



BUSINESS TCRA embraces new drive on promoting courier services

Mchechu commends Stamico for reforms, increase in earnings



Horticulture seen hitting Sh30bn on high output roll



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BUSINESS



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'Lax oversight by MPs foments corruption'

By Guardian Reporter



Some Muslim faithful hold prayers at Mtekelezo grounds in Dodoma city yesterday to signal the end of Ramadhan, the Islamic holy month of fasting and prayer. Eid ul Fitr, one of the largest and most important celebrations in the Islamic calendar, will however be officially held across Tanzania today and tomorrow. Photo: Correspondent Ibrahim Joseph

MEMBERS of Parliament are the principal arm of the state responsible for rising cases of embezzlement and misuse of funds outlined in the annual report of the Controller and Auditor General (CAG), a former parliamentary administrator has declared.

George Mlawa, a former Clerk to the National Assembly, made the remarks in Dar es Salaam on Thursday, outlining his remarks to the commission formed to investigate state organs tasked with dispensing criminal justice.

Before former Chief Justice Mohammed Chande Othman, he said MPs are not fulfilling their responsibilities in their areas of representation. "They are the ones who should spot the weaknesses and work on the loopholes," he emphasized.

"MPs are the representatives of the people," he said, citing Article 8 of the Constitution, insisting that they should use the power of representation.

He expressed shock on the item that payments for the new cargo aircraft was more than doubled from \$37m to \$86m and the standing committee of the National Assembly was unaware of the situation.

"There are 18 parliamentary committees, but they don't see these loopholes until CAG passes to inspect," he stated, pointing out that there are more than 390 MPs from all parts of the country. "They are the ones who should be the first to spot and act, the Head of State has a lot to do," he stated.

Annual reports by the Commission for Human

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FAO inks grain zone stunting research project

By Correspondent Friday Simbaya, Iringa

RESEARCH will be conducted in the southern highlands zone to find out the causes for alarming levels of stunting among children, to design enduring mitigation measures Stella Kimambo, nutrition officer at the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), made this affirmation during training on food guidelines and consumption

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Home checking efforts to reduce malaria cases

By Correspondent Joseph Mwendapole

FOLLOWING up people who test positive at health centres by visiting their households will be conducted in four regions in a campaign to ensure that family members can be tested and treated.

Abdallah Lusasi, the Health ministry acting manager of the national malaria control programme, made this observation ahead of World Malaria Day set for Tuesday next week at Mnazi

Mmoja grounds in Dar es Salaam. "We will make sure that those who are diagnosed with the infection get the right treatment and then pursue tests and treatment on people who live far from health care centers," he said.

This component is one among strategies to reduce malaria in regions leading in infections rates, listed as Tabora, Mtwara, Shinyanga and Kagera, he said, signaling that this year's theme on Malaria Day is 'change, invest, implement' to start eradicating malaria.

Malaria was decreasing nationally on account of strategies being implemented since 2008 when the routine infection rate stood at 18.1 percent, sliding to 8.1 case prevalence this year, he stated.

"We want 20 hours after getting a fever the patient should have been treated," he said, elaborating that motivation is vital in regions where malaria prevalence is low.

"They have completely forgot-

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HIV self-test kits for mobile downloading

By Guardian Reporter and Agencies

AN initial 400,000 test kits for finding out one's HIV status will be distributed within Africa under a new plan to make the tests available, affordable and accessible.

Abbott, the global leader in diagnostics and the fight

against HIV, is partnering with Population Services International (PSI) and the United Nations-based international drug purchasing facility (Unitaid) to make HIV self-testing (HIVST) available at an affordable and accessible price.

Bassem Bibi, divisional vice president for Abbott's

rapid diagnostics business for Europe, Middle East and Africa region, says that his vital partnership serves as an early market access vehicle.

It will enable affordable access to high-quality self-test kits in high HIV bur-

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The Guardian Limited, publisher of The Guardian and Nipashe newspapers, invites all development supporters to send congratulatory messages on celebrating the 59th Anniversary of the Union of Tanganyika and Zanzibar.

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FAO initiates grain zone stunting research project

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for nutrition officers in the zone here on Wednesday.

She said that alarming cases of stunting in the regions with plenty of grain is a shock the government and stakeholders, in which case research will enable stakeholders to find out what underlies that situation

As stunting threatens the future of millions of children in the country, it is necessary to get scientific findings to design a solution that will help rescue the health of the wider population, she stated.

"We have come to Iringa Region to empower nutrition officers with food and eating guidelines," she said, elaborating that this will enable them to inform the people about the guidelines at the community level.

The training follows the launch of the campaign for healthy nutrition as a community asset last year, conveying the message to health experts, researchers, teachers and community leaders, she said.

Current guidelines are not friendly to the poor, so nutrition officers can use their proximity to the people to convey the message of how to use food correctly and address nutritional issues, she said.

Commuter buses, leaflets and nutrition cartoons that reach children will be used as platforms, she said, noting that the research will be conducted in Iringa, Mbeya, Njombe, Katavi, Ruvuma and Songwe regions. It will be looking into food security issues and how families feed their children, the official specified.

Magreth Nathai, head of nutrition in the Agri-

culture ministry, said the training will be directed at regional and district nutrition officers, to send the right message to the community about food consumption. The training is meant to solve nutritional challenges and food intake quality, she stated.

"The community is currently experiencing various challenges in nutrition issues, so after this training, the officers will share this knowledge with the community to overcome the challenge of malnutrition and stunting in the zone," she explained. Participants Judith Mushi from Mbinga District and Albert Sinkamba from Songea municipality both in Ruvuma region, cited poor knowledge on food preparation as a reason for children stunting.

FAO and the government, through the Agriconnect programme backed by the European Union, launched a nutrition campaign country-wide to develop healthy eating habits based on locally available foods.

The FAO-led programme, "Building resilience of agri-food systems and better nutrition in the context of the global pandemic" was the fourth component of the precursor, supporting value chains for shared prosperity.

The project seeks to show the way in absorbing pandemic-like shocks to food supply and market accessibility, as the country's economy and food systems are dependent on agriculture.

Upwards of 65 percent of the population is based in farming, with agro-sector activity accounting for 28 percent of GDP in the Mainland and 51 percent Zanzibar.



Zanzibar President Dr Hussein Ali Mwinyi exchanges greetings with Zanzibar Chief Sheikh Saleh Omar Kaabi (R) shortly after arriving at Masjid Mushawal Mwebeshauri Mosque in Zanzibar yesterday for Friday prayers. Photo: Zanzibar State House

HIV self-test kits for mobile downloading

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den settings with a dire need for access to health-care services, while mitigating risks such as increased supply chain costs and custom fees. People who test positive will undergo confirmatory testing and will be linked to antiretroviral treatment, keeping them healthy and helping reduce further transmission to others.

"With millions of people living with HIV worldwide, many of whom do not know their status, receiving a diagnosis is a vital first step in accessing treatment," the Abbott executive noted. The partnership is im-

portant to Abbott as it reinforces the diagnostics firm's commitment to enabling people in Africa to live healthier, fuller lives, by improving testing capabilities through high quality and affordable blood-based HIV self-tests, he declared.

"Self-testing has shifted the paradigm for HIV testing," he asserted, pointing at the HIV self-testing Africa initiative that it amassed compelling evidence that HIVST can reach more people than traditional diagnostics. It offers an alternative to people living with HIV to find out about their status and to access anti-retroviral treatment services. Self-testing is a critical

entry point to HIV prevention services for those testing negative, including the delivery of pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP), medicine taken to prevent getting HIV, he said. PrEP is highly effective for preventing HIV when taken as prescribed, experts believe, whereas self-test kits are useful for screening in health facilities.

Dr Karin Hatzold, director of the Africa self-test initiative and associate director of HIV/TB programs at Population Services International (PSI), said the kits will also be applicable in seeking to keep services going during COVID-19 and any future emergencies.

PSI requires more product options to meet the growing demand, she stated, underlining that the early market access vehicle will make it easier for countries to acquire products and embed them in health systems. This will ensure that self-test kits are affordable to those who want to access them, she reiterated.

The Abbott HIV self-test kits will be distributed strategically to communities with inadequate access to healthcare services and will help build capacity to meet the UNAIDS 95-95-95 targets for 2025. The 95-95-95 targets stipulate that 95 per cent of people living with HIV know their status; 95

per cent of people who know their status are on antiretroviral therapy; and 95 per cent of people on treatment have suppressed viral loads.

Dr Philippe Duneton, executive director of Unitaid, said self-testing has helped reaching beyond health centres and make testing easier. This is critically important for vulnerable groups who are often at higher risk of HIV but may also be hesitant to access health services for fear of stigma, discrimination, and violence, he said. Making quality self-testing kits widely available and affordable is vital to reaching people at risk of HIV with the opportunity to test privately and access life-saving care, he added.



National Assembly Speaker Dr Tulia Ackson (R) pictured in Dodoma city yesterday holding talks with members of the five-strong presidential committee detailed to assess the performance of the Foreign Affairs and East African Cooperation ministry as relates to delivering results on international relations generally and economic diplomacy in particular. Second right is the committee's chairman, Hassan Simba Yahya, Tanzania's former High Commissioner to Zambia who was also accredited to Angola, São Tomé and Príncipe. Photo courtesy of National Assembly

Home testing drive to arrest malaria cases

FROM PAGE 1

ten as if malaria no longer exists. It seems that testing is now below 51 per cent, now we want these areas to increase testing,' he said.

Encouraging the use of mosquito nets was vital since many people have stopped using them for all sorts of reasons, including misguided views on the nets.

Areas with greater prevalence will be prioritized in distributing mosquito nets, spray drugs and in increasing tests and treatment, said.

"We have enough test kits and drugs in the country but there are times when people do not get them.

Tabora region leads with 23 per cent prevalence rate followed by Mtwara 20 per cent, Kagera 18 per cent, Shinyanga 16 per cent and Mara region 15 per cent.

Meanwhile Arusha Manyara, Singida, Dodoma, Kilimanjaro, Dar es Salaam, Songwe, Mwanza regions have seen prevalence levels drop significantly.

Strategies to remind residents in these regions to be mindful of precautions are relevant, he said.

City chief medical officer Dr Rashid Mfaume asked residents to go for testing in hospital in case of malaria to get the right treatment. Picking up medicine without tests or medical consultation was risky, he state, urging journalists to work on the problem of self-medication when they think they are infected with malaria.

Not every headache, a little pain or tiredness is due to malaria, he added

'Lax oversight by MPs foments corruption'

FROM PAGE 1

Rights and Good Governance (CHRAGG) need to be submitted to the president and then put to the legislature in like manner as the CAG report, the veteran administrator intoned.

"In the Human Rights and Good Governance Report, there are a number of institutions that are listed for violating human

rights, he said, pointing out that discussing the report will enable measures to be taken to improve observance of justice.

Independent lawyer Fatma Karume, appearing before the commission, urged the establishment of special courts to handle criminal cases to reduce congestion and control piling up of cases.

"I have spoken to the commission and I have told them six suggestions which are aimed at reducing congestion in the High Court," she said.

There should be a difference between courts that handle criminal cases and those tasked with civil cases, to improve efficiency and enhance case load handling, she stated.

There should be legislation on eligibility for bail and not court discretion via the pleasing of prosecutors, she stated, underlining that in the current situation there are restrictions used to tighten bail eligibility, hindering people to obtain bail.

Asserting that the Evidence Act (1967) was outdated, she pointed out that Tanzania has signed

various international agreements and protocols to protect people's rights.

She also appealed for guidelines for delivering a ruling as currently there are rulings delivered just by the will of the magistrate. Guidelines are needed to make court rulings uniform in incidents which are of the same nature, she stated.

DART urges employees to observe ethical considerations

By Correspondent Joseph Mwendapole

DAR Rapid Transit (DART) agency's chief executive, Dr Edwin Mhede, has urged the agency's staff to always adhere to work ethics by working hard and efficiently while serving people with quality services.

Dr Mhede made the remarks in Dar es Salaam this week during the 9th DART agency's workers' meeting.

The chief executive gave the counsel in the backdrop of a few staff who seem to have developed a tendency of reporting to the workplace late with an excuse of facing heavy traffic jams in places where BRT services are yet to be accessible at the moment.

Dr Mhede also warned the public servants at the Agency who miss official events on baseless grounds emphasising that any meeting or

social event organized by the agency, aiming at fostering inclusive employee engagements and networking such as sports bonanza, staff meetings, visiting needy communities for corporate social responsibility, cleaning days and others are all integral part of a public servant duties regardless of location and time.

Apart from working hard, he reminded his fellow public servants to keep and live up to the wisdom and provisions of The Public Service Act, Cap. 298 (R.E. 2019).

Furthermore, he told them to abide by the eight underlying principles provided for in Regulation 65(I) of The Public Service Regulations, GN. No. 444 of 2022.

The principles that are cited in the code form, part of the code of ethics and conduct for public service, include the pursuit of excellence in service, loyalty to the government, diligence, impartiality, integrity, accountability, respect for

the law, and proper use of official information.

He said supervisors in departments and units should treat their subordinates with respect and vice-versa. Subordinates as well must respect and adhere to what their supervisors instructed them to do when fulfilling their daily duties.

"While fulfilling your daily duties in your respective departments and units, each of you must respect his or her colleague and at the same time follow a proper chain of command", he insisted.

Dr Mhede said: "Be faithful, put your heart into your work. But do not put your work into your heart. Imitate none who are slothful, and who tend to give divided or sub-optimal service," said Dr Mhede

Geofrey Mgegwa, the Agency's Accountant said that the CE's speech was an opportunity for him and the Agency at large as

they were reminded of the benefits of working hard at a personal and national level as insisting that working hard is the beachhead of success.

"I have received the CE's advice positively and from today I will make a notable improvement in my daily duties as an Accountant of the Agency," he said

One of the DART Agency's drivers, Zebu Mtawa, said the decision by the Chief Executive to remind all workers of the Agency on the ideal way of fulfilling our duties while observing laws and regulations of the public service during workers' meetings would make them serve the public with one voice.

"We have heard by our own ears from the Chief Executive the way we should work and observe all rules and regulations stipulated in the public service standing order. This will help us change for the better in terms of our ways of

perceiving and doing things when fulfilling our duties. Indeed, nothing goes without working hard," said Mtawa.

Bwana Malima, Principal Trade Officer at DART, said that he received the speech positively by saying that the address had inspired him to have a positive attitude towards work at the Agency.

"The Chief Executive has advised us to put our hearts in the work, meaning that we should willingly love and be fully committed to what we are supposed to do while fulfilling our duties regardless of time and place," Bwana said.

Dart is a bus-based mass transit system connecting the suburbs of Dar es Salaam to the Central Business District, which began operations in May 2016.

Construction of the \$154 million first phase was completed in December 2015, funded by the African Development Bank (ADB),

the World Bank and the Tanzanian government.

Phase I of the BRT system has a total length of 21 kilometres and runs from Kimara via Ubungo ending at Kivukoni, Morocco and Gerezani.

Phase II of BRT infrastructure development which stands at 90 percent completion is estimated to be complete by the end of 2023. BRT infrastructure development for Phase III which is underway will be completed by the end of 2024 followed by bus operations in 2025.

Phase III of the BRT project involves the construction of a 23.6km infrastructure project stretching from the Nyerere-Gongolamboto Road to City Centre and a section of the Uhuru Road from Tazara to Kariakoo-Gerezani.

Meanwhile, phase IV involves construction of a 16.1-kilometre stretch along Bagamoyo and Sam Nujoma roads.



The message this Tanzania National Roads Agency (Tanroads) billboard carries is categorical: IT IS PROHIBITED TO CONDUCT BUSINESS IN A ROAD RESERVE. Yet, what we are witnessing is clearly to the contrary – the open-air roasting of maize along the Tangi Bovu-Makonde stretch of Dar es Salaam's Bagamoyo Road. Indeed, the situation is much similar in many other spots across the city. Correspondent Sabato Kasika captured this scene at the Mbezi Shule bus stop in Kinondoni municipality on Thursday.

'9,188 land owners benefited from president's grace period'

By Guardian Reporter, Dodoma

DR Angelina Mabula, Minister for Lands, Housing and Human Settlements Development, has said a total 21.9bn/- in land taxes has been exempted during the three-month grace period issued by President Samia Suluhu Hassan.

President Samia issued an extension up to April, 30 this year for defaulters to pay their principal debts warning that serious legal action will be taken for those who will fail.

The minister said from July, 2022, to March 2023 more than 9,188 land owners have benefited from the grace period in which 32bn/- in primary debts were collected.

However, due to the challenges which made users fail to know their actual debts, the ministry has done an improvement into the system.

Speaking in Dodoma yesterday on the improvements made, Mabula said the ministry has established a system where land users will receive an SMS which requires users to visit the land office so that

they know their actual debt.

Among the changes which the minister said was to allow users receive a sms which remind them of the importance of paying taxes.

She said up to now more than 84,000 messages have been sent to defaulters with the actual debt of 115bn/- which is expected to be collected from 25 regions.

She said the remaining region which is Dar es Salaam, the messages will be sent by 30 April in which all land owners will have received.

According to the minister, the system will increase revenue from the land sector.

"I'm therefore calling upon land users that whenever they see a message with the word 'Ardhi' they should know that it is from the lands ministry," she said.

She said the ministry calls upon users to use the systems to pay their principal debts, warning that serious legal action will be taken for those who will fail.

