incentives in development finance in many of its projects around the world, offered actionable advice for organisations considering such measures.

Key findings

People surveyed by IDB Invest perceived that performance-based incentives were instrumental in improving gender equality. Not only did the incentives help organisations achieve their initial gender targets, but they also justified the allocation of resources within client organisations. Incentives also resulted in spillover effects, such as shifting internal mindsets, and demonstration effects where one of the companies used strategies from an initial programme in other projects in the region. Research also found that new industry networks had been created, as companies connected with organisations

that promote or include women entrepreneurs.

The report's actionable guide lists 12 best practices for companies and financial organisations that want to use performance-based incentives, including setting benchmarks early, adding technical assistance for women-owned businesses, and measuring and aggregating data by gender.

Emerging quantitative evidence showed the effectiveness of performance-based incentives. The report cited the Women Entrepreneurs Opportunity Facility, founded by the IFC and Goldman Sachs in 2014 to support women-owned enterprises in developing countries by combining financial incentives with advisory services. Initial findings indicate a 94 percent increase in the number of women-led businesses receiving loans from IFC investments that had an incentive, compared to 84 percent without. Additionally, client banks observed a growth of 86% in lending to women-owned businesses over three years of the study.

Moving private capital

Incorporating performance-based incentives has become increasingly common within the development finance sector. We-Fi, along with the IFC and other development finance institutions, has long promoted this approach. IDB Invest began implementing performance-based incentives in 2015. It's almost as if this is becoming the norm rather than the exception, said Matthieu Pegon, director of blended finance at IDB Invest.

Incentives create a quadruple win. For development banks, performance-based incentives create more certainty about outcomes, such as the gender equality targets. It's ultimately what you pay for, in

terms of subsidy, Pegon said.

Second, the incentives help in the creation of effective blended finance products, which leverage public sector funds to help convince private capital to move into new spheres - like lending to or investing in women-owned businesses.

In some cases, a financial institution, like a regional or local bank, may be the recipient of the blended finance investment with performance-based incentives attached. In others, a large company may receive an investment with a performance-based incentive to diversify suppliers. These incentives justify paying for necessary changes, such as offering technical assistance to women-owned suppliers or committing senior management to setting goals and conducting sales force training.

A third benefit: more women-owned businesses are receiving financing. However, economists don't know whether performance-based incentives have an ecosystem effect, attracting more women to participate fully in the economy.

And fourth: People working within institutions benefit from the mindset shift to help them see women and women-owned businesses in a new light.

As Wendy Teleki, head of the We-Fi secretariat, notes, 'Performance-based incentives catalyse a conversation at a higher level about gender'. This mindset shift lies at the heart of We-Fi's work on systemic change within institutions - to see women and women-owned businesses as powerful actors within the global economy.

Elizabeth MacBride (pictured) is Senior Knowledge and Advocacy Consultant at the Women Entrepreneurs Finance Initiative, a multilateral partnership that aims to support women entrepreneurs by addressing barriers to their access to finance, markets, and networks.



Germany economy decreases by 0.2pc

BERLIN

GERMANY'S economy shrank for a second consecutive year in 2024 and is unlikely to grow much in 2025, laying bare the challenge for the country's new government once snap elections are held in February.

Gross domestic product fell by 0.2 percent after dropping 0.3 percent in 2023, the statistics office said Wednesday. It's only the second time since 1950 that output has contracted for two years in a row.

The struggles of the continent's largest economy are an overriding theme of an election that many hope will bring more growth-oriented policies capable of helping drag the 20-nation euro zone out of its own rut.

But few foresee quick fixes to issues that include weak global demand, a manufacturing malaise - particularly among carmakers - the lingering effects of the energy crisis, stifling red tape and a dearth of skilled workers.

"Germany is going through by far the longest phase of stagnation in post-war history," said Timo Wollmershäuser, who heads forecasting at the Ifo institute. "It is also falling behind considerably in an international comparison."

Ifo predicts "barely perceptible" growth of 0.4 percent this year.

Germany was the only Group of Seven economy to shrink in 2023 and is the first to publish full-year numbers for 2024. Its prospects for 2025, however, remain bleak. The Bundesbank predicts growth of just 0.2% and warns that another contraction is even possible if US President-elect Donald Trump follows through on his tariff threats.

"Political turmoil at home and the threat of tariffs from the US are likely to weigh on Germany's economic activity, resulting in only very modest growth. Risks to the outlook are skewed to the downside and major woes in the important manufacturing sector could easily push the country back into recession territory," said Martin Ademmer, economist.

Economic decline and squabbling over how to arrest it were big factors in the downfall of Germany's three-party coalition in November. In the early ballot on Feb. 23, Chancellor Olaf Scholz looks set for defeat by Friedrich Merz, who leads the conservative CDU/CSU bloc and is promising fewer regulations and lower taxes.

To get the economy back on track, "we need convincing answers from politicians and companies to the major transformative challenges," said KfW Research economist Klaus Burger.

How the next government deals with German limits on state borrowing and deficits, known as the debt brake, will be crucial. The stringent rules, long championed by conservative politicians, may be overhauled to allow for more flexibility to fund investments in things like infrastructure, energy and defense.

Germany's statisticians said fourth-quarter GDP dropped 0.1% from the previous three months - a development that Deutsche Bank economist Robin Winkler described as a worrying surprise.

"If this were to be confirmed, the German economy would have lost momentum again at the beginning of winter," he said.

Agroforestry initiative to benefit small farmers in Tanga

By Correspondent Beatrice Philemon

SMALLHOLDER and medium farmers in the Tanga Region are expected to start benefiting from agroforestry and become entrepreneurs through the Integrated Forest Biomass Energy Solutions for Tanzania (IFBEST) project currently implemented in Pangani, Kilindi, Handeni and Mkinga Districts.

Peter Mtoro, a community based forest management officer at the Tanzania Forest Conservation Group (TFCG), told The Guardian yesterday that, agroforestry is the practices of integrating trees with crops on farms, allowing for a sustainable interaction between agriculture and tree cultivation.

"We want to encourage people to stop cutting trees in forest reserves and instead earn income by selling timber and fruit from trees planted on their farms," he says.

During the implementation of the agro-

forestry, farmers will be advised to plant indigenous tree species on their farms in accordance with their farming activities.

Additionally, villagers will be allowed to propose the tree species that they want to plant on their farms.

"If the proposed tree species are not suitable in accordance with their agricultural activities, TFCG and Tanzania Community Forest Conservation Network (MJUMITA) will assist them in securing indigenous tree seedlings to plant on their farms," he said.

Additionally, TFCG and MJUMITA will assist farmers in securing indigenous trees to plant as well as establish a nursery for indigenous tree seedlings to enable farmers to access timber and fruits trees.

This project aims to motivate farmers to engage in tree planting and take proper care of the trees on their land for long-term sustainability.

It seeks to prevent deforestation and en-

hance environmental sustainability through sustainable forest management and wood-fuel production in the Tanga Region.

It will also assist them earn cash, improve soil quality, maintain underground water, enhancing biodiversity, building the climate resilience, contribute to carbon sequestration, and supporting the healthy growth of crops.

Through the IFBEST project, TFCG and MJUMITA will plant a total of 500,000 indigenous trees in all deforested areas where the project is being implemented.

Tanzania Forest Research Institute (TAFORI) has conducted research in Lusane, Mswaki, Mapanga, Mnkonde, Gendagenda and Mkalamo villages in Handeni and Kilindi Districts of Tanga region to identify deforested areas.

This will enable TFCG, MJUMITA and the villagers to plant indigenous trees in these areas to restore biodiversity in areas degraded by illegal human activities including agri-

cultural expansions and protect the ecosystems that we all depend upon.

Additionally, the research findings will help TFCG and MJUMITA identify which trees needed to be planted by farmers based on the agroclimatic conditions in their localities and deforested areas.

"We will plant indigenous tree seedlings to restore deforested landscapes, combat deforestation and improve biodiversity in the Village Land Forest Reserves (VLFs)," he says.

So far a total of 13,537.9 hectares of forest have been designed as Village Land forest reserves in Kilindi, Handeni and Pangani Districts for community-based forest management and assist villagers in generating income to fund village development projects.

This has been made possible through a IFBEST Project funded by the European Union (EU, through the ministry of finance.

Simon Lugazo, the IFBEST's project manager says, the European Union has injected a total of 5.4bn/- through the ministry of finance to support the implementation of the IFBEST project.

Currently the project is being implemented by Tanzania Community Forest Conservation Network (MJUMITA) and Tanzania Forest Conservation Group (TFCG) in eight villages in Handeni, Pangani and Kilindi District councils.

He named villages as Lusane, Mswaki, Nghobore, Mkalamo, Gendagenda, Mmbogo, Mapanga and Mseko.

The main goal of the project is to enhance environmental sustainability through sustainable forest management and wood-fuel production in Tanga Region.

Nigeria central bank fines banks for failure to put cash into ATMs

LAGOS

THE Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) has penalised Deposit Money Banks (DMBs) for failing to provide Naira notes via automated teller machines (ATMs) during the festive period.

Each bank was fined 150 million for non-compliance with the CBN's cash distribution guidelines after spot inspections of their branches.

This enforcement action follows repeated warnings from the CBN to ensure uninterrupted cash availability, especially during high-demand seasons.

The penalised banks include Fidelity Bank Plc, First Bank Plc, Keystone Bank Plc, Union Bank Plc, Globus Bank Plc, Providus Bank Plc, Zenith Bank Plc, United Bank for Africa Plc, and Sterling Bank Plc.

The fines will be debited directly from the banks' accounts with the apex bank, according to the Acting Director of Corporate Communications, Hakama Sidi Ali, who emphasised the importance of maintaining public trust and economic stability.

"The CBN will impose further sanctions on institutions violating cash circulation guidelines," Ali stated.

The CBN continues to investigate and monitor cash hoarding and rationing, targeting irregularities at bank branches and Point-of-Sale (POS) operators. The bank is collaborating with security agencies to address illegal cash sales and enforce POS operators' withdrawal limits of N1.2 million daily.

Governor Olayemi Cardoso reiterated the importance of compliance during his address at the Annual Bankers' Dinner of the Chartered Institute of Bankers of Nigeria (CIBN) in November 2024. He highlighted the CBN's dedication to fostering trust and ensuring seamless cash circulation



Central Bank of Nigeria

across Nigeria's financial system.

Further violations of cash distribution policies will attract swift and decisive action, the CBN warned.

Meanwhile, Nigerian banks and other financial institutions are expected to experience digital transformations to align more with the evolving needs of their clients in 2025, a KPMG report has shown.

The KPMG 2024 Banking Industry Customer Experience Survey revealed that customers anticipate significant improvements in service delivery prior to the reliability of digital platforms that emerged as a pivotal priority in 2024, ranking higher on client importance.

It highlighted that Nigerian banks made strides in launching digital solutions, persistent issues such as downtimes, transaction delays, inadequate relationship manager accessibility, and slow response to queries to reinforce the need for better integrated and customer-focused approaches.

"Many corporate clients expect their banking relationships to evolve in line with the broader economic context in 2025. However, aligning internal processes to support these journeys is crucial to delivering the target customer experience and building trust in their digital offerings," it emphasised.

To remain competitive and exceed expectations, banks must go beyond surface-level improvements by implementing these five key steps highlighted by KPMG

As both economies recover, banks are positioned to play a more strategic role. Over 95 percent of corporates seek advisory services that address economic challenges, provide regulatory guidance and recommend risk management and

operational optimisation strategies.

Currency management remains a top challenge, with 44 percent of clients in Nigeria and 53 percent in Ghana citing limited access to foreign exchange. Banks should innovate by offering dynamic hedging tools, forward contracts, and other FX solutions to meet this critical need.

Banks must prioritise delivering real-time business intelligence, actionable insights, and timely updates to support their client's decision-making processes.

About 40 percent of respondents have expressed the need for actionable market insights. In today's volatile environment, Banks can differentiate by providing advanced analysis tools, scenario modeling and risk assessments to strengthen client decision-making.

Only 24 percent of corporations currently feel extremely satisfied with their banking platforms' ability to address operational needs. Leveraging AI and data analytics to offer predictive cash flow tools, integrated liquidity management and enhanced security features can deliver the efficiency clients expect.

BANKING & FINANCE

Oman launches automated invoice system

MUSCAT

THE Gulf Cooperation Council's (GCC) first Automatic Invoice Verification System (AIVS) has been launched in the Sultanate of Oman by Infoline LLC, a subsidiary of Omantel, and a leader in IT-enabled digital transformation, for Nama Power & Water Procurement Company.

Developed in collaboration with Kreative Technologies SPC, this advanced system automates the invoice verification process, significantly reducing errors and saving time.

Nama Power & Water Procurement Company (Nama PWP)—the single procurer of power and water capacity and output in the Sultanate of Oman—plays a critical role in ensuring adequate electricity and water production capacity in Oman at the lowest economic cost.

The newly implemented AIVS platform revolutionises invoice processing by cross-referencing invoices with signed agreements, ensuring compliance before integrating with enterprise resource planning (ERP) systems like Oracle or Systems Applications and Products (SAP).

Key features of AIVS include real-time invoice verification for improved accuracy, seamless ERP integration for efficient processing, automated dispute management with ticket generation for quick issue resolution, and business intelligence dashboards offering insights to enhance decision-making.

Operational across 25 power and water plants in Oman, the system demonstrates Infoline's ability to deliver complex, large-scale platforms tailored for efficiency and accuracy.

"We are thrilled to introduce this transformative solution for Nama Power & Water Procurement Company. AIVS is set to revolutionise how invoices are processed, saving time, cutting costs, and enhancing accuracy for our clients," said Mohamad al Maskari, CEO of Infoline LLC.

Highlighting the importance of automation, Ahmed Salim al Abri, CEO

of Nama Power & Water Procurement Company, stated: "Automation is at the heart of Nama's efforts to ensure business excellence and continuity. We are proud to collaborate with Infoline, a local company, to deliver this innovative solution. This partnership reflects our belief in the capability of local entities to drive technological advancements."

Commenting on the operational benefits, Mohamed Basim al Qabtan, Senior Engineer at Nama, said: "The AIVS has significantly improved our invoice processing efficiency. The real-time verification and seamless ERP integration have saved us countless hours and minimised errors."

Since its inception in 2004, Infoline has established itself as a leading provider of ICT solutions in Oman, delivering state-of-the-art digital transformation services across government, utilities, telecommunications, and private sectors. Through AIVS, the company underscores its commitment to advancing technological innovation and supporting Oman's digital future.



Key features of AIVS include real-time invoice verification for improved accuracy, seamless ERP integration for efficient processing, automated dispute management with ticket generation for quick issue resolution, and business intelligence dashboards offering insights to enhance decision-making

US banks could face rules protecting fossil fuel clients

By Barbara Pianese

US banks could soon be prevented from rejecting clients for reasons other than financial risk, making it more difficult for lenders to cut off services to controversial industries such as gun manufacturing and fossil fuel production.

"Fair access" rules that are intended to prevent politically or ideologically motivated denial of services are expected to see a resurgence under the new US administration, according to legal experts, following a first attempt during Donald Trump's previous government.

In 2020, the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency proposed a Fair Access to Financial Services rule with the agency pausing publication of the rule as the then incoming Biden administration took office in January 2021.

The momentum to approach this issue again, either through the legislature or through OCC rule making, is building,



US Federal Reserves

according to Erin Bryan, partner at law firm Dorsey.

"In the last couple of years there have been a number of states passing their own versions of these laws, and the issue is that then you have a patchwork of laws across the US that banks

have to comply with," she said. While Florida and Tennessee have enacted similar laws, other states have been considering similar moves.

If the fair access rule is approved, it might have a positive impact on the business of some banks,

said Juan Azel, partner at law firm Winston, as they would return to focusing primarily on credit risk in their underwriting decisions and less so on other factors, such as the sector companies operate in.

"Over the past four years, some Republicans have suggested

that certain companies, such as gun manufacturers and fossil fuel companies, may have been 'discriminated' against in the delivery of banking and financial services," he said.

In 2023, 19 Republican state attorneys general accused JPMorgan of "persistently discriminating against certain customers due to their religious or political affiliation".

However, banks are likely to oppose such a rule on the basis that it is unnecessary additional regulation, according to Alan S. Kaplinsky, senior counsel at Ballard Spahr. "Banks don't like to have the government mandating what industries they need to provide credit to," which the rule effectively would do, said Kaplinsky.

In 2021, after the rule was proposed by the OCC, the American Bankers Association urged the regulator to withdraw it as it would interfere with banks' reputation and litigation risk management, among other issues.

A nationwide federal access rule might also create headaches for banks headquartered outside the US.

"Non-US banks that are required by their home country governments to engage in certain activities, for example - potentially to be more green in their lending policies - [for them] the pursuit of those policies in their US lending operations could be drawn into question if this law goes into effect," said Thomas J. Delaney, partner at Norton Rose Fulbright.

"You're now going to have to try to comply with a legal obligation in one place that may be different than what the legal obligations are in the other place, and that can create a delicate balancing act for managers of banks," he added.

The implementation of fair access rules could also raise enforcement prospects for lenders. "I assume we might see some new efforts to hold bankers accountable for refusing to lend

to disfavoured industries," said David Zaring, professor of legal studies and business ethics at Wharton School.

Fair access rules could also pose compliance challenges as they could potentially clash with anti-money laundering requirements. The Treasury last year expressed concerns about how some state fair access laws create money laundering issues as they would interfere with the need to closely assess a customer's connection to risky parties such as terrorist groups.

"Banks will be loath to lend money to companies that raise those kinds of risks. The penalties for violating anti-money laundering laws are draconian," said Kaplinsky.

"Nevertheless, I expect that fair access laws will continue to be promoted by Republicans, many of whom received heavy political contributions from certain of these industries [that are viewed as risky], particularly crypto," he added.

WORLD

Gang violence in Haiti drove over 1m people from homes in 2024

UNITED NATIONS

GANG violence in Haiti drove a record of more than 1 million people from their homes last year, the United Nations said on Tuesday.

The UN International Organization for Migration (IOM) said the figure marked a threefold increase in displacement within a year, rising from 315,000 in December 2023.

In the capital of Haiti, Port-au-Prince alone, displacement fueled by violence, the collapse of essential services, particularly healthcare, and worsening food security nearly doubled, rising by 87 percent.

IOM reported many of the displaced were forced to move many times and that

most of the victims were children. The majority of the displaced originated from the metropolitan area of Port-au-Prince. Many sought refuge in Haiti's provinces.

IOM said 83 percent of the displaced relied on already overstretched host communities, such as acquaintances, friends and families, for shelter, while the remaining struggled to cope in spontaneous sites.

To make the situation worse, the agency said, 200,000 Haitians were deported back to Haiti last year, placing a greater strain on the country's already overwhelmed social services.

Asked at a regular briefing about the deportations, Stephane Dujarric, chief spokesman for UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, said, "Deporting Haitians back to a country that is in the situation



Police patrol around Bernard Mevs hospital where armed gangs have spread violence as residents flee the area in Port-au-Prince on Dec 17, 2024. AFP

that it is, where the basic services are almost non-existent, where violence is rampant, is not a direction that a country should go in."

IOM also said that floods in November and December 2024 affected more than 315,000 people nationwide.