EID MUBARAK

Wishing you and your family
a very blessed Eid El Fitr

tigo



Dar es Salaam regional malaria control coordinator Dr Ford Chisongela briefs journalists attending a seminar in Dar es Salaam yesterday on the implementation of a national plan to control malaria at the regional level. Photo: Correspondent Miraji Msala

African airlines see accelerated recovery with rebound in travel

By Guardian Reporter

AFRICAN Air travel has made a robust recovery, nearly reaching pre-pandemic levels, an association of African carriers has said in a new report.

The African Airlines Association (AFRAA) said traffic in March reached 94.8 per cent of 2019 levels as more international routes and tourism reopened.

It noted that domestic flights accounted for 37 per cent of the March traffic, with intra-Africa flights at 31 per cent and intercontinental travel at 32 per cent.

Data also shows that the total number of intercontinental routes operated by African airlines have exceeded pre-Covid levels since October 2022.

The association said that African airlines are on course to narrow their revenue gap in 2023.

African airlines lost \$3.5 billion in revenue in 2022 and \$8.6 billion in 2021.

The Covid-19 pandemic hit African hard as travel restrictions led to the grounding of aircraft. Some airlines, such as Air Namibia and Air Mauritius completely folded while others such as South Afri-

can Airways and Kenya's flag carrier, KQ needed big bailout funding from the state to keep flying.

Others, like Ethiopian airlines converted their passenger jets into freighters to compensate for reduced passenger traffic.



It noted that domestic flights accounted for 37 per cent of the March traffic, with intra-Africa flights at 31 per cent and intercontinental travel at 32 per cent

Sirari ward councillor warns on pupil and student absenteeism

By Correspondent Ambrose Wantagwa, Tarime

SIRARI Ward councillor in Tarime District, Mara Region, Amos Sagara has warned parents whose students who have not reported in secondary and primary schools strict legal measures will be taken against them.

Addressing the people in Bondeni village on the outskirts

of Sirari Town, he said the government will not tolerate parents in the ward whose children haven't reported to school despite succeeding to pursue secondary education.

He said that all village governments have also been ordered to search and provide information on parents who are not honest, allegedly marrying off their daughters at a young age after undergoing

FGM. "The government announced the removal of fees from primary schools to advanced secondary education, where now parents have to pay for the basic services of their children, including buying uniforms and learning materials," he said.

He added: "We will not allow a single child to miss the opportunity to excel in education for any reason, we will take action against

all parents who force their daughters to get married at a young age."

The Councillor pointed out that in 2022 the Government sent an amount of 180m/- to carry out improvements in two primary schools in Keryoba and Sirari, including the construction of eight classrooms and four toilets.

"The government issued more than 400m/- for the construction of the new Bukira Secondary

School which this year 2023 will be completed and start registering students to start the first form," he said. During end of year holidays, some clans of several communities in the Mara Region are alleged to be carrying out rituals prohibited by law, including female genital mutilation (FGM), where many girls are forced to marry after dropping out of school.

According to the Project Officer

of the Centre for the protection of girls fleeing FGM in the Tarime District, Valerian Mgani, more than 600 girls fled to the centre to seek refuge from FGM.

Despite the government's and stakeholders efforts to fight FGM, some communities in the district are alleged to carry out such violence during night with others alleged to take the girls to neighboring countries for the same purpose.

Zbar police assure public on safety throughout Eid el-Fitr celebrations

By Guardian Reporter, Zanzibar

POLICE have assured citizens that it will intensify security during the celebrations of the Eid el-Fitr where some people have been misusing it by engaging in criminal acts.

Addressing journalists here, Unguja Urban West regional Police Commander ACP Richard Thadei Mchomvu said the Force will not hesitate to take stern action against all people who will be found engaging in acts that threaten peace and stability.

He said the Force is well prepared to strengthen security throughout the festive season especially in celebration grounds, roads, patrols and inspections so as to ensure that people celebrate the important day in peace.

"Some people have been misusing this festival by engaging in acts that threaten peace which include implementing fraud, taking people's funds illegally, but the Police Force is here and very careful," he said. In addition, he said that in

strengthening security and safety of people and their properties, the Force in collaboration with other security and defense agencies will conduct patrols and searches in various areas throughout the festive period.

"There will be enough police officers in the celebration grounds while also strengthening car and foot patrols as well as dog and horse squads will be used to ensure the safety of citizens and their properties is strengthened until the end of the festive season," he asserted.

Commander Mchomvu urged residents to also be careful by making sure that they put their settlements safe when they leave for celebrations which include locking gates and doors.

Unguja South Regional Police Commander, ASP Gaudianus Kamugisha said police officers will be dispatched in all roads during the whole period of the festival so as to control reckless drivers who are always unresponsive in observing road safety rules and regulations.



A cow is slaughtered in Unguja's Amani suburb yesterday in readiness for Eid al-Fitr celebrations set for today and tomorrow across Tanzania. Photo: Rahma Suleiman

HARARE

Zimbabwean students showcase Chinese skills

CHINA and Zimbabwe might be oceans and time zones apart, but through language, the distance is slowly being bridged.

After realizing the importance of Chinese, a language spoken by over a billion people and one of the United Nations' official languages, Lorraine Nganga decided to learn the language.

"Zimbabwe and China enjoy excellent relations. Many Chinese people come to Zimbabwe to buy things, to invest, and for tourism. Many Zimbabweans also go to China for shopping, to study, and for sightseeing," Nganga, a Chinese language

learner at the Zimgro Language Consultancy in Harare, the capital of Zimbabwe said.

The UN Chinese Language Day is observed every year on the day when the contribution of Chinese literature, poetry, and language is highlighted. As the world marks the day on April 20, learning Chinese is becoming a common trend in Zimbabwe, a largely multilingual country with 16 official languages.

While learning Chinese might seem to be a formidable task, according to Minia Rukucha, another learner, all it

takes to master the language is dedication, time, and a suitable learning environment.

"Learning Chinese is very difficult, but I enjoy learning the language, so I will never give up. Although Chinese is very difficult, our instructor's teaching style makes learning interesting," said Rukucha in Chinese.

"To her, practice makes perfect. "Every day, I read Chinese books, listen to Chinese audio, and watch Chinese movies; (in) that way I can improve my Chinese abilities."

As China's global economic footprint expands, demand

for Chinese language interpretation services has expanded spectacularly, said Tawanda Zimhindo, a Chinese instructor and Zimgro founder.

"More and more individuals are signing up for lessons most probably because of the fact of the good relationship that exists between Zimbabwe and China right now, and also the fact that banking on that good relationship, more and more Chinese people are coming to do business in Zimbabwe and more and more Zimbabweans are going to China for various reasons," said Zimhindo.

"So in such interactions, there is a need for language. As long as one has high command of the Chinese language, as long as one has an understanding of the language, there will be more opportunities both in Zimbabwe and outside," Zimhindo said.

To promote the learning of Chinese in Zimbabwe, the University of Zimbabwe became one of the first institutions of higher learning in Africa to host a Confucius Institute in 2006, and to date, over 16,000 students have attended Chinese language classes. Each year

several students are awarded scholarships to further study the language in China.

The government has also taken various measures to promote the study of the language, including the introduction of Chinese classes in elementary schools, high schools, and colleges.

In an effort to promote studying the Chinese language in Zimbabwe, the Confucius Institute has made various strides in developing learning materials in local languages, including the publication in 2015 of a Shona-Chinese dictionary.

China remains the biggest foreign investor in Zimbabwe, with investments from the Asian country ranging from agriculture, mining, communications, and the energy sector, among others. In addition, China has become a competitive study destination, compared to traditional English-speaking destinations such as Britain, the United States, and Australia.

With the increased economic engagement between Zimbabwe and China, which has seen more young people choosing China as the preferred study destination, the popularity of learning the Chinese language among Zimbabwean students continues to grow.

Kilwa sea weed farmers advised to conserve, protect environment

By Correspondent Daniel Semberya

KILWA district commissioner Christopher Ngubiagai has called upon residents in the area to take a leading role in protecting the environment for the benefit of current and future generations.

Ngubiagai gave the remarks yesterday in Kilwa at an event of distributing modern equipment and other tools to Kilwa sea weed farmers offered by Mwani Mariculture Limited who has invested in the area.

He said the new seeds will see farmers produce quality plants hence improve farmers' living standards and economy.

"Good farming goes with the environment protection and hence be able to attain blue economy which brings productivity to the entire society," he said.

The DC commended Founder of the Tanzania Environment and Empowerment Movement (TEEMO) Winfrida Shonde for her tireless efforts to ensure education awareness on how to conserve and protect environment and ensure the environment agenda reaches every corner of

Tanzania, including the Kilwa sea weed farmers.

Winfrida hailed Kilwa farmers for producing high quality Sea weeds which she said will improve their economic lives.

She has urged them to be good ambassadors of conserving and protecting the environment for the benefits of the country and for the current and next generations.

Shonde noted: "Sea weed farming is one of the crucial areas contributing to the blue economy growth."

She has requested the Kilwa sea weed farmers to be environment good ambassadors and should ensure efforts to conserve the environment start with them.

"Ensure sea shore remain clean even after your work. Remove all plastic materials and all other residues harmful to the environment and other creatures."

Mwani Mariculture Limited Kilwa Masoko investor, Roger Morre said that his organization has decided to give modern farming equipment to sea weed farmers in Kilwa so as to enable them get enough stock of sea weed productivity to meet the demand of the market.



Kamila Labani (facing camera), Mwanza Region's acting Fire and Rescue Force commander, has a word with local government leaders of Mkapa Street in Mwanza city's Igoma ward yesterday on the illegal sale of plots in the mountainous area. That was only a day after police and Nyamagana District government officials succeeded in crushing a 'moving' boulder said to have been threatening people's lives. Photo: Correspondent Vitus Audax

By Correspondent James Kandoya

Harold Sungusia contesting Law Society presidency

TANGANYIKA Law Society (TLS) member Harold Sungusia is eyeing the society's presidency and has promised to bring creativity, unique skills and experience to transform it into a more resourceful, responsive, efficient and sustainable organisation.

Sungusia (pictured), an advocate of the High Court said this on Thursday this week in Dar es Salaam when inaugurating his election manifesto ahead of TLS general election next month in Arusha.

He said if elected, he will work tirelessly to ensure that the society is united and that it remains relevant to the

needs and aspirations of its members prioritising three areas-resources, responsiveness and relevance.

Sungusia said TLS was facing the main challenge of society stemming from loopholes in exercising autonomy and preserving independence adding that members' welfare and financial soundness is uncertain.

He said also, TLS lags in prioritising the needs of members, it has been unsuccessful in mobilising and diversifying sources of funding noting that it has not been smart in undertaking selective engagement.

He claimed that a substantial num-

ber of members are unhappy with the state of affairs of their Society adding that there are serious issues with regard to members welfare such as health insurance cover, prevalence of unemployment risk, lack of viable social protection structure for most practicing lawyers, insecurity of income due to undercutting, disrepute to advocates stamps and lack of proper supervision of notary public services.



"TLS needs money. We shall work purposely to ensure adequate availability of resources for self-sustainability of the TLS. a poor bar cannot discharge its mandate to member's communities and the nation," he said.

"We shall ensure innovativeness, financial discipline, cost effectiveness, financial transparency, accountability and value for money. This principle will strictly be achieved in order to guarantee the credibility, compliance, relevance and reputation of TLS," he added.

He said since the primary focus of TLS is the welfare of its members to

effectively discharge their professional role, it will be on an intersectional basis, to cater for the newly enrolled, senior, practicing and not-practicing, bearing in mind their years and areas of operation.

Sungusia said that TLS will ensure the society is more relevant to its members(chapters and zones) adding that its members professional entitlements are guaranteed and be relevant community rights, needs, obligations and that of the nation.

Former Legal and Human Right Centre (LHRC) Dr Hellen Kijo Bisimba said that Sungusia was a visionary

leader and therefore deserves to be TLS president adding that he has accumulated experience to lead the society. Executive Director of Tanzania Women Lawyers Association (TAW-LA) Tike Mwambipile said Sungusia was a capable leader to work out on the main challenges of the society stem from loopholes in exercising autonomy and preserving independence.

Association of Young Lawyer (AYL) chairman, Victor Kweka said that TLS members were facing uncertain financial soundness, assuring that Sungusia, as the presidential candidate, was committed to work on all those challenges.

Police conduct special operation to inspect students school buses

By Correspondent James Lanka, Moshi

POLICE in Kilimanjaro Region is implementing a special operation to inspect all school buses in a move aimed to further prevent road accidents and assure safety of pupils.

Speaking with the reporters here yesterday on the ongoing exercise in the region, the Kilimanjaro Regional Police Commander (RPC), Assistant Commissioner of Police (ACP), Simon Maigwa said police officers and mechanics are inspecting school buses if they are fit and equipped with all required standards.

"The special operations and inspections exercise started in from March to April 30, this year, we have inspected a total of 329 school bus drivers where a total of 118 drivers have the needed criteria, while 99 school bus drivers did not fulfill the criteria and asked them to go back to their Driving School for more training," he said.

According to the RPC, during the special operations and inspections exercise, a total of 25 Driving Schools where we learned that a total of 16 Driving Schools lacked some criteria and regulations,



Ilaia district commissioner Edward Mpogolo pictured along Lumumba Street in downtown Dar es Salaam on Thursday planting a tree in an initiative that also involved motorcycle taxi-riders. Photo: Correspondent Jumanne Juma

while three of them did not have any legal document to train drivers and they were closed.

"We instructed school bus drivers to bring their driving license for inspection voluntary from March to April 30 this year as they should have valid driving license with either Class C, Cl, C2, C3, and E who are allowed by law to drive passenger's vehicles, and some of them have no criteria of driving school buses," he said.

The RPC named the three driving schools that closed after failing to have legal documents to conduct driving training as Wide Institute, Shekinah VTC, Mennonite Training Centre.

Kilimanjaro Regional Traffic Officer (RTO), Pili Misungwi explained that, last year all vehicles that were found with mechanical problems were fleet out of service, and released after undergoing mechanical services.

"We have already contacted all school owners to bring their


school buses for inspection for the safety of the pupils and students who use them in their daily transportation," she explained.

The RTO further cautioned all school bus owners to obey road safety regulations for safety transportation of their pupils and students.

The Kilimanjaro traffic chief further explained the exercise also aims at reducing road accidents, cautioning reckless drivers.

"My appeal to all school and college owners is to bring all their school buses for mechanical inspection for the sustainable safety of their children" the Kilimanjaro RTO noted.

Apart from inspecting school buses, she explained, they also have a special meeting to the school buses' drivers and students/pupils matrons/patrons aimed at creating awareness on road regulations, road safety for sustainable road safety of the school children and other road uses.



PANAFRICAN ENERGY an Orca Company

Date: 22nd April 2023

Reference: PAT/EO/OPS/02/2023 – EXPRESSION OF INTEREST AND REQUEST FOR QUOTE FOR THE PROVISION OF MARINE ENGINEERING SUPPORT TO PANAFRICAN ENERGY TANZANIA LIMITED (PAET)