"Haiti needs sustained humanitarian assistance right now to save and protect lives," said IOM Director General Amy Pope. "We must work together to address the root causes of the violence and instability that has led to so much death and destruction."

Asked whether, considering the violence, the strapped Multinational Security Support Mission in Haiti should be changed from a force comprised of police units from different countries to a UN peacekeeping force, Dujarric said the decision would be up to the UN Security Council (UNSC).

The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) said that despite humanitarian challenges in Haiti, the world body and its partners continue to respond.

The World Food Programme (WFP) reported assisting 1.7 million people across the country in 2024 by providing emergency aid, school meals and social protection. IOM provided last year access to 18 million liters of clean water to uprooted people in camps and rehabilitated water pumps in affected communities, benefiting thousands of families.

However, OCHA said that much more is required to meet the needs of Haiti. In 2025 the UN and its partners will need \$900 million to support 4 million people.

Barrick provides update on Loulo-Gounkoto operations in Mali

TORONTO

BARRICK Gold Corporation has confirmed that the company remains restricted from shipping gold from the Loulo-Gounkoto mining complex in Mali.

The Malian government has executed an interim attachment order on the gold, transferring the existing stock from the mining site to a custodial bank. This action further prevents the shipment and sale of the gold.

So, Barrick has unfortunately started a temporary suspension of operations at the site. The company continues to seek a resolution and remains committed to constructive engagement with the Malian government and all stakeholders.

Barrick aims to find an amicable solution that ensures the long-term sustainability of the Loulo-Gounkoto mining complex, safeguarding its significant contribution to Mali's economy and local communities.

Mali, Africa's second-largest gold producer, depends on the metal for 80% of its exports.

Barrick's Loulo-Gounkoto complex, developed during Bristow's tenure as CEO of Randgold before its acquisition by Barrick in 2018, is a cornerstone of Mali's economy.

Over the past 29 years, the company has invested more than \$10 billion in the country, contributing between 5% and 10% of Mali's GDP annually. Last year alone, Barrick injected over \$1 billion into the local economy.

The mine complex is also one of Mali's largest taxpayers and employers, with 97% of its 8,000-strong workforce being Malian nationals. According to Barrick, more than 70% of the economic benefits from the complex have gone directly to the Malian state.

African School of Governance inaugurated in Rwanda

KIGALI

The African School of Governance (ASG), a graduate institution designed to offer world-class education programs in public policy, research, governance, leadership, and management, was formally launched Tuesday in Kigali, the capital of Rwanda.

Co-founded by Rwandan President Paul Kagame and former Ethiopian Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn, in consultation with other African leaders, academics, and philanthropists, the ASG initiative aims to address the continent's pressing governance challenges by equipping emerging leaders with the mindsets, skills, and knowledge necessary for effective leadership in Africa's future.

Speaking at the launch, Desalegn said the ASG would serve as a center for cultivating purpose-driven leaders prepared to tackle the continent's most significant challenges and opportunities by blending Africa's distinctiveness with global best practices.

"The first step for Africa to reclaim its greatness is to build an understanding and appreciation of its history, political economy, and empowered mindsets in its leaders. Based on this solid foundation, leaders can then shape Africa's trajectory," he said.

At the event, ASG President Kingsley Moghalu said the school would focus on creating a sustainable governance model rooted in African realities. "Today's event is of profound historic importance.

ASG, as an accredited pan-African graduate-level institution, is dedicated to leading the transformation of governance in Africa," he said, adding that the ASG would offer a comprehensive suite of academic programs to address governance, leadership, and policy deficits across Africa. Joseph Nsengimana, Rwanda's minister of education, said at the launch that the ASG has found a natural home in Rwanda, a country that reflects the very principles the institution seeks to cultivate.

"Hosting ASG is our shared responsibility to contribute to Africa's future by investing in the next generation of leaders. As we inaugurate ASG today, let us celebrate not only its opening but also the promise it holds for our continent and the globe at large. Together, let us invest in leadership that will steer Africa toward a prosperous future," said the minister.

The ASG will offer a diverse range of academic programs, including the Master of Public Administration and the Executive Master of Public Administration, tailored to mid-career professionals and senior executives, respectively, according to a press statement released earlier by the ASG.

The school will also provide specialized executive courses designed to enhance specific leadership skills for professionals. Additionally, the Young Leaders Program and the Senior Leadership Fellowship will cater to high-potential undergraduates and seasoned professionals nearing the end of their careers, ensuring leadership development at every stage.

Iran, EU discuss Teheran's nuclear programme, sanctions removal

TEHERAN

SENIOR diplomats from Iran and the European Union (EU) on Tuesday exchanged views on the country's nuclear program and the lifting of sanctions on Teheran.

In a post on social media platform X, Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister for Legal and International Affairs Kazem Gharibabadi said he and Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister for Political Affairs Majid Takht Ravanchi had held "open and constructive" discussions with Enrique Mora, deputy secretary-general of the European External Action Service, and his team in Geneva on Tuesday.

He added they had exchanged views mainly on Iran's nuclear program and removing sanctions on Teheran as well as other issues of mutual interest.

In a post on X, Mora described his meeting with the Iranian deputy foreign ministers as "constructive", saying they had explored ways for a diplomatic solution to the nuclear issue,



Iran's Ambassador to the United Nations (UN) Majid Takht Ravanchi speaks to the media before a meeting with other UN members on the escalating situation with the United States At United Nation headquarters on June 24, 2019 in New York City. AFP

adding bilateral and regional issues were also on the agenda during the meeting.

Iran and three European powers -- France, Britain and Germany -- on Monday agreed to restart discussions

on lifting sanctions against Iran and addressing Teheran's nuclear program, Gharibabadi said in a post following talks with the European states' representatives in Geneva on the same day.

He added the talks were "serious, frank, and constructive", adding they went into detail about removing sanctions and the nuclear issues needed for a deal.

"Everyone agreed on the need to restart talks on removing sanctions and Iran's nuclear program," he said, adding that reaching a deal needs "a good environment" created by all sides.

Iran signed a nuclear agreement with world powers in July 2015, agreeing to limit its nuclear work in return for easing sanctions. The United States left the deal in May 2018 and put sanctions back in place, causing Teheran to reduce its own commitments.

Talks to bring the 2015 deal back to life began in Vienna in April 2021 but have made little progress despite many rounds of discussions.

Michelle Obama to not attend swearing-in ceremony of Donald Trump

WASHINGTON

FORMER US first lady Michelle Obama will not attend US President-elect Donald Trump's swearing-in ceremony on January 20, her office announced on Tuesday, without sharing explanation for her decision, CNN reported.

A statement from the Office of Barack and Michelle Obama said, "Former President Barack Obama is confirmed to attend the 60th Inaugural Ceremonies. Former First Lady Michelle Obama will not attend the upcoming inauguration."

The decision to not attend Trump's swearing-in is a break with tradition for the ceremony, which former presidents and first ladies usually attend. Former US President George Bush and his wife, Laura Bush, will attend the inauguration, his office announced.

According to sources familiar, former US President Bill Clinton and Hillary Clinton will attend the swearing-in ceremony, CNN reported. Michelle Obama did not attend the memorial service for former US President Jimmy Carter last week.

Former US President Barack Obama attended the service at the National Cathedral in Washington. He was seated next to Donald Trump and was involved in animated conversation with him as the program was getting underway. Other former US first ladies, including Hillary Clinton and Laura Bush attended the memorial service for Carter.

Michelle Obama has openly expressed her animosity towards Trump, whom she has accused of putting her family's safety in danger due to his rhetoric. Keeping aside

her personal feelings, Michelle Obama in 2017 had welcomed incoming US President Donald Trump and his wife, Melania Trump, to the White House for tea ahead of his swearing-in.

In the years afterward, Michelle Obama talked about sitting on stage while Trump took oath, CNN reported. While speaking in a podcast in 2023, she said, "There were tears, there was that emotion. But then to sit on that stage and watch the opposite of what we represented on display - there was no diversity, there was no color on that stage, there was

no reflection of the broader sense of America."

Donald Trump and his wife, Melania Trump, did not attend US President Joe Biden's swearing-in ceremony in 2021 amid the US President-elect's claims that he had secured victory in the 2020 election.

On January 20, Trump and US President-elect, JD Vance, will attend the swearing-in ceremony, followed by a luncheon, parade and three inaugural balls, The Hill reported. Former presidents, celebrities and performers will attend the various events. **ANI**

Ice, snow tourism continues to boom in NE China's Harbin

"NO matter how many 'spoilers' I saw online, the moment I entered the park, it completely refreshed my previous understanding of the beauty of ice and snow," said Qin Er, a visitor from Nanjing, east China's Jiangsu province, who was visiting northeast China for the first time.

Despite the temperature dropping to below minus 10 degrees Celsius, Qin's enthusiasm remained high. He praised the ice sculptures in the park as "ingeniously crafted" and "exquisitely beautiful," capturing over 100 photos with his phone.

With just around a month to go, the 2025 Asian Winter Games is set to open in

Harbin. Themed "Dream of Winter, Love among Asia," the park has incorporated elements inspired by the upcoming Asian Winter Games.

The main tower, themed "Love among Asia," stands out as the park's centerpiece. As the tallest structure in the park, it drew inspiration from the official emblem of the Olympic Council of Asia, with the central part maintaining a radiant sun-like shape. The main body of the tower is composed of intricately arranged towering ice columns that gradually taper inward from the base, creating a visual effect of ascending levels.

"Thousands of ice sculptors have gathered in the park,

each presenting their unique skills, working overtime and putting in extra effort, all in the hope of creating a dream-like ice and snow kingdom for visitors," said Cui Shiyao, a designer of the Harbin Ice-Snow World.