<p>(a) PanAfrican Energy Tanzania Ltd. a Producer, Distributor and Marketer of Natural Gas from the Songo Songo gas field in Kilwa District, Lindi Region hereby invites qualified companies to express their interest to bid for the supply of the following Services under the terms of a Service Agreement or other conducive arrangements as a preferred consultant.</p> <p>(b) The consultant is required to provide a comprehensive Method Statement for the installation of approximately 1 km of 6" concrete coated natural gas flowline offshore Songo Songo Island in water depth of 5 to 10 meters for one of its offshore wells (SS-5).</p> <p>(c) The Consultant will also be required to provide site supervision for the pipeline installation phase as per Client approved Method Statement.</p> <p>The required services will cover, as a minimum:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Planning Phase. (Phase 1) 1.1. Review of existing literature and historical background of the problem statement. 1.2. Define the required data to progress with the planning phase. 1.3. Validate the provided data for sufficiency to go into the MoS preparation. 1.4. Prepare most feasible Method Statement for Company approval for pipe installation and identify risks in the methodology in accordance / compliance with PAET HSSE requirements. 1.5. Generate and submit a detailed bill of materials (BoM) required for the installation work. 1.6. Identify Long lead items to be procured on a fast-track basis. 1.7. Identify potential suppliers of the entire BoM. 1.8. Identify resources both human and machinery required for phase 2. <p>2. Execution Phase. (Phase 2)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1. Provide site supervision of works. 2.2. Prepare work instructions and Job orders. 2.3. Make sure works are executed as per approved Method Statement. <p>3. Specific technical capabilities and qualification required:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3.1. Submit Marine engineering or related qualifications from recognised institutions. 3.2. Provide proof of relevant experience on completed projects of a similar nature and scope. 3.3. Demonstrate competence and currency in training on various Health & Safety Courses e.g. First aid, permit to work, Risk assessment courses etc. 3.4. Demonstrate evidence of extensive experience in all offshore pipe-lay methods e.g., J, S and tow-pull installation methods. 3.5. Demonstrate evidence of not less than 10 years of marine engineering works involving offshore pipe laying. 3.6. Present to Company Basic Offshore Safety, Induction & Emergency Training (BOSIET) certificate(s) For personnel to be engaged in the project up to phase 2. <p>(d) Potential Bidders must submit information to demonstrate their technical competency and relevant experience. As a minimum, this must include the following:</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. For Tanzania Registered Companies provide Proof of Registration in EWURAs LSSP Database as a Local Service Provider as defined under the Petroleum (Local Content) Regulations 2017 and compliant with the Petroleum (Local Content) regulations 2017 in all aspects. 2. Current annual returns generated from BRELA Online Registration System. 3. Proof of registration with local authorities in Tanzania. Attach Company Registration/Incorporation certificate, Tax Identification Number (TIN) and Value Added Tax (VAT) certificates, Valid Business License, Regulatory licenses and permits or compliance certificate (as applicable). 4. Health, Safety and Environmental. (Provide OSHA compliance certificate for the current year/annual subscription, safety, Evidence of a safety management system (should have evidence of reporting system and culture, incident and accident investigation process or procedure, Emergency response plan, NEMC registration (if possible), Fire compliance certificate, Appointment of a HSE professional, Medical insurance cover for employee's, Performance statistics for 3 years and Environmental policy). 5. Current approved ESG policy for international companies (For Local companies this will be an added advantage) 6. Proof of financial capability (provide latest approved audited financial statements for the past 3 years) and a Letter from your Bank. 7. Experienced personnel able to exhibit how best it is able to meet the technical and financial aspects of the audit and its readiness to complete the works within the agreed timeline following award of the contract. <p>(e) Interested Parties may obtain full Scope of Work (SoW) by writing to the email addresses given below.</p> <p>(f) All correspondence regarding this enquiry shall be in writing and communicated by e-mail via the emails provided below, otherwise the potential bidder may be disqualified from tendering at the sole discretion of PanAfrican Energy Tanzania Limited.</p> <p>(g) Deadline for submission of quotes is on Monday, 2nd May 2023 at 2pm. Any RFQ submitted after the deadline will be disqualified.</p> <p>Through the provision of the above, adherence to the requirements, and provision of any other relevant materials, potential Bidders should be able to demonstrate they are a reputable company, willing, capable, experienced, and appropriately competent in supplying the said Services in remote areas preferably to the Oil & Gas/Mining Industry.</p> <p>Shortlisted bidders will be subject to necessary due diligence checks.</p> <p>Physical RFQ to be delivered to the following address:</p> <p>PanAfrican Energy Tanzania Limited Offices in Oysterbay, Oyster Plaza, 5th Floor, Haile Selassie Road, P.O. Box 80139, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, Attn. Bizimana Ntuyabaliwe, Deputy Managing Director.</p> <p>Electronic RFQ to be sent to the following emails:</p> <p>(bntuyabaliwe@panafricanenergy.com) and a copy to (rmohele@panafricanenergy.com) and (peter.sololo@panafricanenergy.com) on the last day of submission.</p>
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NHC builds commercial complex in Kahama MC

By Correspondent Shaban Njia, Kahama

THE National Housing Corporation (NHC) has commenced construction of a 1bn/- worth modern commercial complex in Bukondamoyo ward, Kahama Municipal Council, Shinyanga Region that will help create jobs and facelift the municipality.

The proposed state-of-the-art complex is set to facelift the Kahama Municipality, as it will have 84 shops, restaurants, supermarkets, car wash and other services.

Shinyanga NHC regional manager, Angelina Magazi revealed this yesterday during the inspection of the construction site, promising to recruit young people around the area for jobs.

She said that the implementation of the project, which is expected to be completed in the next six months, will be a great opportunity for Kahama residents and nearby areas.

NHC's project manager, Eng Mburuga

Matamwe said, the construction of the project is a big investment that has never been done in Shinyanga promising to supervise it well and ensure it is completed on time.

"Traders will be able to rent at the complex at an affordable rate, this will stimulate businesses and economic development in the region," he said.

Located near the small bus station of Bukondamoyo and the investment area accommodating small and large industries famous as Dodoma, the complex will provide priority to young people in various unskilled jobs with vendors doing their business throughout the construction period.

One of the residents, Felister Joram said they will be happy if they are given priority in temporary jobs including fetching water, moving construction materials for technicians as some of the projects are implemented by hiring young people from outside the region.



Joanes Martin, Simanjiro District's Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Agency (Ruwas) manager, makes remarks at the water users' half-term annual meeting at Orkesumet township on Thursday on the Controller and Auditor General's report for financial year 2021/2022 and that of the agency's internal auditor. Photo: Correspondent Gift Thadey

Grassroots organisation calls upon countries to transform food systems

By Correspondent Zuwena Shame

PRESIDENT of Slow Food, a global and grassroots organisation, Edie Mukiibi has called on the countries across the globe to transform food systems and adopt agro-ecological farming methods to fight the increasing impacts of climate change.

In a statement availed to the media, Mukiibi said that as the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) continues to warn countries worldwide, it was important to act now because the coming years are crucial for the future of the planet.

He said this ahead of World Earth Day 2023 where this year's

theme is "Invest in Our Planet."

In its latest report, the IPCC stressed the importance of shifting towards sustainable diets in the fight against the climate crisis and endorsed agro-ecology, together with the empowerment of local communities, as key climate solutions.

Mukiibi said that Slow Food maintains that agriculture, nutrition and health should be understood in relation to each other, and the roles they can all play in the fight against climate change.

"What we grow, how we grow it, and how we eat have an enormous impact on public health and the health of the planet. In an era

plagued by malnutrition it is essential to remember the complex relationships between soil, oceans, plants, animals and humankind. Agroecology considers all these elements together," said Mukiibi.

He said that it is worth noting that soil is the greatest source of biodiversity in the world, with two-thirds of all living beings hidden under its surface, while oceans are our main ally against global warming, having absorbed 93.4% of excess heat produced over the last 40 years.

He added that with over half of the Earth's soil now being used by humans, we cannot afford to exploit and degrade it any longer.

"It is now essential to change di-

rection. The laws of soil biology and the physiology of plants and animals must be respected. We must stop subsidizing an intensive agricultural model practiced on a large scale, which has compromised soil ecosystems. We must focus on the health and fertility of the soil, valuing agricultural methods that preserve biodiversity and restore the microbiome. That is: agroecology!" Mukiibi underlined.

Regarding the seas, Mukiibi said that more than 190 countries have recently signed a historic agreement to protect life in the world's oceans and that the new global treaty aims to safeguard biodiversity and convert 30 percent of all

international waters into marine protected areas by 2030.

He however said that this is an important step forward considering that today only 1.2 percent of these areas are protected. Like the soil, oceans cannot be seen as an economic resource at our disposal, but must be considered a common good to be managed collectively.

"We all need healthy food. But we can only count on being able to produce it if the ecosystems of the soil and the seas are healthy. "The Slow Food movement knows that the only way we can overturn the injustice of a food system based on the plundering of natural resources is a transition to agroecology," Mukiibi

added.

He said that agroecology is the set of agricultural practices that is also a vision, a science that focuses on the conservation of biodiversity, ecosystems, and the needs of communities and it's the model to ensure long-term food security for everyone on this planet.

Slow Food is a worldwide network of local communities founded in 1989 to prevent the disappearance of local food cultures and traditions. It has become a global movement that involves millions of people in more than 160 countries and works so that we can all have access to good, clean and fair food

New deal: African countries crave win-win partnerships

PARIS

AFRICAN countries have been challenged to ask for win-win partnerships if they are to win in the competitive markets.

Anthony Nkinzo Kamole, Director General of the Democratic Republic of Congo's (DRC) National Investment Agency made the call on Tuesday when speaking at a forum organised by the French Council of Investors in Africa (CIAN) in Paris, France. "Time for a new deal with Africa" is the theme of the forum.

The African continent is a major supplier of energy to the European Union, and has many raw materials and rare metals that are essential to the energy transition and are highly sought after around the world.

Kamole noted that global development will not happen without the continent.

"Today, when you look at coltan, and all the derivatives that are behind it, we can only talk about the DRC. And I also mentioned phosphate and potash. Today, these are extremely important elements in the DRC and this proves that it key to Africa. The future of the world is playing out in Africa and the future of Africa is in the DRC," he said.

Industrialisation is an essential pillar of African development. To achieve this goal, the DRC is banking on its "Industrialisation Master Plan", which costs 58 billion dollars. The aim is to revive the sector by focusing on three key areas.

"First of all, it is the agri-food sector, then energy, which is extremely important, and then infrastructure. And these \$58 billion are distributed on the issues of ports, airports on the issues of energy and on the issues of hydrocarbons and these are elements that are extremely important on these industrial projects," said Kamole.

These projects will be carried out together with European partners.

In Senegal, the government wants to create the best business conditions for companies as Abdoulaye Baldé, Director General of the Senegalese Agency for the Promotion of Investment and Major Works (APIX) explains.



Tabora Regional Police Commander Richard Abwao pictured earlier this week showing journalists what he said were some of the equipment and various other items vandals had stolen from water infrastructure in Tabora District only to be later recovered in crackdowns mounted by law-enforcement agents. Photo: Correspondent Mohab Dominick

Nine Tanzanian varsity students win Chinese language contest

By Guardian Reporter

NINE Tanzanian students at the Confucius Institute at the University of Dar es Salaam have been declared winners of a Chinese language proficiency contest.

Twenty-nine students participated in the competition as part of celebrations to mark the UN Chinese Language Day which fell on April 20.

The competition was aimed at assessing the proficiency of the students in various skills of the Chinese language, including

Chinese speech and knowledge about China as well as a talent show.

Twenty-year-old Sharon Emmanuel Munisi, a first-year student pursuing political science and public administration at the university, did not mince her words when she was declared the top winner.

"I decided to learn Chinese because it is key to getting employment in Chinese companies operating in Tanzania," Munisi said, adding that the Chinese language has many other opportunities, including in the diplomacy platform.

Pendo Malangwa, the University of Dar es Salaam director for Quality Assurance, said Chinese language learning was an effective approach to further developing Sino-Africa ties.

The competition established in 2013 in Tanzania has helped promote and encourage students to work hard and inspired potential students who will be interested in learning Chinese, said Malangwa who represented the Deputy Vice-Chancellor responsible for Academics, Bonaventure Rutinwa.

Malangwa said there were more than 10,000 Chinese people and at least 500 small and large Chinese-run enterprises in Tanzania that need a large number of Tanzanians who have different talents and can speak Chinese.

Zhang Xiaozhen, director of the Confucius Institute at the University of Dar es Salaam, said the Chinese Language Day, launched in 2010, aims to celebrate multilingualism and cultural diversity and promote the equal use of the six official languages of the United Nations, which

include Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian, and Spanish.



I decided to learn Chinese because it is key to getting employment in Chinese companies operating in Tanzania," Munisi said, adding that the Chinese

UNDP-supported project combines solar and agriculture in 9 countries

By **Benoit-Ivan Wansi**

FACED with the effects of climate change, which pose risks of food insecurity, particularly in Africa, a new initiative jointly supported by the International Solar Alliance (ISA) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) should promote solar irrigation in nine countries on the continent by 2025.

Large-scale solar applications for agriculture (LSSAA). This is the new programme recently launched by the International Solar Alliance (ISA) in partnership with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). At a total cost of US\$2 million and over a two-year period, the initiative aims to integrate solar energy into agricultural practices in nine African countries.

These include Benin, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Mali, Niger, Uganda, Senegal, Sudan, South Sudan and Togo, all of which are suffering from drought that is drying up farmers' crops. To address this and secure the livelihoods of rural populations in particular, the SSAU "will provide beneficiaries with improved access to energy and a sustainable

irrigation solution through new and innovative models of deploying solar water pumping (SWP) systems," says the ASI.

The India-based intergovernmental institution intends to mobilise \$1,000 billion by 2030 to invest in several solar solutions that could boost sustainable development, particularly south of the Sahara where agriculture generates 32% of gross domestic product (GDP) and up to 65% of employment, according to the World Bank. Thus, UNDP is strengthening its involvement in initiatives focusing on solar irrigation to increase agricultural yields and strengthen the sector's climate resilience in the region.

In Sudan, for example, the UN agency and the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) are co-financing a \$7 million project called Promoting Renewable Energy and Sustainable Financing as a means to improve farmers' livelihoods and reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.

The initiative launched in 2019 and is expected to be completed by 2023 with the deployment of 450 pumps powered by 5.12 and 3.12 kWp solar off-grid systems. These installations should replace the existing diesel-powered systems on farms in the Nile basin.



Solar power supports agriculture in Africa

AU, regional groupings to discuss harmonisation of road transport regulatory frameworks in Africa

By **Guardian Reporter**

A Continental workshop on harmonisation of Africa road transport regulatory frameworks organised by the African Union Commission (AUC) in partnership with the European Union (EU) funded tripartite transport and transit facilitation programme (TTTFP) underway in Johannesburg, South Africa.

The four-day workshop from 18th to 21st April, 2023 organised to assess progress on the harmonisation and implementation of vehicle load management (VLM) in Africa, exchanging best practices on policies and standards while soliciting realistic proposals for a continental

VLM strategy.

Addressing the workshop during the opening session on behalf of AUC director of infrastructure and energy, Dr Kamugisha Kazaura, acting head of transport and mobility division Eric Ntagengerwa emphasised the importance of harmonising road transport regulatory instruments in order to realise regional integration and aid trade facilitation by laying the groundwork for the effective implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

"Road transport facilitates roughly 80 per cent of trade on the continent, and demand is expected to rise significantly in the coming

years, aided by AfCFTA, which is why we need to increase the efficiency and capacity of transportation infrastructure and services for the movement of goods and people within and beyond borders."

Ntagengerwa said harmonisation of road transport will stimulate African economies by allowing African enterprises to expand and enter new markets, increase productivity, generate jobs, accelerate industrialisation, and contribute to the achievement of Agenda 2063 aspirations, goals, and objectives.

He praised the efforts made in the Tripartite region, which covers 800 million people, to harmonise transit and transportation instruments,

adding, "This is an opportune time to scale up the best practices at the continental level to address trading barriers and realise a liberalised road transport market in Africa. The AUC is ready to provide Member States and Regional Economic Communities (RECs) with the required leadership and support."

Bernard Dzawanda on behalf of COMESA director of infrastructure & logistics Baptiste Mutabazi said "the three RECs are working toward the broader goal of accelerating continental economic integration, boosting economic growth, reducing poverty, and achieving sustainable economic development."

Petra Pereyra, EU Ambassador

to Botswana and SADC, discussed the EU's experience in integrating transport systems across the EU region. "To enable this level of intra-European mobility, we had to work tirelessly for decades to remove regulatory impediments to transport and trade in the EU. And this is the type of hard work that the TTTFP has been conducting for the past five years in collaboration with 25 SADC, EAC, and COMESA member states."

On the first day, the workshop focused on the causes and effects of vehicle overloading across the continent, emerging technologies and innovations, and continental initiatives on road transport and

transit facilitation, as well as lessons learned from these programs to unlock the potential of AfCFTA, which is dependent on factors such as the removal of Non-Tariff Barriers to Trade (NTBs).

The foundations for the discussions are the recently adopted Tripartite Vehicle Load Management Agreement (VLMA), Multilateral Cross Border Road Transport Agreement (MCBRTA), and Model Laws and Regulations by the Tripartite Council of Ministers of the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), East African Community (EAC), and Southern African Development Community (SADC).

Ten people dead as gunmen ambush family in South Africa

JOHANNESBURG

SOUTH Africa has one of the world's highest murder rates, with about 20,000 murders recorded every year out of a population of 60 million.

South African Police Minister Bheki Cele and National Police commissioner Fannie Masemola visit the scene of a mass shooting at a birthday party in Kwazakhele, Gqeberha, South Africa.

Unknown gunmen have stormed a home-stead in the South African city of Pietermaritzburg and ambushed a family, killing 10 people, police said.

Police did not give a motive for the shooting. Those killed included seven women and three men, the police ministry said in a statement.

South Africa has one of the world's highest murder rates, with about 20,000 murders recorded every year out of a population of 60 million.

From July 1 to September 30, 2022, more than 7,000 people were murdered in crimes reported to the South African Police Service (SAPS).

Almost 1,000 women were among those murdered during the period in 2022. More than 13,000 women were also victims of assault with intent to cause grievous bodily harm, and 1,277 women were victims of attempted murder.

Gunmen killed eight people and wounded three others at a birthday party in the city of Gqeberha in the Eastern Cape in January, following a spate of mass gun attacks last year.



R-L Chief of Communications, UNICEF Nigeria, Rajat Madhok, UNICEF Chief of Health in Nigeria, Dr Eduardo Celades, and Health Manager Immunization, UNICEF Nigeria, Dorothy Ochola-Odongo

UNICEF, others develop zero-dose strategy to reach children in Nigeria

By **Nkechi Onyedika-Ugoeze, Abuja**

THE United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF) in partnership with the National Primary Health Care Development Agency, GAVI, the World Health Organisation, and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation have developed a "zero-dose" strategy to reach children who have missed out on routine immunization in the 100 most deprived local government areas in 18 states, in Nigeria.

About 2.2 million children in Nigeria have never received a

vaccination according to "The State of the World's Children Report 2023," released on Thursday by UNICEF.

The report described Nigeria as a home for the second largest number of zero-dose children in the world.

UNICEF Chief of Health in Nigeria, Dr Eduardo Celades, stated that the reasons for the large number of children in Nigeria who have not taken any single immunization was due to the weak healthcare systems and lack of access, to Primary Healthcare facilities as a result of insecurity and violent

conflict in the northeast of the Northwest.

He said, "When I talk about a weak healthcare system, I mean that there are not enough nurses and other midwives, there are not enough doctors, enough commodities from the supply chain because we don't get the vaccines to the last mile. We are expanding cold chain capacity to ensure the availability of vaccines at all levels. Because of the weak primary healthcare system, when the COVID-19 came, the ability of the system to respond to different concurrent needs was

really limited. So that's what we saw that kind of slowed down on the progress.

Celades explained that the new report showed that because of the Covid-19 pandemic, vaccination rates were decreasing.

He said, "We have seen like Nigeria is the second country in the world with Zero dose children which means children that have not had a single vaccine, an additional 2.2 million we see that every year, not vaccinated at all. What happened in Nigeria was that the progress continued even during the Cov-

id-19 pandemic, the country improved vaccination coverage progress, and move forward. However, the progress was not at the pace or at the speed that we need. It still will have this big mass of Zero dose children. Still, the coverage of banditory betters ways like the pentavalent three coverage makes it difficult to read a proxy is probably a good proxy for immunization existing 57%. But when blue can come in and defend so this is quite remarkable, and we need to put that in the day. So what happened in Nigeria, and as well as the rest of the

world why this is happening what progress has slowed. Down or has even decreased. So there were two main factors.

Celades noted that UNICEF, working with partners with government, actors is conducting an analysis and have identified 1, 200 wards in 18 Local government Areas for across the country and also doing something like a Catch Up campaign, a mix of outreach and campaigns with the aim to catch up 1 million children we missed in the next 700 days.

"This is an ambitious target that we're working with NPH-

CDA and we hope to work with partners like Gavi, WHO and others, and we probably will catch up.

And last but not least, and we are the most important in the long term what is our vision is to strengthen the health system, not only at the facility level, hiring nurses, doctors, and midwives and showing that facilities are well equipped and that they have solar panels, water, but as well as community level how we can ensure that we have more incentives for community health workers."

SATURDAY 22 APRIL 2023

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

We should help our children to nurture culture of reading

PARENTS and guardians are supposed to improve home literacy environments that help promote the reading culture among children at an early age as they improve their learning.

There is need for promotion of ownership and involvement of parents in co-creating literacy environments, programmes and how they are run.

It's critical to involve the parents or caregivers at the centre of literacy processes and empower both literate and non-literate ones to support their children's literacy development.

Therefore, parents should play a role and get involved in helping children to nurture a culture of reading.

We appreciate the current efforts to complement the government's programmes to improve and make literacy spaces inclusive and accessible for all.

However, there is still a long way to go for better guidance in writing books to increase the number of books related to the competence-based curriculum.

As an emphasis, the country should roll out campaigns to promote literacy as a critical skill in foundational learning.

We are therefore calling for joint efforts to embrace the reading culture even in the community by creating community-based reading places among other majors.

According to a UNICEF study, only one parent in five parents engages in learning activities yet more than half of the children are left home alone or in the care of siblings.

We are very fast becoming a nation that has lost appetite of reading anything serious rather than opting for flimsy issues.

Issues emanating from yellow

journalism in the form of scams appear to be attractive stories to be read by our people. It is even worse when considering reading books, a culture which is already lost and mostly has ended up with one's graduation day from the College.

The government has cautioned against lack of interest among youths in immersing in literature on serious issues when at school, saying they risk losing global opportunities.

Reading therefore is the process of taking in the sense or meaning of letters, symbols, etc., especially by sight or touch.

For educators and researchers, reading is a multifaceted process involving such areas as word recognition, orthography (spelling), alphabets, phonics, phonemic awareness, vocabulary, comprehension, fluency, and motivation. Reading is typically an individual activity, done silently, although on occasion a person reads out loud for other listeners; or reads aloud for one's own use, for better comprehension.

Major predictors of an individual's ability to read both alphabetic and non-alphabetic scripts are oral language skills.

As a leisure activity, children and adults read because it is pleasant and interesting. In the US, about half of all adults read one or more books for pleasure each year. About 5 per cent read more than 50 books per year. Americans read more if they have more education, read fluently and easily, are female, live in cities, and have higher socioeconomic status. Children become better readers when they know more about the world in general, and when they perceive reading as fun rather than another chore to be performed.

Low voltage fencing effective antidote for wildlife intrusions

EXTENSIVE efforts are being pursued around the country to reduce the frequency and intensity of what is euphemistically known as human-wildlife conflicts, an area that has lately attracted a 6m euros (16bn/-) grant from Germany, via its development agency, GIZ. The sector minister affirmed that wildlife conservation is constantly faced with intrusion of animals into settled areas and especially laying waste to farms. The danger to food security, properties is clear.

One result is to impede wildlife conservation when people move to poison such animals with vegetable or meat set as a trap. Just to show that current approaches will take a while to cover all needy areas of the country, the three years project that GIZ is supporting will focus on the Selous ecosystem in the southern wildlife circuit. Unless similar projects are taking place elsewhere, apace with this or other initiative, it is clear that covering national parks and game reserves will take time.

Yet, as a matter of fact, it doesn't need projects stretched for 20 years or so to put an end to intrusions of wildlife into farms. All what is needed is bank credit where all districts facing such problems hire companies to put a minimum of electrical fencing that puts away fairly big animals. Such fences would be low enough to the ground and carry fairly low voltage electricity to shock animals, not kill them; with such experience they would soon learn that approaching any farms can be costly.

This sort of 'human wildlife conflict' is typical of poor countries where no visible or workable boundaries exist between the wildlife sphere and settled areas. Women for instance still have to go into the bush to seek firewood, or boys take cattle to the very

boundaries of national parks or game reserves, amplifying the possibility of such 'conflicts.' The issue is who is going to bell the cat, and there the mode of ownership or management of the parks or reserves is a problem, as they can't do it.

Designers of the current project were upbeat about the potential impact, saying that apart from mitigating such conflicts, the project will reduce government expenditures in paying compensation to affected communities. It will similarly improve food security and safety, while enhancing cooperation between conservation authorities and communities. It is not clear if compensation is regularly paid with such intrusions, but livestock intrusions lead to forfeiture.

Formulas enunciated like communities being empowered through training on appropriate mitigation methods, where the key features include colouring of elephants and geo-fencing are somewhat unconvincing. A check with experts showed that geo-fencing creates a virtual geographical boundary that triggers action on a mobile device when a targeted beast enters or exits that boundary.

But this comes down to saying that one alerts wildlife rangers if beast is nearby, where there is too much sharing of space between animals and villagers for that method to be reliable. It is to shut the gate after the horse has bolted. Proper fencing out of animals would be far more effective, which can be conducted by conservation authorities if there is private sector participation making them loanable. It can also be done by farmers if they were in commercial agriculture.

At the moment neither of those options is available, so we have waiting to do.

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EID MUBARAK



Vanuatu twin cyclones underscore the Pacific's vulnerability to compounding climate disasters

By Sanjay Srivastava and Sudip Ranjan Basu

TWO destructive Category 4 tropical cyclones, Judy and Kevin, and an earthquake of 6.5 magnitude impacted over 80 per cent of the Vanuatu population from 1 to 3 March 2023. To address this emergency situation, the UN, along with Pacific member States have deployed personnel on the ground to coordinate humanitarian assistance and prepare post-disaster damage assessment.

Sitting in the Pacific "Ring of Fire," Vanuatu experiences frequent volcanic and seismic activity. And along with the other Pacific small island developing States (SIDS), Vanuatu faces existential threats due to rising sea level, ocean acidification and the increased frequency and severity of natural disasters and is on the front line of climate crisis.

The twin cyclones and an earthquake in just 48 hours remind the world that seismic and climate risks are converging and intensifying - no community feels this stronger than those of the Blue Pacific Continent.

On macro-economic impact, in fact, Pacific SIDS face Average Annual Losses from multiple hazards totaling to US\$ 1.1 billion in the current scenario. This figure is set to increase to US\$ 1.3 billion under moderate and US\$ 1.4 billion under worst-case climate warming scenarios. As a percentage of GDP, Vanuatu, Tonga and Palau are projected to face highest losses - Vanuatu is projected to lose a staggering 20 per cent GDP annually due to disasters.

In ESCAP's recent report, the analysis shows that at 1.5 to 2.0 °C warming, there are likely intensifying annual wind speeds of tropical

cyclones and that the risk of tropical cyclones is expected to expand and include newer areas beyond the historical tracks (Figure 2). Vanuatu in particular, will experience higher risk of tropical cyclone both in terms of the intensification as well as geographic expansion of the riskscape.

As cyclone hazards are intensifying and deviating from their traditional tracks, their greater complexity results in deeper uncertainties in the ability to predict. Our Blue Pacific Continent is not sufficiently prepared.

Formulating transformative actions

As the climate changes, the riskscape is transforming. These disaster risks compound and cascade to amplify the great hardship experienced by the Pacific SIDS in terms of population and critical infrastructure exposure. The argument for transformative action to mitigate and adapt to intensifying and expanding disaster risks in the Blue Pacific Continent has never been more compelling.

First, early warning for all is an imperative, needs to capture compounding risks.

The UN Secretary-General highlighted that every person on the planet is to be covered by early warning systems by 2027. The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction sets the increase in availability and access to of multi-hazard early warning systems as a distinct target, Target G, to be achieved by 2030. As per the latest Sendai Framework reporting of Target G, large gaps remain for many countries in the Pacific SIDS.

Relative to other countries in the subregion, Vanuatu's Target G scores are high, reporting substantial to comprehensive coverage of

multi-hazard early warning systems across all indicators. WMO's Regional Specialized Meteorological Centre in Nadi, Fiji was providing early warnings in the face of power outages and surmounting uncertainties - as a result, there have been no reported fatalities.

Second, transformative adaptation solutions are needed.

To minimize and prevent systemic and cascading risk, we need to make new infrastructure and water resource management more resilient. Improving dryland crop production and using nature-based solutions such as increasing mangroves protection are also priority adaptation solutions.

1.5 per cent of GDP for adaptation investment is estimated to be needed in Pacific SIDS - three times less than the average losses projected. These adaptation investments must be risk-informed and strategically directed towards policy actions that yield high cost-benefits. Where there are multi-hazard risk hotspots across the region, risk-informed policy and transformative actions should capitalize on inter-sectoral synergies and co-benefits.

Third, the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent provides a clear pathway

With the adoption of the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent in July 2022, Pacific SIDS have developed a clear pathway to synergize regional priorities with accelerated implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and the SAMOA Pathway.

Next generation risk analytics, advances in climate science, geospatial modeling, Artificial Intelligence and machine learning must be at the heart of people-centered and evidence-based decision-making.

And, the Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific is an ideal platform to take forward some of the policy decisions.

Strengthening subregional and regional cooperation platform

Tropical cyclones, often transboundary in nature, require an architecture of regional co-operation mechanisms to effectively manage the shared risks. In this instance, local capacities and regional support mechanisms should be commended. To further strengthen this work, the lesson from Vanuatu's back-to-back cyclones and earthquake is to have effective, impact-based and risk informed early warning systems that can capture the complexity and dynamics of a compounding risk.

The Asia-Pacific Risk and Resilience Portal was developed by ESCAP with the goal of creating a user-friendly one stop platform for policymakers to access a vast array of scientific information and decision support tools to promote risk informed policy decisions. Furthermore, the Vanuatu incidents underscores the need for conducting a rapid post-disaster needs assessment that can support formulation of a long-term recovery strategy and plan for its reconstruction by applying a standardized approach with innovative methodology and framework.

The overlapping and transboundary nature of risks experienced by countries of the Blue Pacific Continent cannot be addressed without solidarity and collective action towards strengthening regional cooperation platform.

Sanjay Srivastava is Chief, Disaster Risk Reduction, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)

We need more dedicated investment to address TB in children

By Dr Siphon Nyathi

THE theme of last year's World Tuberculosis (TB) Day was 'Invest to end TB' - an apt theme acknowledging the critical shortfall in funding for TB if we are to meet the 2035 goal of eliminating TB globally.

South Africa is one of the highest TB-burdened countries and has the additional burden of a high proportion of HIV co-infected TB patients, and a high prevalence of drug-resistant TB. Children, particularly those younger than five, are the most at risk for contracting TB and are more likely to have poor outcomes if diagnosed late. The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that South Africa has approximately 27 000 children (under the age of 15) living with TB but, with a detection rate of 65%, ap-

proximately one-third of children are being left undiagnosed or unreported. If identified early, children do very well on treatment, including when they have drug-resistant TB.

So why are children not being prioritised?

'a renaissance period for paediatric TB' Prior to 2012, TB in children was not being documented by conventional surveillance, with the WHO only starting to provide estimates in 2012. Since then, "the decade was to be considered as a renaissance period, with [a] rise in attention, effort, advocacy and investment focused on paediatric TB", reads an article published in Pathogens MDPI. Despite this rise in investment, the \$91 million (10% of total annual TB R&D spending) raised globally for TB research in chil-

dren, still falls far short of the \$200 million needed to achieve the global targets for TB elimination, the authors write. Children, particularly those younger than five, are the most at risk for contracting TB and are more likely to have poor outcomes if diagnosed late.

In South Africa, spending on children likely reflects international trends - this is despite South Africa being a high TB burden country with multiple overlapping epidemics such as drug resistance, HIV, and malnutrition that further strain children's health.

In response to the call by the WHO in 2013 to invest more resources in surveillance and detection in children, South Africa committed at the United Nations High-Level Meeting in 2018 to identify over 95 500 children between 2018 and 2022. By the end of 2021, we had achieved 63% of the target.

Our shambolic public transport system violates Law of the Child Act

By Telesphor Magobe

LAST week, we briefly looked at the World Justice Project (WJP) Rule of Law Index 2022, which reflects the perspectives and experiences of more than 154,000 people and 3,600 legal practitioners and other experts in 140 countries and jurisdictions. In this WJP Rule of Law Index 2022 and also in the previous years, Tanzania showed improvements in both sub-Saharan Africa and global rankings, but could have done better than that.

We then concluded that reports like these ones can inform Tanzania and other countries about the areas that need improvement to make the enforcement of the rule of law more effective. But to do so we need to improve in the way we think and do things (to think and do better than we often do).

Today, I invite you to briefly look at the plight of schoolchildren, especially the public transport problem during this rainy season (but also in other times) and how it impacts on their learning process. I will particularly reflect on this issue in the context of Dar es Salaam and in light of section 5(2) of the Law of the Child Act (R.E. 2019).

Section 5(2) states that: "A person shall not discriminate against a child on the grounds of gender, race, age, religion, language, political opinion, disability, health status, custom, ethnic origin, rural or urban background, birth, socioeconomic status, being a refugee or other status." But is it so?

The other day I was travelling by commuter bus and public transport was very problematic because it was raining and where I was supposed to report at 09:00am, I only arrived there at 10:30 - that is after one hour and 30 minutes. At the commuter bus station, I found and also left many people, including schoolchildren, still struggling to get transport to places they were going to. I don't know how long it took the schoolchildren to arrive at their schools.



The commuter bus I took was overcrowded with passengers and it was very difficult even to turn from one side to the other and I hardly saw any schoolchildren inside. How could a schoolchild compete with adults who were scrambling to enter the commuter bus and only the strongest could enter?

In the circumstances, it was very difficult for them to get transport and arrive at school on time. Another thing is that schoolchildren are sometimes denied transport because they pay less bus fare compared to that of an adult. If they happen to board a commuter bus, it looks more of a favour than a right because they are considered by both commuter bus drivers and conductors as a liability to the business.

After I finished what I had gone to do at the place I had gone, I left for home at 16:00 and arrived at a bus station where I could take another commuter bus at 18:30. There was heavy traffic jam on that day because the road we used was under construction and when it rains the situation becomes quite appalling.

So, when I arrived at this bus station, I found no minibus there while there are usually plenty of them. After a while, I saw some minibuses coming, one of which its conductor loudly announced

"I don't take any schoolchildren this time."

By the time he said this, three schoolchildren had entered the minibus and he was telling them to get out, which they did. In a rare case, the driver differed with his conductor on the schoolchildren. He asked his conductor why he told the schoolchildren who had entered the minibus to disembark. They started exchanging words with each other. Furious as he looked, the driver told his conductor to give him the money he had collected from passengers in previous trips. He then told the schoolchildren who were told to get out of the minibus to enter, closed the door and drove, leaving his conductor behind.

Onlookers started laughing at the conductor as he stood under a tree in embarrassment, smoking his cigarette. I too felt it was good he learned that way not to deny schoolchildren transport on the basis of paying a lesser bus fare than an adult.

Although I felt happy about what had happened to the conductor, we arrived at the end of our journey at 19:30. By this time, it was already dark because it was still raining and I started thinking of the schoolchildren we left at the bus station waiting for transport and asked myself at what time they would arrive home and do their homework. There is really a transport problem for schoolchildren and both the government and parents haven't taken this issue seriously. I just wonder whether attending classes very late or having no sufficient time for personal study and homework results in better academic outcomes! Yet, this is the schoolchildren's daily plight.

A solution to the schoolchildren's transport problem is perhaps to make the bus fare the same as that of an adult. After all, it is the parents who give it to their children. In this way, the problem

of denying them transport because they pay less will be solved, but then another problem will be created. This time schoolchildren who occupy less space than adults, will be preferred by commuter bus drivers and conductors to adults because the former will be considered profitable to the business. However, this won't be a big problem like the one schoolchildren face currently.

Today's proverb: "Sympathy without relief is like mustard without beef."