Providing technology-enabled experiences

The park covers an impressive 1 million square meters and uses 300,000 cubic meters of ice and snow, setting a historical record. How was such a massive project completed with efficiency and high quality? The answer lies in the use of technologies. In April 2024, Harbin Ice and Snow World Park Limited collaborated with Harbin Insti-

tute of Technology (HIT) on a provincial sci-tech project to develop intelligent and automated equipment for making standard ice blocks.

"Unlike previous construction that mainly relied on manual labor, our equipment adopts multi-sensor data fusion and artificial intelligence visual recognition and measurement technologies after over six months of exploration and practices. It is able to automatically detect and recognize the status of ice blocks," said Ren Bingyin, project leader and a professor with the School of Mechatronics Engineering of HIT.

Additionally, with automa-

tion control technology, the equipment can intelligently control the production process of standard ice blocks, greatly enhancing the production efficiency and quality of ice blocks used for landscape and architectures, Ren added.

The ice was collected from the frozen Songhua River and efficiently cut into uniform sizes by machines, which will make the surface of the ice blocks smoother and more even, laying a sound foundation for the subsequent ice construction, said Cong Peiyu, head of the design and research department of the Harbin Ice-Snow World.

Technology is also empow-

ering visitors' experience. As an icon of the park from the first edition to the present, the "Century Clock" has adopted more acoustic-optical technologies. Whenever the clock chimes, flowing light and shadows will appear on the petal-shaped ice structures around the clock, providing an engaging audiovisual interactive experience.

Magnificent world of snow sculptures

If the Harbin Ice-Snow World is the kingdom of ice sculpture art, the Sun Island International Snow Sculpture Art Expo, another iconic winter attraction in Harbin, is a magnificent world of snow sculptures.

The Sun Island International Snow Sculpture Art Expo has been held for 37 sessions, becoming a grand international event of snow sculpture art. Inside the park, a snow sculpture inspired by traditional Chinese blue-and-white porcelain has attracted a large number of visitors.

With a total length of 17 meters, a height of 14 meters, and a width of 8 meters, the snow sculpture uses about 1,800 cubic meters of snow. The "bottle" of the sculpture is surrounded by carefully carved traditional Chinese elements such as pine trees and auspicious cloud, exuding a graceful and elegant charm. **People's Daily**

S. Korean investigators question arrested Yoon in insurrection probe

SEOUL

IMPEACHED South Korean President Yoon Suk-yeol was arrested and questioned by authorities in relation to a criminal insurrection investigation yesterday, saying he was only cooperating with what he called an illegal probe to avoid violence.

His arrest, the first ever for an incumbent South Korean president, is the latest head-spinning development for one of Asia's most vibrant democracies even though the country has a history of prosecuting and imprisoning former leaders.

Since lawmakers voted to stand him down after his short-lived declaration of martial law on Dec 3, Yoon has been holed up at his hillside residence, guarded by a small army of presidential security that blocked a previous arrest attempt.

He agreed to come in for questioning after more than 3,000 police officers determined to arrest him marched on his residence in the early hours of yesterday.

"I decided to respond to the CIO's investigation - despite it being an illegal investigation - to prevent unsavoury bloodshed," Yoon said in a statement, referring to the Corruption Investigation Office for High-ranking Officials (CIO) that is heading the criminal probe.

A prosecutor accompanied Yoon in his car from his home in the upscale area known as Seoul's Beverly Hills to the austere CIO offices, where

he slipped in through a back entrance, avoiding media.

Authorities now have 48 hours to question Yoon after which they must seek a warrant to detain him for up to 20 days or release him.

However, Yoon is refusing to talk and has not agreed to have interviews with investigators recorded on video, a CIO official said. The CIO said it had no information on why Yoon was refusing to talk.

Yoon's lawyers have said the arrest warrant is illegal because it was issued by a court in the wrong jurisdiction and the team set up to investigate him had no legal mandate to do so. A warrant to search Yoon at his residence, a copy of which was seen by Reuters, referred to Yoon as "ringleader of insurrection".

Presidential guards were stationed on the CIO floor where Yoon is being questioned, said a CIO official, but he will likely be held at Seoul Detention Centre, where other high-profile figures including former President Park Geun-hye and Samsung Electronics Chairman Jay Y. Lee have also spent time.

On the menu tonight: a dinner of bean sprout soup, barbecue beef and kimchi, costing around \$1.

Serious interest

Yoon's declaration of martial law shocked South Koreans, rattled Asia's fourth largest economy and ushered in an unprecedented period



Impeached South Korean President Yoon Suk-yeol arrives at the Corruption Investigation Office for High-ranking Officials in Gwacheon, South Korea, yesterday. AP

of political turmoil in one of Washington's key security partners in the region. Lawmakers voted to impeach him and remove him from duties shortly after on Dec 14.

Separate to the criminal investigation, the Constitutional Court is deliberating whether to uphold his impeachment by parliament and permanently remove him from office or restore his presidential powers.

The United States remains committed to working with the government in Seoul and appreciates all its efforts and citizens "to act in accordance with the Constitution", a spokesperson for the White House National Security Council said in a statement.

The top government spokesperson in neighbouring Japan, Yoshimasa Hayashi, told a daily news briefing that Tokyo was following developments in South Korea "with particular and serious interest".

Yoon supporters

The latest arrest attempt that began before dawn gripped the nation with hundreds of thousands glued to live

feeds showing bus loads of police arriving near the presidential residence, pushing past Yoon supporters and then walking towards the gates of the compound carrying ladders and wire cutters.

As local news broadcasters reported that Yoon's detention was imminent, some minor scuffles broke out between pro-Yoon protesters and police near the residence, according to a Reuters witness at the scene.

Thronged protesters, which also gathered outside the CIO offices, waved South Korean and American flags and held posters bearing "Stop the Steal" slogans referring to Yoon's unsubstantiated claims of election fraud - one of the reasons he gave to justify his short-lived martial law declaration.

In a hand-written letter posted to his Facebook page, Yoon said he was often called foolish because he did not compromise.

He claimed there's too much evidence of election fraud for it to be dismissed as a conspiracy theory, even while acknowledging "there is insufficient evidence to punish a specific person for it".

The National Election Commission, which was one of the targets of troops deployed by Yoon during the martial law, has denied allegations of election fraud, saying the election system is transparent and above board with plenty of oversight.

Some of Yoon's supporters have drawn parallels with his plight and that of US President-elect Donald Trump, who also claimed voter fraud contributed to his election defeat in 2020 but recovered to make a stunning political comeback.

"It is very sad to see our country falling apart," said Kim Woosub, a 70-year-old retiree protesting Yoon's arrest outside his residence on Wednesday.

"I still have high expectations for Trump to support our president. Election fraud is something they have in common but also the U.S. needs South Korea to fight China," he said.

Despite polls showing a majority of South Koreans disapprove of Yoon's martial law declaration and support his impeachment, the political standoff has given oxygen to his supporters and his People Power Party (PPP) has seen a revival in recent weeks.

Support for the PPP stood at 40.8 percent in the latest Realmeter poll released on Monday, while the main opposition Democratic Party's support stood at 42.2 percent, within a margin of error and down from a gap of 10.8 percent from last week, the poll said.

China welcomes foreign tourists to enjoy Chinese New Year

BEIJING

CHINA welcomes foreign tourists to join China's celebration of the Spring Festival and experience the joy of the Chinese New Year, Foreign Ministry spokesperson Guo Jiakun said on Tuesday.

Guo made the remarks at a regular press briefing when asked to comment on the trend of "China Travel".

According to reports, the General Office of China's State Council released a list of measures to foster new growth drivers to boost spending in the culture and tourism sectors. One of the measures is to improve inbound travel policies, including gradually rolling out unilateral visa-free policies to more countries.

China's visa exemption policies have given a boost to inbound travel. Since the start of the year, "China Travel" has kept trending, and a good number of foreign tourists spent their New Year's Eve in China. Some travel agencies estimate that the number of travel bookings by foreign tourists for the Spring Festival period this year will increase by 203 percent year on year compared with 2024.

Guo said that as China includes more countries in its visa waiver program and improves facilitation measures, the number of foreign tourist arrivals has continued to rise.

In 2024, the number of inbound and outbound journeys by foreign nationals stood at 64.88 million, up by 82.9 percent year on year. Among them, 20.12 million entered China visa-free, up by 112.3 percent year on year. During the just concluded New Year holiday, arrivals of foreign nationals grew by 34 percent year on year, according to the spokesperson.

Guo said the Chinese Lunar New Year of the Snake is half a month away. It is the first Spring Festival since the inscription of the festival on the UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage list.

"We welcome foreign tourists to join China's celebration of the Spring Festival, experience the joy of the Chinese New Year, feel the warmth of Chinese hospitality, and usher in an auspicious Year of the Snake," said Guo.

Xinhua

Lavrov: Russia-China partnership key to global stability

MOSCOW

THE relationship between Russia and China is essential to maintaining global stability at a time of rising tensions around the world, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said Tuesday in his annual press conference.

He noted that the Russia-China partnership is one of the main stabilizing factors in modern international relations.

Lavrov (pictured) said Washington and its allies from the North Atlantic Alliance are attempting to heighten global confrontations and hostilities, sowing discord and creating divisions across Europe and elsewhere.

The foreign minister noted the Shanghai Cooperation Organization is currently deepening ties with the Eurasian Economic Union, which aligns with the Belt and Road initiative.

"The international significance of our cooperation, partnership and our future plans is immense, and I am convinced that these plans will be realized," Lavrov said.



Israeli airstrikes kill at least 40 in Gaza amid ceasefire talks

JERUSALEM/GAZA

ISRAELI forces intensified their assault on Gaza, striking approximately 50 sites since early yesterday, according to the Israeli authorities.

The airstrikes took place as Qatari, Egyptian, and American mediators held talks with Israeli and Hamas officials in Doha to finalize a ceasefire-for-hostage agreement.