The author is a lawyer based in Dar es Salaam. He can be reached at tmagobe@gmail.com

The Law and You



Sustainable marine resource use key for successful blue economy drive

By Lucy Magembe

TANZANIA is renowned for its attractive coastal and marine environments which boast rich biodiversity and resources. These coastal ecosystems interact and sustain diverse marine life which is an important source of sustenance for neighbouring communities and source of tourism revenue for the nation.

Signs of environmental degradation as well as decline in natural resources and biodiversity are getting noticeable. This is evidenced by declining fish yields, deteriorating conditions of coral reefs and gradual reduction in mangroves and coastal forests.

This degradation is attributed to unsustainable use of coastal resources as well as pressure from a growing population. Unsustainable and poor management of resources is the top issue impacting coastal ecosystems. Lack of planning on available resources for use is the second contributor to mismanagement of resources.

As a means of conserving these coastal resources, the Office of the Vice President (Environment) and the Ministry of Blue Economy and Fisheries of the Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar in partnership with The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and Australia's Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization (CSIRO), with financial support from the government of Germany through its International Climate Initiative (IKI), are participating in a project entitled "Strengthening the Blue Economy of the Western Indian Ocean Through Integration of Ecosystem Services and Effective Biodiversity Conservation".

The project aims to promote and strengthen protection and resilience of natural marine resources in the Western Indian Ocean, and to strengthen the

blue economy.

One of the key project's outcomes was a feasibility study report that combines a scoping study on the status of marine spatial planning in Tanzania and an analysis of existing policy and legal framework for such a plan.

The resulting study report was presented at a two-day validation workshop attended by diverse group of stakeholders ranging from ocean users to representatives of Zanzibar Ministry of Blue Economy, government technical agency staff, blue economy development partners and local and international non-governmental organizations at the Julius Nyerere International Convention Centre.

One of the fundamental steps taken by the country is focusing on marine spatial planning as a driver of the country's sustainable blue economy agenda. This is a practical way to establish a rational and integrated organization of marine space where different uses are addressed to minimize and manage impacts on the system.

In developing a sustainable blue economy, the increasing demand for marine space, along with the multiple pressures on marine and coastal resources requires an integrated approach for utilization and management of ocean space.

Marine spatial planning provides such a vehicle by both protecting the most vulnerable and critical habitat within marine protected areas and other tools, and by managing commercial activities beyond those core protected areas in a way that allows for sustainable use of resources.

Through planning and via improved fisheries management, coastal and offshore fisheries will be sustainable and critical ecosystems, such as coral reefs, mangroves and sea grasses, will be better protected, reducing the rate of deg-



radation of these habitats and resources, mitigating climate change, enhancing local food security and sequestering carbon.

The study's findings indicate that several sectoral policies and existing legislation are relevant to the management of marine and coastal resources in Tanzania, including land, fisheries, environment, forestry, tourism, oil and mining, among others.

It also highlighted need for an integrated and participatory resource management approach to resolve conflicts that arise amongst stakeholders to be able to effectively take advantage of development opportunities.

Tanzania is one of the fastest growing economies in Africa and one of the top three growth performers in East Africa. Much of its economy relies on the health

of its natural ecosystems. It is therefore paramount that these natural resources are managed sustainably and in a coordinated fashion.

The country is in the process of developing a comprehensive blue economy policy that embraces a full-scale marine spatial planning for the government to jointly manage a range of activities in their respective sectoral jurisdictions including environment, fisheries, aquaculture, tourism, maritime transport, energy, oil and gas, among others in its exclusive economic zone that encompasses both Tanzania Mainland and Zanzibar.

Priorities for development of the blue economy for both Tanzania Mainland and Zanzibar have been identified. These include marine capture fisheries and aquaculture including seaweed cultivation, ports and

shipping, offshore petroleum exploration and production, coastal and marine tourism, subsea cables - both electric transmission and telecommunications and coastal salt production. Priorities afforded to each may differ between Tanzania Mainland and Zanzibar.

Lucy Magembe is Tanzania Country Director for The Nature Conservancy.

Food challenges in Vietnam call for global push for systems transformation

By Tuyen Huynh

THIS month Nature spotlighted three insightful new studies chronicling food-related challenges from a global perspective. One presented worrisome new data on the global rise in the prevalence of diabetes, high blood pressure and liver disease, all linked to obesity.

Another presented a new assessment revealing that half of the greenhouse emissions generated by food systems globally are caused by food waste. Finally, the third study found that food consumption could add “nearly 1 degree Celsius to warming by 2100,” with most of that attributed to global methane emissions from meat, dairy and rice production.

Studies like these are valuable for focusing attention on the need for a fundamental reset from farm to fork in the way food is produced and consumed around the world. But we also must recognize their limits.

Chiefly, that solutions to the problems they skillfully document will fail unless adapted to specific social, political and economic contexts on the ground.

We recently spent two years studying food systems across Northern Vietnam. Our work reveals how much food-related challenges can change even over relatively narrow distances—and how solutions must be tailored accordingly.

The contrasts we documented can be instructive for other countries as well. As a fast-growing, rapidly urbanizing middle-income country that still has a large rural population, Vietnam is an ideal living laboratory for studying the essential role of local food environments in shaping solutions to global food challenges.

In our work, we roamed the colorful, richly stocked open-air markets and modern retail outlets of urban Hanoi. We traveled just outside the city to study the food landscape in the populous peri-urban area of Dong Anh.

We visited the rural highlands of the Moc Chau district in Son La Province, where people rely on agriculture for their livelihoods. Along the way, we surveyed thousands of people to learn about where they purchased food and what they ate. Here are a few key lessons that emerged. Food-related issues are



Fruit stalls at a local market in Hanoi, Vietnam. Credit: Shutterstock

linked to both what you eat and where you eat it. With their bounty of choices and relatively high incomes, people in urban Hanoi tend to eat very diverse diets, including more meat, dairy and fish, than people in other areas in Northern Vietnam. It's the opposite in rural Moc Chau: a dearth of food outlets and a reliance on subsistence farming leads to a narrower menu of options—and diets that are heavy in starchy staples. This

difference produces a sharp contrast in food-related health problems. In rural areas, the issue is stunting and wasting in poorly fed children, which is three to four times higher than in urban or peri-urban areas. In urban areas, an abundance of food choices contributes to childhood obesity rates that are 6 to 10 times higher than in the other regions we studied.

Problems are clear; solutions are complex—especially

in local contexts: We know that addressing malnutrition requires improving food choices, but that also requires considering trade-offs that can be highly political. For example, there is evidence that consistent access to nutrient-dense meat, fish and dairy products can reduce malnutrition in low-income communities like those we studied in rural Vietnam. But a lack of these products in local diets is a key reason rural

food systems in Vietnam produce much lower emissions than those in urban areas. The solution is two-fold. First, we must acknowledge the different realities of people in high-income regions globally who have an abundance of nutritious food choices and those in low-income regions who have few. Second, supporting efforts in low-income communities to adopt environmentally sustainable, climate-positive approaches to livestock production—while encouraging more modest consumption in wealthy regions—can capture their benefits in fighting malnutrition while mitigating risks.

Promoting healthy diets requires probing local factors behind consumer behavior. Compared to other regions in Vietnam, a significantly higher percentage of rural consumers are relying on cheap and highly processed instant noodles to meet their dietary needs. But encouraging a shift to healthier diets requires engaging the broader constellation of local issues driving this choice. For example, economic policies that drive inflation can negatively affect household food budgets. Also, we found the neglect local road systems in rural ar-

reas we studied was a factor in limiting access to food stores and food selection relative to urban and peri-urban areas.

Two years ago, 51,000 people from 193 countries participated in the 2021 UN Food Systems Summit—with many likely to return for this summer's eagerly anticipated follow-up.

They are committed to a transformation of a global food system many view as fundamentally broken. The latest scientific studies chronicling food-related impacts to human and planetary health—alongside the recent shocks to the global food system caused by Covid pandemic—certainly support this view.

Our work reveals that food system challenges vary considerably depending on where you live—and that developing effective solutions requires a focused effort to detect these differences. It means if we want to achieve a more sustainable food system transformation, we must think globally but act locally.

Tuyen Huynh is a leading food systems expert and senior researcher at the Alliance of Bioversity International and CIAT

World crises complicate things for underprivileged in Bangladesh

By Nuzhat Fatima

THE world is becoming increasingly coexistent with crises. A pandemic, the Ukraine-Russia war, and cost-of-living crisis are only a few of the ordeals we've seen in just the last two years.

As is characteristic of such crisis settings, those already marginalized are further pushed back, augmenting existing barriers to accessing services, resources and opportunities.

The UN's Sustainable Development Goals centered around leaving no-one behind become all the more difficult to achieve.

Crisis settings are now leading to a worrying trend where those not categorically marginalized are becoming increasingly vulnerable. The World Bank estimates that the COVID-19 pandemic pushed 71-100 million people into extreme poverty, giving rise to the “new poor”, those above the poverty line pre-pandemic who fell below the marker during it.

Against this backdrop, identifying vulnerabilities for development assistance becomes an exponentially more difficult – yet necessary process.

In Bangladesh, around 20 percent of the population was below the poverty line before 2020. This figure has increased substantially since, and is becoming a phenomenon less temporary than expected. In accurately identifying the vulnerabilities of such groups, conventional, income-centred measures of poverty may fall short.

Policy measures must therefore be dispensed using tools that can effectively deal with a range of vulnerabilities, beyond income.

One is the Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI), which captures deprivations in non-monetary dimensions of wellbeing, utilizing a range of indicators in calculating poverty levels for a particular population. Poverty levels are then represented by an MPI score. The higher the figure, the greater the level of poverty.

To see whether multidimensional approaches to addressing vulnerability could potentially be more helpful during crises the Research Facility at the UNDP Bangladesh country office

analyzed data from its “Livelihoods Improvement of Urban Poor Communities” (LIUPC) project.

This is a poverty reduction programme covering four million urban poor in 19 Bangladeshi cities, and employs the MPI metric to identify deprivation levels of potential beneficiaries. Conditional cash grants are provided to help eligible MPI-poor households start a business or expand an existing one.

These households also received COVID-19 relief in the form of cash, food, or preventive materials as unconditional support, separate from grants intrinsically part of the project.

A study presented in a recent UNDP Development Futures Series brief compared the before-and-during COVID MPI figures of the beneficiary group with two other household categories – MPI-poor non-grantee households, and vulnerable MPI non-poor households. The detailed methodology and results of the study can be seen here.

Some of the findings from the study were intuitive, business grants disbursed by the project generally helped poor households reduce their multidimensional poverty levels, despite the pandemic.

Far more interesting however were the rather less intuitive policy insights from the analysis: Consider vulnerable non-poor groups in development programming

The study's findings corroborated the emergence of the “new poor”. Households with MPI scores not high enough to be eligible for grants (but still vulnerable, just below the MPI poverty threshold) experienced on average an increase in their multidimensional poverty levels during the pandemic.

People in these categories usually remain outside the purview of emergency policy measures, having not met eligibility requirements of being “poor” under normal circumstances. As such, their vulnerabilities remain unaddressed and are exacerbated during crises.

Cash support helps vulnerable groups during crises

Findings suggest that the improvement in MPI levels was concentrated amongst the poor



The already marginalized are further pushed back, augmenting existing barriers to accessing services, resources and opportunities. Credit: UNDP Bangladesh

groups, including non-grant receivers, while the vulnerable group, who did not receive grants, saw poverty levels deteriorating.

The latter group barely received cash support even in the form of COVID-19 relief, unlike the poor groups. This suggests that in crisis situations, households that receive unconditional cash support may be able to use it to improve living conditions in the immediate term, including households that are not the neediest judging solely by MPI score, but are still vulnerable and at-risk during crises.

Context-specific MPI can complement income-based

Increases or decreases in a household's MPI

score may obscure changes in households with specific vulnerabilities, such as members with disabilities, members belonging to a particular age group, or geographical and regional characteristics.

Despite an overall decline in MPI scores amongst poor households who received grants, the improvement in multidimensional poverty was not reflected for grantee households with disabled members.

Thus, the use of a uniform MPI metric in programming, irrespective of variations in local contexts, also risks overlooking specific needs of vulnerable communities.

Understanding multidimensional poverty

would greatly benefit from dynamic data. The study used static data which cannot account for real-time changes occurring after collection. In this case, if the data had been dynamic and could be updated during the pandemic, the project may have been able to identify beneficiaries and discern the nature of relief needed more appropriately.

IPS UN Bureau

Nuzhat Fatima is a Research assistant at UNDP Bangladesh.

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
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Tembelea mitandao ya kijamii ya CAPITAL RADIO



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NCT to produce skilled experts in tourism sector's value chain

By Guardian Reporter

THE National College of Tourism (NCT) has started to invest heavily in innovative programmes to produce a wide range of skilled experts to serve in the tourism sector's value chain in line with the government's goals to transform the sector.

The experts are trained to meet the required and competitive national and international standards.

Dr Florian Mtey (pictured), NCT chief executive officer says that the college has increased its efforts to complement President Samia Suluhu Hassan's agenda by training and producing more competent graduates who will make a remarkable contribution in the sector.

He says the idea is to ensure that tourists visiting Tanzania increase, hence boosting the sector's growth and helping to stimulate socio-economic development.

According to him, tourism is one of the sectors that have been given priority in the sixth-phase government after President Samia chipped in to strengthen promotion of the country's tourist destination internationally through "The Royal Tour" documentary.

The film which promotes various Tanzania's tourist attractions has spread in different parts of the world and thus increasing the number of tourists in the country.

Dr Mtey states: "The College makes a unique con-

tribution in promoting the sector that is why we conduct training for the stakeholders to go along with the success obtained from the Royal Tour Film."

He says the number of tourists has increased to 922,692 tourists (48.6 percent) in 2021 from 620,867 tourists in 2020. Income from tourism has also increased by 83 percent to \$ 1,310.34 million from \$ 714.59 million in 2020.

He also states that last year the number of tourists from abroad who visited various tourist attractions in Tanzania from January to May 2022 continued to increase to 458,048 compared to 317,270 tourists who entered the country during the same period in 2021 (44.4 percent).

Dr Mtey: "NCT offers training on the entire chain of the tourism sector, from when the tourist arrives at the airport, when enters the hotel until goes to our various tourist attractions, everywhere he will meet their students."

He also says the college offers specific courses on how to welcome tourists, showing them great hospitality for them to remember and speak well about Tanzania when they go back to their home countries.

"But we also provide training to the communities surrounding the conservation areas so that they can preserve but also benefit from those resources, the college collaborates with other institutions worldwide to offer better education that is being recog-

nized internationally," he explains.

Mohamed Mchengerwa, Minister for Natural Resources and Tourism once quoted as saying the sector can contribute more than that.

"Tanzanians have high hopes for us and this Ministry, its contribution to the national income reaches 21 to 25 percent, but it is not enough for a nation burdened with culture," Mchengerwa said.

The college which operates in four campuses—Arusha, Bustani, Temeke and Mwanza has been teaming up with different institutions across the globe to produce competitive candidates who can offer services of the international standards, which are highly needed in the sector.

As a result of the nationalization process of 1967, Hallmark Hotels was also nationalized and gradually, the institute was handed over to the Tanzania Tourist Corporation (TTC) in 1969.

According to Dr Mtey, NCT originates from the Hotel and Tourism Training Institute (HTTI) which was established in 1969 under a British firm called "Hallmark Hotels Ltd". The main objective was to provide basic skills in Front Office Operations, Housekeeping & Laundry, Food Production and Food & Beverage Techniques.

He unveils that considering space problems, the Institute which was known as Tanzania Hotel School was relocated from New Africa



Hotel to Dar es Salaam club at Forodhani, Kivukoni Front / Ohio Street. It was during that time when it changed its name to Hotel and Tourism Training Institute. It was later handed over to the Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism in 1977.

"By that time the institute could only accommodate 50 students. As time went on, the demand increased. Students who were self-sponsored were enrolled in big num-

bers." The tourism sector contributes about 25 percent of foreign exchange and more than 17 percent of the national GDP.

Due to the emerging need for improving service delivery and the growth demand of the tourism industry, the institute was launched as an Executive Agency under the Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism in January 24th 2003 in accordance with

the Executive Agency Act No. 30 of 1997 and changed its name into National College of Tourism.

NCT is responsible for providing hospitality and tourism training in the country, providing consulting services, and conducting various research in the field of hospitality and tourism.

'Africa needs to vaccinate 33 million children to put progress back on track'

BRAZZAVILLE

AN estimated 33 million children will need to be vaccinated in Africa between 2023 and 2025 to put the continent back on track to achieve the 2030 global immunisation goals that include reducing morbidity and mortality from vaccine-preventable diseases, an analysis by World Health Organisation (WHO) finds.

The unprecedented impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on routine immunization services has driven up the number of zero-dose and under-immunized children, rising by 16 per cent between 2019 and 2021 and pushing the cumulative total (2019-2021) to around 33 million, which represents nearly half the global figure, according to estimates by WHO and UNICEF.

"The pandemic has seriously set back the region's vaccination efforts and left millions of children vulnerable to vaccine-preventable diseases that can cause serious illness and even death," said Dr Matshidiso Moeti, WHO regional director for Africa. "As countries strive to emerge from the long shadow of COVID-19, we cannot afford to lose further ground. Every effort must be made to ensure every child has access to essential vaccines."

Without renewed political will and intensified efforts by governments, it is estimated that vaccination coverage in Africa will not return to pre-pandemic levels until 2027.

This year, African Vaccination Week and World



Immunisation Week, from 24-30 April, is being marked under the theme "The Big Catch-Up". This is a global push by WHO and partners to intensify efforts to reach children who missed vaccinations, as well as to restore and strengthen routine immunization programmes.

The "Big Catch-Up" campaign builds on efforts to

advance countries towards the goals of Immunization Agenda 2030, a strategy endorsed during the WHO World Health Assembly in 2020. It seeks to reduce mortality and morbidity from vaccine-preventable diseases, ensure equitable access to vaccines and strengthen immunization within primary health care.

To urgently scale up coverage and protect children, WHO and partners are supporting 10 priority African countries—which are among the top 20 countries globally with the highest numbers of zero-dose children—to carry out catch-up routine vaccination campaigns.

African governments and healthcare workers made

heroic efforts during an unprecedented public health emergency, vaccinating more people than ever before in history. But the ripples of this emergency response effort are still being felt. At the Vaccine Alliance we are intensifying our efforts to support countries to make up lost ground," said Aurelia Nguyen, Chief

Programme and Strategy Officer for Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance. "Our Alliance is committed to working with countries and communities alike to support efforts to catch up and restore immunization, focusing on responding to the unique needs of each child - and particularly those in hard-to-reach areas and fragile and conflict settings."

At a high-level event during the African Union Summit in February 2023, African heads of state endorsed a declaration aimed at re-vamping and scaling up routine immunisation across the continent. The declaration also called for urgent measures to address persistent bottlenecks in vaccine and health care delivery systems.

In a bid to recover from the pandemic's disruptive wake, countries have made efforts to restore health services. Decreased vaccination levels have led to a surge in outbreaks of vaccine preventable diseases such as measles, meningitis, diphtheria, polio and yellow fever.

Despite the disruptions, at least one third of African countries have sustained the target coverage of 90 per cent or higher for the third dose of the diphtheria-tetanus-pertussis vaccine, and the third dose of the polio vaccine, over the past three years. However, only three countries have sustained this coverage for the second dose of the measles and yellow fever vaccines during the same period.

The region has also continued to step up the po-

lio response. More than 30 million children were vaccinated against polio in Malawi, Mozambique, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe in 2022, following wild poliovirus type 1 cases being reported in Malawi and Mozambique.

"The ambition to ensure that every child has access to essential vaccines by 2030 is still within our reach if we act now," said Dr Moeti. "It is time for us to renew our commitment to this ambition and work together to restore and strengthen essential vaccination services to save the lives of millions of children."

WHO held a press conference today led by Dr Joseph Cabore, Director of Programme Management, WHO regional office for Africa. He was joined by Hon. Dr Austin Demby, Minister of Health, Sierra Leone, Aurelia Nguyen, chief programme and strategy officer for Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance; Dr Franklin Asiedu-Bekoe, director of public health, Ghana Health Services; and Prof William K. Ampofo, secretary of the presidential committee on vaccine manufacturing and development, Ghana.

Also on hand from WHO regional office for Africa were Dr Phionah Atuhebe, new vaccines introduction officer; Dr Dorothy Achu, team lead, tropical and vector-borne diseases; dr jamal ahmed, Polio Coordinator; Dr Ado Bwaka, acting team lead, vaccine-preventable diseases programme; and Dr Patrick Otim, health emergency officer, acute events management unit.

How South African region fixed up dilapidated airport for UAE royals

By Estelle Ellis

THE princely sum of R20-million was donated by the United Arab Emirates to enable the Eastern Cape government to get the Bulembu Airport near Qonce (formerly King William's Town) ready for a visit by the country's royal family and its president.

This included a generator to provide power in case of rolling blackouts.

Private planes transporting the leader of the United Arab Emirates and ruler of Abu Dhabi, Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, and his entourage, arrived at Bhishe-Bulembu Airport this week for a visit to the Sheikh's game reserve between Makhanda and Bedford.

Eastern Cape premier Oscar Mabu-yane's office said this was a private visit and not at the invitation of the premier. Khuselwa Rantje, the Eastern Cape government's head of communication, said the airport was, in line with South Africa's protocols, temporarily designated as a port of entry to enable the passage of the UAE leader.

"All relevant resources have been put in place at the airport to ensure adherence to the laws of the country," she said.

"Bhishe-Bulembu Airport has been in existence for many years and upgrades were done years ago by the government. The province is working hard to strengthen trade relations with the UAE in various areas including education, agriculture, renewable energy, oil and gas, research and innovation, as well as partnerships in the aviation economy.

"Provincial government is negotiating the possibility of a joint investment project to raise standards at the government-owned Bhishe Airport, in line with requirements of an international cargo

airport, as a start," she said.

Rantje said there were no agreements in place – they were still "exploring".

"The province hopes to use this opportunity to convince UAE citizens that the Eastern Cape is both a tourist and an investment destination; thus, hosting their president is a crucial step in that regard," Mabu-yane said.

Mabu-yane visited the United Arab Emirates a month ago and returned to South Africa on 4 April. Before his departure, he said he was discussing the refurbishment and upgrade of Bhishe Airport for the landing of wide-body aircraft.

In his 2023 State of the Province Address, Mabu-yane committed his government to use economic diplomacy as an instrument to attract foreign investment to sustain economic growth and job creation. He has been clear that his plan is to make it easier for international visitors to fly directly into the Eastern Cape.

"The problem of limited international and domestic flights into the province is not only about tourism but also about reducing the cost of doing business in the province," Mabu-yane said.

Transport spokesperson, Unathi Bin-qose, said the Eastern Cape government received R20-million from the United Arab Emirates to do "routine maintenance" at the airport.

"There were no upgrades... What was done was garden services and cleaning it up, painting the lines and the runway... fixing it, replacing the lights. It wasn't an upgrade. It was just putting on some touches to get it ready for the arrival of the UAE delegation for a head of state.

He said the contribution from the UAE included a generator for times of rolling blackouts.

"It has always been the dream of the Eastern Cape government to further use the airport as an international cargo air-



Bhishe-Bulembu Airport, Eastern Cape, South Africa. (Photo: flightsim.to / Wikipedia)

port," Bin-qose added. "The successful landing of the UAE delegation has further demon-

strated the capabilities of this airport and will serve as a motivation to push towards that."

The airport was used by the

South African National Defence Force while its office space alongside the facility was being renovated.

"No flights had landed there in a long time before the arrival of the UAE delegation," Bin-qose added.

DM/MC

THE GUARDIAN SIMPLE WORD FIT // THE GUARDIAN CROSSWORD --00 416 00--

In this puzzle you have no clues, only a list of words that all fit into the grid. The Guardian have given you a head start.

WORD-FIT

3 letters ASA, NIT,
4 letters COME, MASS, DODO, TEAM, SNAG, SHOP, OSLO,
5 letters SPEED, TERSE, OMANI
6 letters LATHER, ATTAIN, SOFALA, SUNDAY
7 letters COLUMBIAN, HIRE GUN, ETHIOPIA
8 letters CARELESS

CROSSWORD

CLUES: Across

1. container with a handle for holding liquids
5. Roll-on/ roll-off
7. Native of India
9. a family of sea fish used for food
10. a loud, deep, resonant sound
11. to avoid
13. medicine that prevents nausea and vomiting
15. any number that cannot evenly divided by two
18. Lake Malawi
20. Today in Kiswahili
21. belonging to boys and men
23. old
24. a phrase repeated often

Down:

1. the natural fluid that comes from fruit
2. used to emphasize or express annoyance with someone
3. In geology, a graben is a depressed block of the crust of a planet or moon, bordered by parallel normal faults
4. an order
6. Nearest offer
8. a work of fiction
12. to declare something untrue
14. drug
16. a valley
17. group of countries with common interests
18. a plant
19. grandmother in Chinese
22. romanized as Jedo or Yedo



Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, President of the United Arab Emirates (Photo: Andy Rain / EPA / Bloomberg via Getty Images)

RADIO One **RATIBA YA VIPINDI JUMATATU - JUMAPILI**

MONDAY TIME PROGRAMME	TUESDAY TIME PROGRAMME	WEDNESDAY TIME PROGRAMME	THURSDAY TIME PROGRAMME	FRIDAY TIME PROGRAMME	SATURDAY TIME PROGRAMME	SUNDAY TIME PROGRAMME
05:00 AM HALI YA HEWA / KUMEPAMBAZUKA I 06:00 AM AMKA NA BBC 06:30 AM NIPASHE 06:50 AM MATANGAZO 07:00 AM NEWS BULLETIN 07:10 AM MATANGAZO 07:15 AM TAARIFA ZA BARABARANI 07:25 AM UDONDOZI WA MAGAZETI 07:40 AM KUMEPAMBAZUKA II 08:00 AM HABARI NYEPESI 08:10 AM KUMEPAMBAZUKA III 09:00 AM HABARI ZA BIASHARA 09:20 AM BRAND TALK 10:00 AM NEWS BRIEF 10:03 AM DEATH ANNOUNCEMENTS 10:10 AM VALIYOMO YAMO 13:00 HRS DJ SHOW 13:10 HRS DEATH ANNOUNCEMENTS 13:30 HRS NEWS BULLETIN 16:00 HRS NEWS BRIEF 16:03 HRS DEATH ANNOUNCEMENTS 16:30 HRS HOJA YA LEO 18:30 HRS DIRA YA DUNIA BBC 19:30 HRS SPOTI LEO 20:00 HRS NEWS BULLETIN 20:10 HRS RADIO ONE DOCTOR 21:00 HRS NEWS BRIEF 21:05 HRS DAJIKI 45 22:00 HRS NEWS BULLETIN (24 HRS) 22:15 HRS AFRO TIZI 23:00 HRS NEWS BRIEF 23:03 HRS AFRO TIZI 01:00 - 05:00 HRS MUZIKI (MCHANGANYIKO)	05:00 AM HALI YA HEWA / KUMEPAMBAZUKA I 06:00 AM AMKA NA BBC 06:30 AM NIPASHE 06:50 AM MATANGAZO 07:00 AM NEWS BULLETIN 07:10 AM MATANGAZO 07:15 AM TAARIFA ZA BARABARANI 07:25 AM UDONDOZI WA MAGAZETI 07:40 AM KUMEPAMBAZUKA II 08:00 AM HABARI NYEPESI 08:10 AM KUMEPAMBAZUKA III 09:00 AM HABARI ZA BIASHARA 09:20 AM BRAND TALK 10:00 AM NEWS BRIEF 10:03 AM DEATH ANNOUNCEMENTS 10:10 AM VALIYOMO YAMO 13:00 HRS NEWS BULLETIN 16:00 HRS NEWS BRIEF 16:03 HRS DEATH ANNOUNCEMENTS 16:30 HRS HOJA YA LEO 18:30 HRS DIRA YA DUNIA BBC 19:30 HRS SPOTI LEO 20:00 HRS NEWS BULLETIN 20:10 HRS MATANGAZO / MUZIKI 21:00 HRS NEWS BRIEF 21:05 HRS CHAGUO LA DJ 22:00 HRS NEWS BULLETIN (24 HRS) 22:15 HRS AFRO TIZI 23:00 HRS NEWS BRIEF 23:03 HRS AFRO TIZI 01:00 - 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Tembelea mitandao ya kijamii ya Radio One **Radio One**

BUSINESS

Mchechu commends Stamico for reforms, increase in earnings

By Guardian Reporter

THE Treasury Registrar, Nehemiah Mchechu (pictured), has commended the State Mining Corporation (Stamico) for successfully initiating significant reforms that has enabled it to earn a big profit this year.

This comes after the corporation, which marked its 50th anniversary last December, has managed to pay dividends worth over 2.2bn/- to the government.

Speaking at a meeting that brought together the Treasury Registrar's board and various public agencies in Dar es Salaam on Wednesday, Treasury Registrar Nehemiah Mchechu said that Stamico has now become self-sufficient, after being one of the entities that generate significant profits for the government.

He added that the government's goal is to see public entities becoming less dependent on the government, thereby reducing the burden of running them.

As a result of these achievements, the organization, which

was once considered defunct, was confirmed by legislators in 2019 that it could no longer be dissolved due to its satisfactory current performance and change of initial perception.

Last month the corporation signed a historic two-year contract worth 55.2bn/- with the gold mining company Geita Gold Mining Limited (GGML) for conducting rock drilling within the mine.

This lucrative contract followed Stamico's successful implementation of an initial contract worth 5.6bn/- which was signed in July 2020.

As a result of these developments, minerals minister, Dr. Dotto Biteko, said that the contracts are the fruits of the government's investment to ensure that Stamico's operations are enhanced and increase profits.

Stamico's CEO Dr. Venance Mwashe said the corporation has succeeded in developing an eco-friendly alternative cooking fuel called Rafiki Briquettes that is environmentally friendly.



TCRA embraces new drive on promoting courier services



TCRA director general Dr. Jabiri Bakari

By Correspondent Cynthia Mwilolezi, Arusha

THE Tanzania Communications Regulatory Authority (TCRA) has launched a campaign aimed to raise public awareness on the effectiveness and safety of licenced postal and courier services and their contribution to the country's social and

economic development in the country.

TCRA Director General, Dr. Jabiri Bakari said in Dar es Salaam during a special interview yesterday that the campaign also aims at solving challenges facing consumers of postal services and promoting interest in postal and courier business.

"We are encouraging

Tanzanians to send their parcels through the 96 officially recognised, licenced postal and courier companies that have proper offices, storage facilities and excellent track records of efficiency, safety and integrity," said Dr. Bakari.

He said the existing service providers are required to renew their licences and new ones are directed to the TCRA

online licence registration portal for processing applying for their licences.

"TCRA licences postal and courier companies are under six licence categories, namely Public Postal Services Provider and Courier Companies in International, East Africa, Intra-city and inter-city markets, respectively. Most buses qualify for the latter category," he said.

Dr. Bakari elaborated that during the four-month campaign, consumers of postal and courier services will be educated on risks involved in using illegal, unlicensed courier operators plus the consumers' rights, responsibilities and duties.

"The rights include getting pre-service information on tariffs and on the complaints' mechanism. Consumers also have a duty to protect themselves and be vigilant when using services," Dr. Bakari said.

The TCRA campaign team will also impart to the public information on the significance of the National Postcode and Physical Addressing System," he added.

"We encourage the public to seize opportunities provided by physical addressing and postcode infrastructure for efficient parcel delivery and pick up," Dr. Bakari explained.

By using licensed operators, consumers may avoid delays or loss of their parcels. Latest communications statistics published by TCRA show an increase in parcels traffic in Tanzania in the last few months due to the up-take of e-commerce.

Latest communications statistics published by TCRA show an increase in parcels traffic in Tanzania in the last few months due to the up-take of e-commerce.

Goods ordered online can be picked and delivered physically and the postcode and addressing system facilitates this. TCRA sets the standards of quality of postal services and monitors compliance by all service providers in order to protect consumer rights.

Horticulture seen hitting Sh30bn on high output roll

NAIROBI

HORTICULTURE earnings are projected to rise by Sh30 billion this year on the back of the easing cost of living crisis in Europe, a strong euro and improved production locally.

Exporters in the industry project better prospects this year as most of the European economies stabilise following last year's upheaval caused by the Russia-Ukraine conflict that nearly paralysed global trade.

Horticulture earnings dipped by Sh12 billion last year, marking one of the sector's worst performances in a decade. Returns from fresh produce dipped to Sh120 billion in 2022 from Sh132 billion previously.

"So far we have witnessed good rains that will improve production, coupled with a strong euro and easing tension in Europe will boost our earnings by at least Sh30 billion this year," said Okisegere Ojepat, chief executive, of Fresh Produce Consortium of Kenya.

The common currency has gained by 12 percent against the shilling this year, exchanging at Sh148.16 per unit, up from Sh131.26 at the be-



ginning of January.

Horticulture exporters to Europe are paid in euros, and those to the UK using the pound, which has gained by 13.3 percent against the shilling since January.

Speaking on the sidelines of a meeting organised by Absa on Wednesday, Mr. Ojepat said the horticultural sector was caught in the middle of the Russia-Ukraine war

last year and a severe drought that impacted production on farms after rains failed for a fifth consecutive time.

Mr. Ojepat said this year farmers will earn more as exporters are predicting more returns because of the prevailing good business environment.

The sector wants the government to hasten the process of refunding their value-

added tax, which now amounts to Sh5 billion. They say this will help in boosting their revenue following a bad season last year.

The war between the two countries started at the end of February last year, taking a toll on the European economy as it eroded consumers purchasing power.

Last year, the average consumer price growth

in the Eurozone – a group of 19 countries which use the euro as a common currency – climbed to 8.35 percent compared with 2.4 percent a year earlier.

Kenyan exporters had complained that the runaway inflation was eroding consumer purchasing power in the Euro area and the UK, the main destinations for cut flowers, fruits and vegetables.

The inflation pressure in Europe saw consumers direct their income on essential goods such as energy and food, cutting expenditure on luxury goods such as flowers.

Flowers remain a key revenue earner in the horticulture sector, accounting for over 60 percent of the total export returns on fresh produce.

Europe is the larg-

est market for Kenya's fresh farm produce, buying nearly three-quarters of the country's horticultural exports.

Kenya's earnings from horticultural exports reduced by 9.7 percent in 2022 on the back of elevated inflation in main markets amid weaker currencies, data shows.