The proposed deal aims to end more than 15 months of a deadly Israeli onslaught that has killed over 46,700 Pales-

tinians and devastated Gaza, while securing the release of approximately 100 hostages held in the enclave.

In a joint statement, the Israeli Shin Bet domestic security agency and the military reported that the airstrikes targeted militants, weapons storage facilities, underground infrastructure, anti-tank fire positions, and Hamas military structures.

Mahmoud Basal, spokesperson for the Civil Defense Authority in Gaza, reported that the authority had re-

trieved the bodies of seven people and rescued dozens of wounded individuals after Israeli aircraft targeted the Al-Farabi School with at least one missile.

The school, located in the Yarmouk area west of Gaza City, was housing displaced people.

The Israeli statement confirmed the strike, stating that it targeted a militant "holding a central position" who was hiding in the building, which they described as "a command and control center" for

attacks on Israeli forces in Gaza.

Hussam Al-Daqran, spokesperson for Al-Aqsa Hospital, said 15 Palestinians, including women and children, were killed in Israeli airstrikes targeting two houses in Deir al-Balah in the central Gaza Strip.

Three Palestinians were also killed in an Israeli airstrike on a residential house in the Bureij refugee camp in the central Gaza Strip, Al-Daqran added.

Meanwhile, Al-Awda Hospi-

tal in Nuseirat camp reported in a press release that six people were killed and five others injured in an Israeli airstrike on a house in the camp.

In the southern Gaza city of Rafah, Israeli aircraft targeted a house and two gatherings, according to local sources.

Paramedics told Xinhua that medical teams recovered nine bodies, including a fetus and children, while several wounded individuals were transferred to a local hospital for treatment.

ISRO's ambitious 2025: Gaganyaan, NASA collaboration, and India's leap in space exploration

NEW DEHLI

THE Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) is set to continue its ground-breaking contributions to space exploration in 2025 with a robust line-up of missions.

From the much-anticipated Gaganyaan orbital test to collaborative efforts with NASA, ISRO's plans underscore India's growing prowess in space technology.

On January 9, 2025, Jitendra Singh, India's Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science and Technology, Earth Sciences, and Minister of State for Space, chaired a high-level review of ISRO's major missions planned for 2025.

The meeting included outgoing ISRO Chairman S. Somnath, his successor V. Narayanan, and senior officials like Pawan Kumar Goenka, Chairman of IN-SPACE.

India's space programme is set for a transformative year, with ambitious projects such as the first uncrewed orbital mission under the "Gaganyaan" programme, which marks a significant step toward human spaceflight.

ISRO is gearing up for a packed schedule in the first half of 2025, showcasing its technological capabilities and fostering international partnerships.

In January, the GSLV-F15 mission will carry the NVS-02 navigation

satellite to enhance the NavIC constellation, incorporating domestically developed atomic clocks to improve India's navigation and positioning systems.

February will see the GSLV-F16 mission launch NISAR, an advanced Earth observation satellite co-developed with NASA.

In March, ISRO will undertake the commercial LVM3-M5 mission to launch BlueBird Block-2 satellites for AST SpaceMobile, a U.S.-based company.

This mission highlights ISRO's expanding presence in the global space economy. Jitendra Singh commended ISRO for its innovative advancements and its role in strengthening India's position as a leading space-faring nation.

The minister also emphasised the importance of public-private partnerships in accelerating India's space ambitions.

Gaganyaan Orbital Test: India's gateway to human spaceflight

The Gaganyaan mission represents India's ambitious foray into human spaceflight.

After the successful completion of uncrewed missions and abort tests in 2023 and 2024, ISRO plans to conduct the Gaganyaan Orbital

Test in 2025. This test is a critical step toward the first crewed Gaganyaan flight.

The Gaganyaan orbital test aims to validate the spacecraft's systems under actual space conditions.

This includes testing the crew module's re-entry capabilities, environmental control systems, and emergency measures.

The test will involve placing the spacecraft into low Earth orbit (LEO) using the GSLV Mk III (also known as LVM3) rocket.

The mission will carry a suite of sensors and experimental payloads to simulate real-life scenarios for crew safety and mission efficacy.

If successful, the Gaganyaan programme will make India the fourth country to achieve independent human spaceflight capabilities, joining the United States, Russia, and China.

It also lays the foundation for India's future manned lunar and interplanetary missions.

GSLV launches: Advancing satellite deployment

The Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle (GSLV) remains a cornerstone of ISRO's satellite deployment strategy.

In 2025, ISRO plans multiple

GSLV launches to bolster its communication, navigation, and Earth observation infrastructure.

These missions will include deploying advanced satellites into geostationary orbits, ensuring seamless connectivity and enhancing disaster management capabilities.

One notable mission in the GSLV pipeline is the launch of the GSAT-24A, a high-throughput communication satellite.

GSAT-24A will play a crucial role in meeting the country's growing demand for high-speed internet and broadcasting services.

Another key mission involves an advanced weather observation satellite equipped with state-of-the-art imaging technology to improve India's ability to monitor climate patterns and respond to natural disasters.

With each GSLV mission, ISRO continues to refine its cryogenic engine technology, further solidifying its position as a reliable partner in the global space launch market.

LVM3 commercial flight: Strengthening global partnerships

The LVM3, India's heaviest launch vehicle, has become a preferred choice for commercial satellite launches.

In 2025, ISRO will execute a ma-

major commercial mission using the LVM3, carrying a payload comprising satellites from multiple countries.

This mission highlights India's growing stature in the global commercial space sector.

By offering cost-effective and reliable launch services, ISRO attracts clients from Europe, North America, and Asia.

The LVM3 commercial flight will demonstrate its versatility by accommodating satellites of various sizes and functionalities, showcasing ISRO's adaptability to diverse customer needs.

These commercial ventures not only generate significant revenue but also strengthen India's international partnerships in space exploration.

They contribute to the global space ecosystem while reaffirming India's commitment to fostering global cooperation.

ISRO-NASA NISAR collaboration: Pioneering earth observation

One of the most anticipated missions of 2025 is the launch of the NASA-ISRO Synthetic Aperture Radar (NISAR) satellite.

This joint venture between ISRO and NASA marks a milestone in in-

ternational collaboration for Earth observation.

NISAR is designed to provide unparalleled data on Earth's surface changes. It uses advanced radar technology to monitor natural hazards, ice-sheet dynamics, and ecosystem disturbances with unprecedented precision.

The satellite will operate in dual frequency bands, allowing it to capture high-resolution images regardless of weather conditions or daylight.

The mission's applications are vast, ranging from agricultural monitoring and water resource management to disaster response and climate change research.

By combining the expertise of NASA and ISRO, NISAR exemplifies the potential of collaborative efforts in addressing global challenges.

India's role in the NISAR project includes developing the satellite's S-band radar and launching it aboard an Indian rocket.

This partnership not only strengthens India-US relations but also enhances ISRO's technical capabilities and global reputation.

A leap toward technological self-reliance

ISRO's 2025 missions underscore its commitment to achieving

technological self-reliance.

The development of indigenous cryogenic engines, advanced spacecraft systems, and cutting-edge radar technology highlights India's ability to compete with established spacefaring nations.

Economic benefits

The commercial LVM3 flight is expected to generate substantial revenue, contributing to India's growing space economy.

With an increasing number of international clients, ISRO is poised to capture a larger share of the \$500 billion global space market.

Global leadership in space exploration

Collaborations like NISAR and the ambitious Gaganyaan programme position India as a key player in global space exploration.

These missions showcase ISRO's ability to execute complex projects and foster meaningful international partnerships.

As India's space exploration efforts reach new heights, these missions are poised to enhance the nation's technological capabilities and reaffirm its status as a global leader in space science.

For millions of space enthusiasts, 2025 is shaping up to be a historic year for ISRO and Indian science.

SPORT



Portland Trail Blazers guard Scoot Henderson (00) goes up for a dunk during the first half against the Brooklyn Nets at Moda Center in Portland, Oregon, USA, on Tuesday. Agencies

Nets now end skid with high-scoring blowout of Blazers

By Field Level Media

THE Brooklyn Nets withstood a career-best 39 points from Portland's Scoot Henderson to snap a five-game losing streak with a 132-114 win over the host Trail Blazers on Tuesday night.

Cameron Johnson, who entered the game with an ankle injury, scored 24 points for Brooklyn. Noah Clowney and Keon Johnson had 20 each.

Henderson, who also dished six assists, connected on 13 of 18 shots from the floor and 8 of 10 from 3-point range.

Fellow second-year Blazer Toumani Camara also chalked up a career-high 23 points, and Shaedon Sharpe added 21.

The Nets went 19 of 41 from deep and had 36 assists from their 49 field goals, with 11 turnovers. Portland had 20 assists and 17 turnovers.

Henderson was aggressive from the outset, chalking up a season-best 17 first-quarter points and momentarily wiping out an early 25-15 deficit for the Blazers. But Brooklyn had more contributors at the other end.

Cameron Johnson and sixth man Jalen Wilson paced a 16-2 burst spanning the first-quarter horn to help the Nets march ahead 46-30.

Henderson hit his first eight field goals and his first six 3-pointers. He led a 14-3 Portland response, before he received some much-needed help from Camara. The pair trimmed the Blazers' buffer to 66-61 at intermission.

Henderson's 25-point tally before halftime was a season high, as were Camara's 19 points. The pair combined for 10 of 15 3-pointers at halftime -- the rest of Portland's team was 1 of 4.

Sharpe's coast-to-coast layup closed the gap to three to start the third period before Cameron Johnson and Clowney combined to give control back to the Nets, who led 98-88 at the end of the quarter.

Tyrese Martin's running dunk made it 112-97 midway through the fourth.

Portland hit three buckets in 59 seconds to reduce the margin to single digits and force Brooklyn to call timeout. The Nets strengthened their grip on the contest down the stretch.