Revenue from horticultural sales abroad amounted to Sh120.26 billion last year from Sh133.23 billion in the prior year, provisional export statistics indicate.

The decline came in a year when the average price growth in the Eurozone – a group of 19 countries which use the euro as a common currency – climbed to 8.35 percent compared with 2.4 percent a year earlier.

Kenyan exporters had complained that the runaway inflation was eroding consumer purchasing power in the Euro area and the UK, the main destinations for cut flowers, fruits and vegetables.

Earnings from the sale of vegetables fell by nearly a quarter to Sh27.34 billion, while the value of cut flowers reduced by 10.21 percent to Sh54.25 billion, according to provision-

al data collated by the Central Bank of Kenya.

The data, however, shows exports of fruits – which were bolstered by the opening up of China for fresh avocados – earned Kenya a modest 4.19 percent more last year to Sh38.67 billion.

The Kenya Flower Council, a lobby, had described 2022 as a "horrible" year which had "worked against growers", citing persistent inflationary pressures on households in Europe following the Russia-Ukraine war.

Europe is the largest market for Kenya's fresh farm produce, buying nearly three-quarters of the country's horticultural exports.

"With [inflationary] pressure that people in Europe have, especially on energy costs, they are cutting expenditure on things like ornaments where cut flowers fall," KFC chief executive Clement Tulezi had told the Business Daily last October when Eurozone inflation peaked at 10.6 percent.

"We are also incurring a lot of production costs on the shilling which we cannot recover on the euro and pound when you are selling."

Mining firm registers successes, reinforcing people's livelihoods

By Guardian Correspondent, Geita

GEITA Gold Mining Limited (GGML) has unveiled a number of successes since its inception in 2000, ranging from education, health, charity, development projects and improving people's livelihoods.

Simon Shayo, Vice President for AngloGold Ashanti Sustainability for Tanzania and Ghana said GGML has always been committed to ensuring that communities surrounding the mine benefit from mining activities in the region, and has led the way with its sustainable social investments that have increased support for local communities.

He said that GGML's strategic objective is to integrate mining into development policies at local, national and regional levels saying in doing so, the company has shaped the attitudes of other key stakeholders in the mineral extraction industries.

According to him, in 2018, GGML became the first mining company in Tanzania to take the lead and develop and implement a credible CSR plan in accordance with Section 105 of the Written Laws (Miscellaneous Amendments) No. 7 of 2017, which amends the Mining Act No. 14 of 2010.

This has led to the company entering into strategic partnerships with local government authorities and other stakeholders to drive inclusive socio-economic development in Geita, with annual investments of 9.2bn/- per annum, rising to 19bn/- for projects under the newly signed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for the 2022/2023 fiscal year.

"With the intention of creating a legacy and supporting government initiatives to create a sustainable economy that can outlast mining activities in Geita. GGML continues to work with various stakeholders to improve education, health and infrastructure in all other areas prioritised by the government," he said.

On education, Shayo said the mining firm believes that it's a cornerstone for Tanzania's development.

"So, GGML supported the construction of a number of primary and secondary schools in the Geita region, including Nyankumbu Girls Secondary School, the largest sec-



Moyo wa Huruma, one of the orphanage centres supported by GGML.

ondary school for girls in Geita, which was officially opened in 2014 and for whose construction GGML provided 15bn/- under the leadership of the Geita Town Council," he said.

The Shayo's remarks was seconded by Georgia Mugashe, the Nyankumbu Girls Secondary School, headmistress, who said that the establishment of the school has benefited so many people and is a saviour for the region.

"This academic year, the school has admitted a total of 240 new students in form one after being heavily oversubscribed," the headmistress attested.

After the establishment of Nyankumbu Girls Secondary School, there were still too few school places in Geita for Form Five and Six students and the district authorities directed the construction of Bugando and Kamena secondary schools with a contribution of 287,500,000/- under GGML's 2018 CSR Plan.

The construction of these two government high schools was completed in time for the admission of the first students for the 2021/2022 school year.

On the KILI Challenge against HIV/Aids, Shayo stated that GGML in collaboration with other stakeholders launched campaign over 20 years ago.

"The mining firm's idea was to complement government's efforts in the fight against HIV/Aids in Tanzania and to rise funds each year to support communities in areas severely affected by the pandemic," Shayo said, stressing

that as part of the campaign, a team of cyclists circles the base of Mount Kilimanjaro while climbers scale the summit of Africa's highest mountain.

"This year's challenge is scheduled for 14 July, when another group of climbers and cyclists will train with the common goal of joining the more than 800 people from all parts of the world who have successfully completed this rewarding challenge, helping to raise the more than 1.3 billion to support more than 20 private institutions in providing services to victims of the epidemic."

According to Shayo, one of the beneficiaries of the funds is the AGAPE Centre in Njombe region which last year received a grant of 29.9m/- after submitting a proposal to the GGM Kili Challenge board of trustees.

Enara Nyagawa, AGAPE Centre's coordinator said that the funds have helped improve the environment of access to education for children and families living with HIV.

The mining firm also supported the 'Moyo wa Huruma Orphanage' in Geita Region, which is run in collaboration with Roman Catholic Diocese of Geita (RCDG) since 2004.

He said that through the GGM Kili Challenge Against HIV & AIDS Fund and the Geita District Council. The facility was officially inaugurated in 2006 and started operating as a residential home in the same year, caring for orphans, most of whose parents have died of HIV & AIDS and who are in a vulnerable state.

The centre has so far 113 children and employs 14 staff. GGML funds

the running costs of the centre estimated at 50m/- per quarter and the centre also receives about 150m/- per year from GGM Kili Challenge Against HIV & AIDS Fund for infrastructure.

As part of its CSR mandate, Shayo also stated that GGML has made significant investments in the health sector, whereby more than 20 health centres in the Geita region have benefited from the mining centre's CSR funding.

"This has contributed to the purchase of medical and surgical equipment at Nyamalembu, Nyakahongola, Kasota, Kakubiro, Bukoli and Katoro health centres."

According to Shayo, a total of 565m/- was disbursed by GGML to Geita Referral Hospital to support the rehabilitation of the facility, which was built in 1957, and the improvement of cardiology services.

GGML also partnered with the Rafiki Surgical Mission of Australia and donated four ambulances. Over the past 20 years, GGML has financially supported the free surgical treatment of more than 2,000 patients with cleft lip and palate.

On Jubilee medical boat, Shayo attested that the first Jubilee Medical Boat made its maiden voyage in February 2015.

The project is part of the partnership between the African Inland Church of Tanzania, the Vine Trust of Scotland and GGML, the boat operates in the islands of Lake Victoria, which originally had no access to medical services.

In October 2021, GGML signed

a Memorandum of Understanding to extend support for the medical boat for a further five years to maintain the provision of primary health care services, including maternal health care, voluntary HIV testing and care and treatment for AIDS, immunization, dentistry and general basic health education and care with a focus on maternal and child health.

Basic laboratory services and a general pharmacy are also provided, with all services free of charge reaching more than 158,000 residents on various islands in Lake Victoria since the project started.

On business development for Tanzanians, the mining firm's official said: "GGML sees it as its duty to ensure that CSR investments fully engage local communities in the Geita region and the expansion of local procurement."

The signing of the capacity-building programme between GGML and National Economic Empowerment Council (NEEC) increased the transparency of GGML's procurement standards and made it easier for local businesses to supply one of the largest employers in the region, the official said.

"Since the launch of this Local Content initiative, over 300 local businesses have received valuable training to help them better understand and position themselves as potential suppliers. The number of Tanzanian companies that make up Geita Gold Mining's local supplier network now exceeds 300 and accounts for 76percent of total procurement spend in Tanzania."

One such beneficiary of the collaboration between the mine and NEEC is GGML's contractor—Blue Coast Investment Limited, whereby it got the tender to transport one-third of the fuel used by the mining company for its machinery and vehicles.

Jeremiah Musa, manager of Blue Coast Investment Ltd explained that the GGML also provided the company with training that enabled it to successfully participate in two other tenders and win the contract, allowing the company to expand and increase its workforce to over 400 Tanzanians.

On the integrated mining technical training (IMTT), Shayo said that GGML is one of the main sponsors of the training, which is supported

by the Moshi-based Vocational Education and Training Authority (VETA), whereby more students are enrolled.

The idea, he said improves the quality of outcomes, especially for students taking various courses related to the mining industry. In October 2021, GGML donated equipment worth 132m/-.

On improving farmers' livelihoods, Shayo stated that in 2015, GGML and the Cholima Agriculture Institute initiated a special capacity-building programme that imparted knowledge and best agronomic practices.

The programme led to the introduction of sunflower cultivation and the adoption of improved farming practices for rice cultivation.

Since the project began in the seven villages, the fortunes of the 220 farmers cultivating 350 hectares of land have changed for the better. GGML has also invested in a sunflower processing factory in Kasota and financed the construction of a mill (milling, grading and packing) and storage facilities under the Saragurwa Rice Paddy Project, where 700 farmers (85percent women) cultivate 600 hectares of land.

He said that through the exchange of knowledge and best agronomic practices, the lives of many farmers have been transformed thanks to GGML's support, in some cases achieving as much as 250% higher yields.

A sunflower farmer from Kasota village, Saakumi Makungu, who is also the chairperson of the Nyabusakama cooperative said: "We thank the management of GGML and the council for supporting us because we had to walk 25 kilometres to access a sunflower processing machine but now we are doing the same with rice here."

As part of increased focus on community livelihoods, GGML donated 23 tonnes of sunflower seeds worth \$46,956 with a distribution of 13.8 tonnes in Geita District Council and 9.1 tonnes in Geita Town Council. The support reflects GGML's ambition to transform the agriculture sector to the communities around the mine since 2015 where most of the farmers relied on their small-holdings to mostly cultivate maize, cassava, groundnuts and raise livestock.

NAIROBI

INVESTORS injected Sh33.3 billion into Treasury bills in this week's auction after sidestepping the Sh30 billion bond whose sale closed on Tuesday.

The high appetite for the short-term papers was in line with analyst expectations, continuing a trend where investors have preferred to park cash in short-duration securities as they wait out the interest rate uncertainty that has gripped the market.

The 91-day T-bill dominated bids this week, raising Sh30.5 billion against a target of Sh4 billion, while the 182-day and 364-day issues raised Sh2.7 billion between them.

Rates on the T-bills also continued to edge upwards, with the return on the 364-day Treasury bill crossing the 11 percent mark as the other two traded at 10.1 and 10.4 percent.

On Thursday, the Central Bank of Kenya (CBK) mobilised just Sh1.8 billion against a targeted Sh30 billion from a reopened three-year bond with 2.1 years to maturity.

At the same time, the apex bank disclosed the cancellation of a reopened 15-year bond after pressure from investors for higher returns in what marked a rare bond cancellation in the domestic market.

Analysts said despite

the market seeing tight liquidity, the likeliest reason for the bond cancellation was aggressive investor bids, which were viewed to be untenable by the government, rather than a lack of interest to lend by investors.

Earlier in the month, the Treasury had auctioned the first tranche of this month's bond issuance – a 10-year reopened paper targeting Sh20 billion – raising just Sh3.6 billion.

The poor performance could see the Treasury pile pressure on the Kenya Revenue Authority to beat collection targets or higher leverage on external financing to close the budget funding gap.

Apathy around bond issuances has left the government behind its domestic borrowing curve with only Sh396.3 billion having been mobilised by the end of March against a target of Sh886.5 billion which includes rollovers.

Kenyan investors have put Sh312 billion in short-term government securities this year, pointing to an expectation that interest rates will rise amid high State demand for loans to fill in its budget deficit.

The reluctance by investors to commit their funds to long-term papers is allowing them the flexibility to take advantage of a rise in rates, which

Investors inject Sh33bn into T-bills, snub Sh30bn bond



would be difficult with long-dated bonds.

Since the beginning of the year, the most popular security has been the three-month Treasury bill, which has seen an uptake of Sh169.2 billion in just 10 auctions.

This averages out at Sh16.9 billion per sale, which is more than

four times the weekly government target of Sh4 billion from this tranche of T-bill.

The 182-day and 364-day Treasury bills have on the other hand been attracting much lower demand, realising Sh84.5 billion and Sh54 billion respectively in the period.

The State normally seeks

Sh10 billion from each of these two longer-dated T-bills every week, meaning that the one-year tranche has underperformed against the target.

Following last week's auction, when the 91-day paper accounted for half of the Sh32.2 billion the State raised from the sale, which analysts at Genghis Capital

attributed to this preference by investors to remain near liquid in the market.

"The 91-day T-Bill registered an oversubscription in the week – signalling the continual investor preference for near-cash securities," said Genghis Capital.

For the Treasury, the high demand for the 91-day T-bill threat-

ens to introduce refinancing risk in the short term when the billions come due.

The government has also been pushing hard to lengthen the maturity profile of domestic debt by prioritising longer-dated bonds and reducing the use of Treasury bills in budget financing.

The current share of T-bills as a percentage of issued government debt stands at 14.8 percent, having been brought down from a high of 34 percent in June 2019.

For the bonds market, a number of recent issuances have failed to hit the targeted amount, forcing the CBK to adjust upwards the rates it is willing to accept on bids to attract enough takers.

The most recent sale of a 17-year infrastructure bond which had targeted Sh50 billion realised investor bids worth Sh59.77 billion, out of which the government took up Sh50.88 billion.

The average rate of the accepted bids was 14.39 percent, a record for an infrastructure bond and now the highest net return on offer on an outstanding government bond.

Infrastructure bonds are typically oversubscribed due to their tax-free status. Interest income on other government bonds is taxed at a rate of between 10 percent and 15 percent, depending on duration.

Fiscal deficit hit Shs822.88 billion in March, says Ggoobi

KAMPALA

INCREASED expenditure needs have forced the government to spend Shs391.35 billion higher than it had planned to spend in the March of 2023.

Speaking during the release of quarter four (final) expenditure for the Financial Year 2022/2023 on April 20 at the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development headquarters in Kampala, the Permanent Secretary/Secretary to the Treasury, Mr Ramathan Ggoobi said government spending was much higher than planned.

"Government operations in March 2023 resulted in a fiscal deficit of Shs822.88 billion. This was higher than the programmed deficit of Shs431.53 billion due to a combination of shortfalls in revenues and higher than planned expenditure for the month," he said.

Adding: "Domestic revenue and grants were short of their target for the month by Shs251.90 billion while total expenditure was above plan by Shs139.44 billion."

Statistics in the performance of the economy report for March, indicate that the government spending amounted to Shs2,847 trillion which was higher than the

plan of Shs2,707 trillion.

The higher spending was mainly registered under the recurrent category which was above its plan for the month by 23.5 per cent (Shs 394.30 billion).

"Expenditure on non-wage recurrent items explained this performance as most MDAs exhausted their funds for quarter three while completing their quarterly work plans for this period," said the Ministry of Finance.

Development expenditure performed below the plan for the month mainly due to externally financed development projects which were less than the plan by 33.8 per cent.

Performance of this category is hinged on the disbursement of funds by development partners and does not reflect the physical progress of the projects. The domestically financed development projects performed at 99.3 per cent of the plan for the month.

Breakdown in tax collection indicates that the government collected revenue totalling Shs1,887 trillion in March 2023 which was 13.9 per cent lower than the target of Shs2,192 trillion for the month as both tax and non-tax revenue were lower than their respective targets.

Of the total amount collected, Shs1,781 trillion was tax revenue



Ramathan Ggoobi, Finance ministry Permanent Secretary

while Shs106.37 billion was non-tax revenue. Tax revenue collection was less by Shs252.38 billion.

"All the three major tax categories registered shortfalls during the month. Direct taxes

registered a shortfall for the first time this financial year amounting to Shs67.85 billion," the Ministry of Finance said.

It explained that this followed an underperformance of corporate tax (short by Shs60.27 bil-

lion) and withholding tax (short by Shs22.94 billion) both of which more than offset the surpluses registered for PAYE (Shs29.32 billion) and rental income tax (Shs1.73 billion).

Similarly, indirect taxes were

also short of the target for the month by Shs45.30 billion as both excise duty and Value Added Taxes were lower than targeted by Shs4.12 billion and Shs41.18 billion, respectively.

The Ministry of Finance said the major reason for the underperformance of both direct and indirect domestic taxes was the level of economic activity, which albeit improving, was lower than what had been projected for this period at the time of setting the targets.

"As a result, the projected profitability for firms as well as projected demand for goods and services turned out lower than expected, which negatively affected performance of corporate tax, VAT and excise duty," Ministry of Finance said.

The largest shortfall in tax revenue was registered under taxes on international trade transactions, as the amount collected under this category was Shs733.60 billion against a target of Shs867.80 billion, posting a shortfall of Shs 134.20 billion.

This followed lower than projected volumes of imports such as petroleum and others. As such, petroleum duty, import duty, excise duty on imports and VAT on imports all underperformed during March 2023.

Bank fees revenue surges on mobile, forex charges

NAIROBI

TIER-one lenders cut their dependence on the interest income from lending last year after higher fee revenue from mobile transactions and foreign exchange trading boosted the share of non-funded to 38 percent of total income from 34.4 percent in 2021.

The nine lenders reported a 33 percent rise in non-interest income to Sh225.4 billion in 2022 from Sh164.6 billion received the year before.

The contribution of net interest income to total income meanwhile fell to 62 percent in the year ended December 2022 from 65.6 percent in 2021.