Meanwhile, Jamal Murray scored a season-high 45 points on 18-of-26 shooting and the Denver Nuggets recorded a 118-99 victory at Dallas on Tuesday night to finish off a two-game sweep of the Mavericks.

Michael Porter Jr. added 13 points and six rebounds for Denver, which has won four straight games and eight of its past 10. Nikola Jokic added 10 points, 14 rebounds and 10 assists for his 16th triple-double of the season.

Dallas star Kyrie Irving (back) returned from a five-game absence and scored 11 points in 30 minutes. His rust showed as he shot just 4 of 18 from the field.

Daniel Gafford scored 13 points to lead the Mavericks, and Naji Marshall also put up 11 as Dallas fell for the seventh time in nine games.

The Mavericks lost big man Dereck Lively II to a sprained right ankle in the opening minutes to leave the club short-handed in the interior. Denver took advantage with a 51-30 rebounding advantage.

The Nuggets recorded a 112-101 victory over the Mavericks on Sunday, also in Dallas.

Denver shot 51.8 percent from the field on Tuesday, including 13 of 29 (44.8 percent) from 3-point range. Murray also had six assists and sank five 3-pointers.

Dallas made 42.2 percent of its shots and was 9 of 32 (28.1 percent) from behind the arc. Quentin Grimes, Maxi Kleber and Olivier-Maxence Prosper scored 10 points apiece for the Mavericks.

Dallas is just 3-7 since losing star Luka Doncic to a left calf strain on Christmas Day.

Murray was hot from the start with 19 first-quarter points on 7-of-9 shooting as Denver took a 36-21 advantage.

Jokic and Murray hit 3-pointers one minute apart to push the lead to 64-39 with 2:12 left in the first half. The Nuggets led by 29 after Murray's driving hoop with 29.5 seconds left before Denver settled for a 71-45 halftime lead.

REUTERS

SPORTS

Tanzania's cricketers gear up for ICC Men's CWC Challenge League B

By Correspondent Japheth Kazenga

TANZANIA's senior national men's cricket team is all set for the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup Challenge League B slated for February 7-17 in Hong Kong.

The squad made up of 14 cricketers is, a Tanzania Cricket Association (TCA) official said, slated to head to Hong Kong on January 31.

The cricketers constituting the squad are Ally Mpeka, Akhil Anil, Amal Rajeevan, Arslaan Jassani, Ivan Ismail, Khalid Amiri, and skipper Kassim Nassor.

Laksh Snehal, Mohamed Omary, Mohamed Simba, Mohamed Yunus, Mukesh Maker, Rajendra Asuri, and Sivaraj Selvaraj are also in the squad.

Pushpa Kumar is the head coach, former senior national cricket team player Adil Kassam is the team manager, and Nassor is the skipper.

The senior national cricketers, the official said, are determined to make a strong comeback in the second leg of the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup Challenge League B.

After a challenging start in Uganda, he stated, the team is focused on improving results and making a statement in Hong Kong.

The Hong Kong leg is a vital step on the Road to the 2027 Cricket World Cup in South Africa, Zimbabwe, and Namibia in October and November 2027.

The TCA had organized a showdown, termed the TCA 50 Overs Trials Tournament, to gauge the selected national cricketers' skills before playing in the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup Challenge League B.

The TCA 50 Overs Trials Tournament, recommended by the senior national squad head coach, took place in Dar es Salaam this month, involving three teams of Tz Green, Tz Blue, and Tz Yellow.

The ICC Men's Cricket World Cup Challenge League B participating teams are Bahrain, Italy, Singapore, Tanzania, Uganda, and Hong Kong.

The senior national cricket team will also play a series of friendly matches upon arrival in Hong Kong to gear up for the tournament.

The TCA official asked sports followers and the rest in Tanzania to show them unwavering support as the performers aim to rise higher.



Tanzania's senior national men's cricket team. PHOTO: COURTESY OF TANZANIA CRICKET ASSOCIATION

The 2024 ICC Men's Cricket World Cup Challenge League B, which took place in Uganda, culminated with Tanzania taking the fifth spot.

The ICC Men's Cricket World Cup Challenge League B eventual champions - Uganda - had topped the showdown table after notching a 2.7247 Net Run Rate (NRR), having emerged victorious in three encounters.

The tournament leader amassed 629 runs and gave away 392 runs in the three clashes. The other fixture was declared a no-result.

Uganda was, on the tournament's climax, facing Bahrain at the Entebbe Cricket Oval - aiming to seal an unbeaten stint.

Second-placed Italy ended up recording a 2.2440 NRR having secured victory in three outings and succumbed to loss in one tie.

The top two teams had, before confronting each other, so far been the competitors boasting unbeaten stretch in the showdown.

Italy brought their campaign in the week-long tournament to an end with a comprehensive eight-wicket victory over Singapore on the closing day.

Hong Kong secured third place after amassing the -0.5193 NRR, having come out victorious in three outings, lost one game, and the other tie was declared a no result.

Fourth-placed Bahrain had, before the climax, amassed the 0.7732 NRR

following a victory in two ties, a loss in another, and one clash with no result.

The team was, on the showdown's closing day, seeking to end Uganda's winning run.

Fifth-placed Tanzania, having failed to garner a victory in the showpiece, ended up recording the -1.4912 NRR.

The fixture versus Singapore, which ended up being declared a tie, had the East African country's squad garnering the only point in the showdown.

Bottom-placed Singapore had as well not registered victory in the tournament, managing a -2.6076 NRR.

Singapore, which brought its participation in the showdown to an end with the loss to Italy, scored 434 runs and leaked 598 runs.

The 2024 ICC Men's Cricket World Cup Challenge League B turned out to be the first stage of the road to the 2027 ICC Men's Cricket World Cup.

ICC Cricket World Cup Challenge League is the second edition of the ICC Cricket World Cup Challenge League and a cricket tournament which forms part of the 2027 Cricket World Cup qualification process.

Tanzania's senior national cricket team has honoured ICC Men's Cricket World Cup Challenge League B whilst boasting a successful run in the ICC Men's T20 World Cup Sub Regional Africa Qualifier A, held in Dar es Salaam in September.

Coffee lovers find grounds for complaint at Australian Open

By Lidia Kelly

MELBOURNE prides itself on serving up the world's best coffee, but finding a hot brew at the Australian Open has proved a challenge for some of the tens of thousands of fans attending this year's Grand Slam tennis tournament.

Organisers have worked hard over the last decade to improve options for refreshment and an array of outlets at the Melbourne Park precinct now offers everything from gourmet food to cocktails.

Yet long queues face fans looking to indulge their passion for the city's favourite beverage at the 15 coffee stores Tennis Australia says dot the 40-hectare (99-acre) site.

"We need more coffee places open," said Katherine Wright, who has been coming to the tournament for the five years as she lined up for a hot drink near the Rod Laver Arena on Wednesday.

"We are big coffee drinkers, especially Melburnians."

The Australian Open attracts more than 90,000 fans a day early on in the tournament, when ground passes are relatively cheap, offering the chance to watch main draw action on the outer courts.

Liz, another Melburnian, said she stood in line for half an hour for a cup of coffee on Sunday, when rain halted play for six hours on the outer courts.

"This is a well-established global event," she added. "You actually need to be providing better service to the consumer."

Melbourne imports about 30 tonnes of coffee beans a day, the Australian Science Education Research Association says, representing a surge of nearly

eightfold over the past decade that is sufficient to brew 3 million cups of coffee.

For Malgorzata Halaba, a fan who came from Poland on Sunday for her second Australian Open, finding one of those 3 million cups was a must.

"It seems it took me a day and a half, and several kilometres of walking around the grounds, to find coffee," she said. "And jet-lagged as I am, coffee is a lifesaver."

REUTERS



Manungu soccer team players Nassoro Pazi (L) and Ashimu Abdallah pictured on Tuesday fighting for the ball during a training session at Msimbazi Centre grounds in Dar es Salaam. PHOTO: CORRESPONDENT JUMANNE JUMAPHOTO: Correspondent

Barcelona president Laporta denies irregularity in Olmo registration saga

By Fernando Kallas

BARCELONA president Joan Laporta has defended his management of the club's finances and said they followed the Financial Fair Play (FFP) rules to enable them to register players Dani Olmo and Pau Victor.

Barca were blocked by LaLiga and the Spanish football federation (RFEF) from registering the players for the second half of the 2024-25 campaign for failing to meet the FFP rules before the Dec. 31 registration deadline.

After two courts also rejected Barcelona's requests, the club turned to the Spanish Government, which intervened as the National Sports Council (CSD) reversed the decision and allowed the club to provisionally register the players until the final resolution of their appeal.

Laporta said on Tuesday that they closed a deal with Middle Eastern investors to sell the VIP boxes of the revamped Camp Nou by the end of December which, alongside a new, seven-year kit deal with Nike, allowed them to balance their finances and meet the LaLiga financial requirements.

"We submitted the documentation on Dec. 27. We sent it within the deadline, but between Dec. 27 and 31, LaLiga asked us to complete the documentation. We thought we had the break-even on Dec. 31 and LaLiga asked us for additional requirements that were not included," Laporta told reporters on Tuesday.

"There was no improvisation whatsoever (in the VIP seats deal). We established a very detailed strategic plan from the outset and it has been evaluated as the weeks have gone by. (The deal) has been completed thanks to the work and talent of all the executives. They are doing an extraordinary job.

"The contract with Nike triples what we were charging and (the VIP seats deal) would have been done regardless of the FFP requirements."

Laporta refused to provide details of the VIP seat contract, citing confidentiality clauses.

LaLiga said last week it disagreed with the CSD's decision and will appeal. Several clubs have also criticised the government intervention, saying it set a dangerous precedent.

REUTERS

Atletico boss Simeone eyes more from Sorloth

MADRID

ATLETICO Madrid manager Diego Simeone said on Tuesday that while striker Alexander Sorloth has met the club's expectations in his first season, he is hopeful the Norwegian can deliver more.

The 29-year-old Sorloth, who has scored eight league goals in 18 games, was benched in their 1-0 victory over Osasuna on Sunday that moved them top of the LaLiga standings with 44 points, one ahead of second-placed rivals Real Madrid.

He had scored in back-to-back league matches before the Osasuna clash, including a 96th-minute winner in their 2-1 win at Barcelona and in their 1-0 win over Getafe. However, Sorloth is yet to score in the Champions League after five appearances.

"They all know where they are, it's about the collective and not the individual, and another important thing is the quality of minutes played," Simeone told reporters.

"Every time Sorloth came on from the bench, he was phenomenal, and when he started, he helped us. He is giving what we expected from him, and we hope he gives more."

Atleti visit second-tier side Elche on Wednesday in the Copa del Rey last 16 and the Argentine coach confirmed defender Clement Lenglet will likely miss the outing after sustaining a knock.

Speaking of his senior players, including all-time top scorer Antoine Griezmann who turns 34 in March, the coach said: "There's Koke, (who is 33), Cesar Azpilicueta (35), Axel Witsel (36) and Griezmann too and having them around is priceless for a coach.

"They train as if they were kids just starting out, and that energy rubs off on their teammates. We work by talking openly, being honest about our needs, and recognising their importance to the team. I have no doubt they are ready to compete."

Simeone, who has been managing Atleti for 14 years and guided them to two LaLiga titles and two European Cups, downplayed his achievements. He also led them to their longest winning streak of 14 games in all competitions on Sunday.

"I don't live off praise or criticism. I know my worth as a coach and the common goal I share with the players. When I find people who are compatible, like the four players I mentioned, that's true happiness for me," he said.

Atleti visit Leganes in LaLiga three days after their Elche trip and host Bayer Leverkusen in Champions League on Jan. 21.

REUTERS

Sevilla defender Salas detained in betting scheme probe

MADRID

SPANISH police briefly detained Sevilla defender Kike Salas on Tuesday over his alleged involvement in an illegal betting scheme, the club told Reuters.

According to Spanish outlet El Confidencial that first reported the arrest, the 22-year-old Spaniard is under investigation for deliberately seeking to receive bookings during several LaLiga matches in the 2023-24 season.

Salas received 10 yellow cards in the campaign, seven of those in Sevilla's last nine games of the season, making him LaLiga's most cautioned player in that period.

Sevilla officials told Reuters they were still "gathering information" about the situation. Police officers detained Salas on the club's premises after training and he was released after being questioned. He could face up to three years in prison for fraud.

LaLiga told Reuters they would ask to join the prosecution as a damaged party if the investigation were to lead to a lawsuit.

"Every year, LaLiga provides players with compulsory integrity workshops, in which they are explained and informed about these issues, so that they are very clear about what they can and cannot do," LaLiga said. Two other people related to Salas have also been arrested.

Police, court authorities and Salas' representatives did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

REUTERS

Guardiola rues missing players as Man City out-muscled by Brentford

LONDON

MANCHESTER City coach Pep Guardiola blamed the fact that he is missing key players for his side's late capitulation against Brentford in the Premier League on Tuesday as the Bees came from 2-0 down to grab a 2-2 draw.

Visitors City had gone 2-0 up thanks to a pair of goals from Phil Foden, but Yoane Wissa pulled one back for the hosts in the 82nd minute and Christian Norgaard headed the equaliser in the second minute of stoppage time as City's defence wilted.

City are currently missing defenders Ruben Dias and John Stones and influential midfielder Rodri, all of whom are injured.

Guardiola said that with several key players missing through injury, City didn't have the personnel to defend the type of balls they faced against Brentford.

"We have another type of player right now, and at the end we could not defend that situation," Guardiola told a press conference.

"They put six, seven players in the box, crosses, and sometimes they are better, so there are more players, they are taller, they are stronger in (heading)," he added.

The Catalan coach was seen engaging animatedly with Stefan Ortega after the final whistle, simultaneously berating and hugging his German goalkeeper, who got a strong hand to Norgaard's equalising effort but couldn't keep it out.

"I said how good he played in actions with the ball, how good his pass (was) to Erling (Haaland), how happy and satisfied I am," Guardiola explained.

Despite his positive words about Ortega, there was no denying his



Brentford's Christian Norgaard scores their second goal against Manchester City during their Premier League match at GTech Community Stadium, in London, Britain on Tuesday. REUTERS

disappointment at throwing away another lead and dropping two more points. "What I missed today especially was that we didn't take the right decision in the final third, in the actions where we could run, long balls we won and we could run, and in that moment we didn't take the right decisions," Guardiola said.

"I give credit to them, Brentford has always been a really, really tough opponent... they are an honest team, they are a generous team, I like the way they play, but today we created a lot."

Meanwhile, West Ham United fans expect new manager Graham Potter to bring some style back to their team's football after a dispiriting and brief Julen Lopetegui reign but the new coach was happy to win ugly against Fulham on Tuesday.

In Potter's first Premier League

game in charge, West Ham were largely second best against Marco Silva's side but managed to win 3-2 thanks to being gifted two goals by their London rivals.

The former Brighton and Hove Albion and Chelsea manager looked relieved at the final whistle as West Ham hung on in the face of a Fulham siege to move to 12th in the standings. Potter admitted it was "not perfect" but after the best part of two years since his last Premier League game, a morale-boosting win was the priority, stylish or not.

"It was probably not one for the purists but from our point of view we are delighted with the three points," Potter said. "I think we started the game a little bit passive and credit to Fulham for being in the game well and we tried to get the crowd a little bit more involved."

West Ham were run ragged early on but were gifted their opening goal as Fulham's Andreas Pereira played a careless loose pass across his own area and Carlos Soler took full advantage to thump a shot past Bernd Leno.

Potter introduced Danny Ings off the bench in the second half and the substitution paid off as the forward closed down a dawdling Leno and the ball broke for Lucas Paqueta to score what turned out to be the winning goal.

"I didn't think we were going to win the game by playing nice football," Potter said. "It was about forcing an error and creating something out of nothing."

Alex Iwobi scored both of Fulham's goals to twice bring his side to within one goal of their hosts but their eight-match unbeaten run in the league came to a disappointing end.

REUTERS

Motta puts focus on Juve's draw woes after Atalanta stalemate

ROME

JUVENTUS manager Thiago Motta voiced his frustration following his side's draw with Atalanta on Tuesday, acknowledging that while they remain unbeaten, their growing tally of draws means the Turin side are falling short of the club's expectations.

Fifth-placed Juve were held to another stalemate on Tuesday, this time at Atalanta where a goal from Pierre Kalulu was cancelled out by Mateo Retegui who levelled the score at 1-1.

Motta acknowledged that despite Juve being unbeaten this season, the number of draws means results are not good enough for the club, with his side now having racked up 13 draws and only 34 points - 15 fewer than at the same stage last season.

"It's clear that we can't be happy with the result; we go on the pitch to win. We played well, created some interesting situations, but we weren't good enough to score," Motta told reporters.

"It's true that we have drawn a lot this season and are not happy about that, we cannot be happy with a draw.

"However, they (the players) performed well. I have to acknowledge the effort and the performance.

"Now we have an important match against a great team, we need to recover well," he added, referring to the visit of seventh-placed AC Milan on Saturday.

Motta did not confirm whether forward Dusan Vlahovic would be ready for the clash or if Italian media reports that France striker Randal Kolo Muani has agreed to join Juve on a six-month loan deal from Paris St Germain were true.

"I do not talk about the transfer market. Dusan is recovering, he is not at 100% and we cannot risk losing him for longer, so we'll see what happens over the next three days," Motta said.

Juve scorer Kalulu acknowledged that the run of draws was starting to take the focus away from their performances.

"A good evening at the beginning, then this goal conceded overshadows everything a bit. We always have to do something more to get points," the defender said.



Atalanta's Mateo Retegui scores their first goal past Juventus' Michele Di Gregorio during their Serie A match at Gewiss Stadium, in Bergamo, Italy on Tuesday. REUTERS

Meanwhile, AC Milan must become more solid if they want to embark on a winning run in Serie A, coach Sergio Conceicao said on Tuesday after they needed two second-half goals to beat lowly Como.

Defender Theo Hernandez and forward Rafael Leao scored in the 71st and 76th minutes to secure a 2-1 win at promoted Como. They are in seventh place with 31 points from 19 games, five points off the top four, albeit with

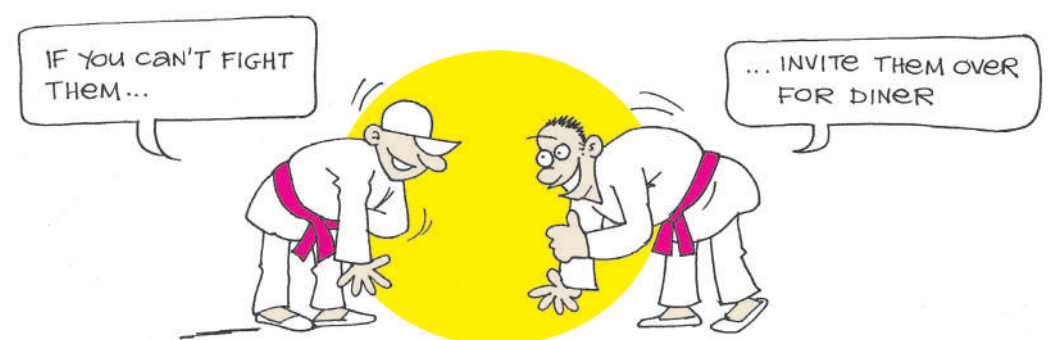
a game in hand. "We weren't 100% effective, far from it," Conceicao told Sky Sport. "Better in the second half, but as a team we have to be more solid, not allow the opponent to come out easily... We have the quality to not concede a goal like today." Como shocked Milan when new signing Assane Diao put the hosts in front on the hour as he beat goalkeeper Mike Maignan with a low shot inside the near post.

"We faced a good team and it wasn't easy," Conceicao said.

"We prepare for the matches with a board and video, but on the pitch several things are missing in (different) departments.

"We need to be more present in the duels, offensive and defensive, but there is always a good reaction. Working on positive results is easier and we will look for them, but we need to improve a lot." REUTERS

Gwiji by David Chikoko



SPORT

Guardiola rues missing players as Man City out-muscled by Brentford

COMPREHENSIVE REPORT, PAGE 19

Dauids: Simba hungry for group leadership despite fan ban

By Correspondent Nassir Nchimbi



SIMBA SC head coach Fadlu Dauids has expressed pride in his team's achievement of qualifying for the CAF Confederation Cup quarterfinals but emphasized their determination to finish as group leaders.

This would secure a second-leg home advantage in the knockout stages.

Currently, CS Constantine leads Group A with 12 points, while Simba follow closely with 10 points. Both teams have already qualified for the quarterfinals, leaving their final group-stage clash at Benjamin Mkapa Stadium as a battle for top spot.

A victory against the Algerian side on Sunday would allow Simba to top the group and avoid facing powerhouses such as RS Berkane, Zamalek, and USM Alger - clubs that have all claimed the title in the past five seasons - in the quarterfinals.

However, Simba will face an additional challenge as they play without fans, following a one-match crowd ban imposed by the Confederation of African Football (CAF).

This disciplinary action stems from fan misconduct during their 2-1 win over CS Sfaxien in December 2024.

In their most recent match, Simba drew 1-1 against Angola's Bravos do Maquis. The result secured their quarterfinal spot by bringing their total to 10 points in Group A.

Coach Dauids (pictured) stressed the importance of finishing at the top of the group, noting the benefits of hosting the second leg of the quarterfinals.

"We had a goal to qualify early, and now we have succeeded. But there is still one important thing: to finish at the top of our group," Dauids said.

"The match against CS Constantine is very important to us; it is a match to get three points that will put us at the top of the group. It will be a tough match because CS Constantine is a good team and they know how to play big matches."

The coach emphasized Simba's attacking and possession-based approach as key to breaking through CS Constantine's defense.

"We will need to be careful and try to break their defense, but we have the ability to win if we play our attacking and possession-based game," he added.

Dauids also voiced his frustration with CAF's decision to impose a one-match ban on fans and a \$40,000 fine (approximately Tsh. 100,000,000).

"CAF's decision is unfair because CS Sfaxien were the ones who started the trouble. I'm not saying we responded well, but it's disappointing," he said.

"It's disappointing to play without fans. They push us to the limit, helping us stay aggressive even when we are down. However, we will be happy to have them back during the quarterfinals."

Simba last reached the quarterfinals in the 2021/2022 season, where they were eliminated by Orlando Pirates on penalties after a 1-1 aggregate draw.

This season, the Tanzanian giants have set their sights on reaching the CAF Confederation Cup final, seeking to go beyond their quarterfinal appearances in recent years.

“

CAF's decision is unfair because CS Sfaxien were the ones who started the trouble. I'm not saying we responded well, but it's disappointing.

Simba wrap up transfer window with winger Elie Mpanzu signing

By Correspondent Seth Mapoli

AS the mid-season transfer window closed yesterday, January 15, Simba SC appear to have concluded their business with the signing of Elie Mpanzu only.

Sources within Simba's management have hinted that head coach Fadlu Dauids is satisfied with the current squad and has opted not to make any additional signings during this window.

In one of his recent interviews, Dauids highlighted the challenges of securing the type of players he needs, particularly those capable of making an immediate impact in the starting lineup, similar to Mpanzu.

"We won't make significant signings during this window because it's challenging to find the type of players we need during this period," Dauids explained.

"Most players are under contracts with their respective clubs, which makes negotiations difficult, especially when those players are key to their teams."

"When signing a player at this time, it's crucial to ensure they have the quality to immediately fit into the first team, as Mpanzu has done," he added.

During the transfer window, Simba were linked with Azam FC midfielder Feisal Salum, popularly known as Fei Toto. However, it proved challenging to negotiate with Azam FC, as the club remains keen on retaining the player.

Simba also inquired about the availability of Allan Okello, a midfielder for Uganda's Vipers SC. However, Vipers have been reluctant to engage in transfer talks with Simba, especially since the drawn-out negotiations during Cesar Manzoki's transfer saga.

At this point, there are no expectations of additional signings unless a surprise deal emerges, as a strategy Simba has occasionally employed in previous windows.

Simba have now turned their focus to their upcoming CAF Confederation Cup clash against Algeria's CS Constantine, scheduled for this Sunday at 4 PM at Benjamin Mkapa Stadium in Dar es Salaam.

Simba currently sit in second place in Group A with 10 points and will be aiming for a victory to secure the top spot. CS Constantine lead the group with 12 points.

The first-leg encounter between the two teams ended in a 2-1 victory for CS Constantine in Algeria. Simba will now look to leverage their home advantage and end the group stage on a high note.

This crucial match promises to be a thrilling contest as Simba battle to secure the top position in the group and gain momentum for the next stage of the competition.

Infrastructure delays push CHAN 2024 to August 2025, CAF confirms

By Correspondent Seth Mapoli

THE Confederation of African Football (CAF) has officially announced the postponement of the 2024 African Nations Championship (CHAN) finals, which were set to take place in Tanzania, Kenya, and Uganda from February 1 to 28.

The tournament will now be held in August 2025, with the decision attributed to the need for more time to complete and upgrade critical infrastructure.

In a statement, CAF acknowledged significant progress made by the three host nations but emphasized that additional efforts are necessary to meet the standards required for a successful tournament.

"Good progress has been seen in Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda in the construction and upgrading of stadiums, training grounds, hotels, hospitals, and other infrastructure and facilities for the successful hosting of the TotalEnergies African Nations Championship (CHAN) Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda 2024. However, CAF's technical and infrastructure experts have advised that more time is needed to ensure that these facilities are up to standard," the statement read.

CAF's technical team has been conducting regular inspections in the host countries and concluded that, while the preparations are commendable, several aspects of the infrastructure need more time to be finalized.

The CAF President, Patrice Motsepe (pictured), extended his gratitude to the leaders of the three host nations for their dedication to the project.

"I would like to express my sincere gratitude to President William Ruto of Kenya, President Samia Suluhu Hassan of Tanzania, and President Yoweri Museveni of Uganda for their leadership and the good progress made in the construction and upgrading of football infrastructure. I am amazed by the ongoing construction and renovation of stadiums, training grounds, and other facilities in these countries," Motsepe said.

Motsepe expressed confidence that by August 2025, the necessary infrastructure will be ready, enabling the three countries to



deliver a world-class tournament.

In Tanzania, preparations are reportedly nearing completion, with significant work done on key facilities.

The Chairman of the Tanzanian CHAN Internal Preparation Committee, Leo-degar Tenga, highlighted the progress made in the country.

"To make the competition a success, the Government has undertaken crucial renovations and construction of infrastructure. This includes work at Benjamin Mkapa Stadium in Dar es Salaam and the New Amaan Stadium in Zanzibar."

"Additionally, training grounds such as Gymkhana, Law School, and Major General Isamuhyo have been constructed as requested by CAF," Tenga said.

Tenga noted that Tanzania's preparations are more than 95% complete, and CAF officials who have inspected the facilities have expressed satisfaction with the progress.

"Although there are a few final touches to complete, the inspections have shown that Tanzania is ready to host the tournament," Tenga added.

The CHAN tournament, held every two years, is unique in that it exclusively features players who compete in their respective domestic leagues.

This edition of the tournament will involve 19 nations and is a significant event for the region, showcasing local talent while boosting infrastructure and economic activity.

The collaborative effort among Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda marks a historic moment for East Africa, as the three nations work together to host a major continental football event.

CAF's decision to postpone the tournament reflects its commitment to ensuring that the host nations can deliver a memorable event. The organization has pledged to continue working closely with the three countries to provide technical support and guidance during the remaining stages of preparation.

"We remain optimistic that the additional time will allow for the completion of the required facilities and ensure the tournament's success," CAF stated.

The CHAN finals are eagerly anticipated by football enthusiasts across Africa, and the new timeline gives host nations the opportunity to meet CAF's standards and expectations.

For now, the focus will be on completing the infrastructure to showcase East Africa's capabilities on the continental stage.

Flexibles by David Chikoko



TO NIGHT @ 9:00

EATV THURSDAY

11:00 DADAZ
12:00 KIPENGA XTRA
13:00 Movie
13:55 Dondoo za Michezo
14:00 Movie
14:30 Ujenzi (r)
15:00 Funguka
15:30 Ubongo Kids
16:00 Zole Kuntu
16:55 Dondoo za Michezo
17:00 SSELECT
17:55 Kurasa
18:00 Kati Za Wana
18:30 #HASHITAG
19:00 EATV SAA 1
20:00 DADAZ (r)
21:00 TOP 10
21:30 Zole Kuntu
23:00 Kurasa
23:05 EATV SAA 1

TOP 10
It is a list of the hottest Bongo Flava music videos that are loved by the viewers

eastafrika RADIO

05:00 Supa Breakfast
09:00 MAMAMIA
12:00 Kipenga Xtra
13:00 Planet Bongo
16:00 EA Drive
19:00 Kipenga
21:00 The Cruise

88.1FM
DAR ES SALAAM