Net interest income for the lenders stood at Sh367.6 billion last year, representing a 17.3 percent increase from Sh313.4 billion in 2021.

Foreign exchange income rose by at least 30 percent across the banks, with I&M Holdings leading followed by NCBA, on the back of a weakening shilling against the dollar.

Aside from forex and account-mobile wallet transfer fees, the non-interest income is also drawn from account maintenance charges, loan processing fees, transaction fees, insufficient funds fees, and inactivity levies, among others. "The main factor is the foreign exchange income, which boosted the non-funded income (NFI) or non-interest income because the mobile charges were reintroduced this year. Fees and commission fell last year," said Michael Odundo, a research associate at Standard Investment Bank.

Analysis showed the contribution of NFI to total income for banks is rallying towards pre-pandemic levels—having stood at 41.8 percent in 2019.

This year, however, interest income is likely to grow at a faster pace compared to last year due to the continued approval of risk-based pricing plans that will allow lenders to price in risk in determining the interest to be charged

on customer loans.

Interest rates have also gone up generally in line with the tightening of monetary policy by the Central Bank of Kenya (CBK) in reaction to higher inflation.

By the end of February, the average lending rate stood at 13.06 percent, up from 12.1 percent a year earlier.

Between March 2022 and March this year, the CBK has raised its base lending rate from seven percent to 9.5 percent, forcing banks to adjust their interest rates upwards to account for the resulting higher cost of money.

Banks taking up new bonds floated by the also stand to earn more in interest due to rising yields on government securities.

The yield curve has gone up significantly over the past year, with the latest five-year bond now rating at about 13.2 percent compared to about 12 percent in June 2022.

On the Treasury bills market, rates have now risen to between 10 and 10.9 percent across the three tenors, from a range of 7.4 to 9.7 percent a year ago.

Domestic electricity bills have dropped 3.6 per cent this month on a decrease in variable charges including fuel cost charge (FCC) and foreign exchange fluctuation adjustment (FERFA).

An analysis of power bills by the Business Daily shows those consuming 50 kilowatt-hours (kWh) will settle Sh1,237.2 this month, down from Sh1,283.3 in October.

Households with a consumption of 100 kWh are paying Sh2,474.3 down from Sh2,566 last month. Consumers will part with Sh3,711.6 for 150 kWh this month from Sh3,849.8 in October.

Other consumers will cough up Sh4,948.7 in November for 200 kWh, a drop from Sh5,133 in the previous month.

Consumers are paying less for electricity this month after the Energy and Petroleum Regulatory Authority (Epra) reduced the FCC and FERFA resulting in a reprieve for consumers.

<p>WEDNESDAY 19 April</p> <p>5:00 Soap rpt: Uzalo</p> <p>5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi</p> <p>6:00 HABARI</p> <p>6:40 Kumekucha</p> <p>7:30 HABARI</p> <p>8:00 Kumekucha Michezo</p> <p>8:55 Habari za saa</p> <p>9:00 Kumekucha Kishindo</p> <p>9:30 Soap: In Love with Ramon</p> <p>9:55 Habari za saa</p> <p>10:00 Watoto wetu</p> <p>10:25 Kipindi maalum: TMDA rpt</p> <p>10:55 Habari za saa</p> <p>11:00 Hawavumi lakini wamo rpt</p> <p>11:55 Habari za saa</p> <p>12:00 Al Jazeera</p> <p>12:30 Bundesliga na DW rpt</p> <p>12:55 Habari za saa</p> <p>13:00 Dakika 45 rpt</p> <p>13:55 Habari za saa</p> <p>14:00 Kipindi maalum: NSSF rpt</p> <p>14:15 Chetu ni chetu rpt</p> <p>14:55 Habari za saa</p> <p>15:00 Meza huru</p> <p>16:30 Watoto Wetu</p> <p>17:00 Music: The Base</p> <p>18:00 Jiji Letu</p> <p>18:15 Kipindi maalum: Nyota Rays</p> <p>18:20 Utalii Popote</p> <p>18:30 Jarida la wanawake</p> <p>19:00 Kipindi maalum: BOT</p> <p>19:30 Soap: In Love with Ramon</p> <p>20:00 Habari</p> <p>21:05 Aibu Yako</p> <p>21:10 Kipindi maalum: Tanesco</p> <p>21:40 Kipindi maalum: Pesa Fasta</p> <p>22:00 Ripoti maalum</p> <p>22:30 Soap: Uzalo</p> <p>23:00 Habari</p> <p>23:30 Music: The Base</p> <p>00:30 Al Jazeera</p> <p>02:00 DWTV</p>	<p>12:30 Jarida la wanawake rpt</p> <p>12:55 Habari za saa</p> <p>13:00 Kipindi maalum rpt: BOT</p> <p>13:30 Kipindi maalum: Brela</p> <p>13:45 Shamsam za pwani rpt</p> <p>13:55 Habari za saa</p> <p>14:00 Shamsam za pwani rpt</p> <p>14:55 Habari za saa</p> <p>15:00 Meza huru</p> <p>16:30 Watoto wetu</p> <p>17:00 The Base</p> <p>18:00 Jiji Letu</p> <p>18:15 Mapishi</p> <p>18:30 Kipindi maalum: TMDA</p> <p>19:00 Usafiri Wako</p> <p>19:30 Soap: In Love with Ramon</p> <p>20:00 Habari</p> <p>21:05 Malumbano ya hoja</p> <p>23:00 Habari</p> <p>23:30 Music: The Base</p> <p>00:30 Al Jazeera</p> <p>02:00 DWTV</p>	<p>FRIDAY 21 April</p> <p>5:00 Soap rpt: Uzalo</p> <p>5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi</p> <p>6:00 HABARI</p> <p>6:40 Kumekucha</p> <p>7:30 HABARI</p> <p>8:00 Kumekucha Michezo</p> <p>8:55 Habari za saa</p> <p>9:00 Kumekucha Kishindo</p> <p>9:30 Soap rpt: In Love with Ramon</p> <p>9:55 Habari za saa</p> <p>10:00 Watoto wetu</p> <p>10:30 Usafiri Wako</p> <p>10:55 Habari za saa</p> <p>11:00 Igizo: Mizengwe rpt</p> <p>11:15 Jungu kuu</p> <p>11:55 Habari za saa</p> <p>12:00 Al Jazeera</p> <p>12:30 Kipindi maalum rpt: Tanesco</p> <p>12:55 Habari za saa</p> <p>13:00 Kipindi Maalum: Maisha ni Nyumba rpt</p> <p>13:30 Kipindi Maalum rpt: Sema na Mahakama ya TZ</p> <p>13:55 Habari za saa</p> <p>14:00 Kipindi Maalum rpt: Sema na Mahakama ya TZ</p> <p>14:30 DW: Afrimaxx rpt</p> <p>15:00 Meza huru:</p> <p>16:30 Watoto Wetu</p> <p>17:00 The Base (DJ Show)</p> <p>17:30 Kiislam</p> <p>18:00 Jiji Letu</p> <p>18:15 Kipindi maalum: REA</p> <p>18:45 Kipindi maalum: Soka Bet</p> <p>19:00 Shamba lulu</p> <p>19:30 Soap: In Love with Ramon</p> <p>20:00 Habari</p> <p>21:05 Kipima Joto</p> <p>23:00 Habari</p>	<p>23:30 The Base</p> <p>00:30 Al Jazeera</p> <p>02:00 DWTV</p>	<p>SATURDAY 22 April</p> <p>5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi</p> <p>6:00 HABARI</p> <p>6:40 Kumekucha</p> <p>7:00 Habari</p> <p>8:00 Al Jazeera</p> <p>9:00 Watoto wetu</p> <p>10:00 Kipindi maalum: FAO</p> <p>10:05 Shika Bamba 5</p> <p>10:35 Mjue Zaidi rpt</p> <p>11:15 Chetu ni chetu rpt</p> <p>12:00 Hawavumi lakini wamo</p> <p>13:00 Usafiri wako</p> <p>13:30 Jagina</p> <p>14:00 Soap: In Love with Ramon rpt</p> <p>16:15 Igizo: Mizengwe</p> <p>16:30 Igizo: Rebecca</p> <p>17:00 Shamsam za Pwani</p> <p>18:00 Jiji Letu</p> <p>18:15 ITV Top 10 rpt</p> <p>19:00 Jungu Kuu</p> <p>19:30 Shika Bamba</p> <p>20:00 Habari</p> <p>21:05 Kipindi Maalum: Tatu Mzuka</p> <p>21:15 Igizo: Slay Queen</p> <p>21:40 Art and Lifestyle</p> <p>22:10 ITV Top 10</p> <p>22:50 Hawavumi lakini wamo</p> <p>23:40 Soap: Uzalo rpt</p> <p>01:15 DWTV</p>	<p>23:30 Soap: Uzalo rpt</p> <p>02:05 Al Jazeera</p>	<p>CAPITAL TV</p> <p>Wed 19 April</p> <p>06:00 Al Jazeera</p> <p>07:00 Morning Jam (Via Capital Radio)</p> <p>09:00 Dw</p> <p>11:00 Al Jazeera</p> <p>11:30 Tomorrow Today rpt</p> <p>12:00 Dw News Africa rpt</p> <p>12:30 Our Earth</p> <p>13:00 Telenovela rpt The Three Sides of Ana</p> <p>14:00 Club 101 (via Capital Radio)</p> <p>16:00 Bussines Edition Rpt</p> <p>16:30 Culinary delight rpt</p> <p>17:00 Innovation rpt</p> <p>17:30 Meza huru</p> <p>19:00 Sports Gazette</p> <p>19:30 Chetu ni chetu</p> <p>20:00 Monday Agenda Rpt</p> <p>20:45 Telenovela: The Three Sides of Ana</p> <p>21:30 Capital Prime News</p> <p>22:00 Dakika 45:</p> <p>22:45 The Décor</p> <p>23:15 Al Jazeera</p> <p>Thurs 20 April</p> <p>06:00 Al Jazeera</p> <p>07:00 Morning Jam (Via Capital Radio)</p> <p>09:00 Dw</p> <p>11:00 Al Jazeera</p> <p>11:30 Spots gazette</p> <p>12:00 Innovation</p> <p>12:30 Culinary</p> <p>13:00 Telenovela rpt: The Three Sides of Ana</p> <p>14:00 Club 101 (via Capital Radio)</p> <p>16:00 Tomorrow Today</p> <p>16:30 Business edition rpt</p> <p>17:00 In good shape</p> <p>17:30 Meza huru</p> <p>19:00 Out & About Rpt</p> <p>19:30 Eco@Africa</p> <p>20:00 Our Earth Rpt</p> <p>20:45 Telenovela: The Three Sides of Ana</p> <p>21:30 Capital Prime News</p> <p>22:00 Capchat rpt</p> <p>23:00 Al Jazeera</p> <p>Frid 21 April</p> <p>06:00 Al Jazeera</p> <p>07:00 Morning Jam (Via Capital Radio)</p> <p>09:00 Dw</p> <p>11:00 Al Jazeera</p> <p>11:30 Capchat</p> <p>12:30 Decor</p> <p>13:00 Telenovela rpt The Three Sides of Ana</p>	<p>14:00 Club 101 (via Capital Radio)</p> <p>16:00 Dw News Africa rpt</p> <p>16:30 The Monday Agenda rpt</p> <p>17:30 Meza huru</p> <p>19:00 Rev</p> <p>19:00 Out & About Rpt</p> <p>20:10 Aibu Yako</p> <p>20:15 Local Pgm: Business Edition</p> <p>20:45 Telenovela The Three Sides of Ana</p> <p>21:30 Capital Prime News</p> <p>22:00 Malumbano ya hoja rpt</p> <p>00:00 Al Jazeera</p> <p>Sat 22 April</p> <p>08:00 Al Jazeera</p> <p>09:00 Rev rpt</p> <p>09:30 Jagina rpt</p> <p>10:00 Culinary delight rpt</p> <p>10:30 Innovation rpt</p> <p>11:00 Out n'about rpt</p> <p>11:30 Sports Gazette rpt</p> <p>12:00 Shamba Lulu rpt</p> <p>12:30 Our Earth rpt</p> <p>13:00 Business edition rpt</p> <p>13:30 Aljazeera</p> <p>14:30 Telenovela rpt The Three Sides of Ana</p> <p>17:15 Eco@Africa</p> <p>17:45 Bundesliga kick off</p> <p>18:15 Capchat rpt</p> <p>19:15 Mizengwe</p> <p>19:30 The Decor</p> <p>20:00 Ripoti Maalum</p> <p>20:30 Tomorrow Today</p> <p>21:00 Out n'About</p> <p>21:30 Music Club 101 rpt</p> <p>23:00 Capchat Rpt</p> <p>01:00 Al Jazeera</p> <p>Sun 23 April</p> <p>08:00 Aljazeera</p> <p>09:00 In good shape</p> <p>10:00 Capchat rpt</p> <p>11:00 Sports Gazette rpt</p> <p>11:30 Dw</p> <p>12:00 Jagina rpt</p> <p>12:30 Bundesliga Kick Off rpt</p> <p>13:00 In good shape rpt</p> <p>13:30 Dw</p> <p>15:15 Aibu yako</p> <p>15:30 Rev rpt</p> <p>16:00 Dakika 45 rpt</p> <p>16:45 Mizengwe rpt</p> <p>17:00 The Decor rpt</p> <p>17:30 Meza huru</p> <p>19:00 Eco@Africa</p> <p>19:30 Cookery pgm: Culinary Delights</p> <p>20:00 Jagina</p> <p>20:30 Out & About rpt</p> <p>21:00 Dw News Africa</p> <p>21:30 Capchat live</p> <p>22:15 Telenovela rpt: The Three Sides of Ana</p> <p>00:00 Al Jazeera</p>
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WORLD

Joe Biden considering launching re-election bid Tuesday - sources

WASHINGTON

US President Joe Biden may announce his re-election campaign by video as soon as Tuesday, two people familiar with the matter said on Thursday, setting the stage for a possible rematch with his Republican predecessor Donald Trump.

A Tuesday announcement by Biden, 80, would come four years to the day after his 2020 campaign launch. One of the sources on Thursday cautioned that the exact timing could change.

"We'll announce it relatively soon," Biden told reporters last Friday of his campaign announcement. "I told you my plan is to run again."

Biden is the oldest person to have occupied the White House and would be 86 at the end of a second four-year term. He has struggled with low public approval ratings, with a Reuters/Ipsos poll completed on Sunday showing that just 39 percent of Americans approve of his job performance.

The White House and the Democratic National Committee declined to comment on the timing of the announcement.

Republicans have not yet picked their candidate for the Nov 5, 2024, presidential election, but polls show Trump leads a pack of declared and undeclared Republican candidates that include Florida Governor Ron DeSantis, former vice-president Mike Pence and former UN ambassador Nikki Haley.

While Biden faces little serious competition for the Democratic nomination, 45 percent of Democrats responding to a March Reuters/Ipsos poll said they thought he should not run again in 2024, with 48 percent saying he should.

Civility and employment

Biden plans to campaign on his record in the 27 months since he took over from Trump.

That includes winning Congress' approval for billions of dollars in federal funds to tackle the COVID-19 pandemic and for infrastructure, restoring what his supporters see as civility to the White House and overseeing the lowest levels of unemployment since 1969, although a 40-year high in inflation has marred his economic record.

He faces potential economic headwinds including a showdown in the Re-



US President Joe Biden speaks during a meeting with the President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology (not in image) in the State Dining Room of the White House on April 4, 2023, in Washington. (PHOTO / AP)

publican-controlled US House of Representatives over a \$31.4 trillion debt ceiling that risks a default that would shake global markets and could cause a US recession.

Biden's Democrats also face difficult US Senate elections in 2024, when they will be defending seats in Republican-leaning states including West Virginia, Ohio and Montana. They hold a narrow 51-49 majority in that chamber.

Republicans won a House majority in last year's midterm election, bringing Biden's legislative agenda to a shuddering halt.

In recent weeks, Biden has laid out the likely themes of a re-election bid in political speeches, secured a doctor's note that he is "fit for duty," told Democrats to re-order the party's primary calendar in a manner favoring his nomination and picked Chicago as the city where he would ostensibly formally become the nominee next year.

Biden is expected to meet next week with top volunteer fundraisers from his last campaign. Donors would be key to what might be the most expensive US presidential election to date. They would also show that Biden's

strongest supporters have overcome doubts about his age and prospects in another grueling race.

Unlike the heavily virtual 2020 campaign due to the pandemic, a 2024 campaign would require him to travel to the handful of key states spread across the country that are expected to again be competitive, from Arizona to Pennsylvania.

After losing by seven million votes to Biden in 2020, Trump refused to concede defeat, falsely claiming widespread electoral fraud.

His supporters stormed the US Capitol building in Washington, DC, on Jan 6, 2021, in support of his claims but failed to halt Congress' certification of Biden's win.

Biden is expected to remind voters of these actions, while lauding his handling of the pandemic economic recovery, especially the strength of the US labor market.

Biden has used recent political events to attack Trump-aligned "MAGA" Republicans for trying to undo his legislative victories, but he has largely avoided directly speaking about the legal woes facing Trump.

Agencies

Qin: Chinese modernisation boosts world peace, justice

BEIJING/SHANGHAI

CHINESE State Councilor and Foreign Minister Qin Gang delivered a keynote speech at the opening ceremony of the Lanting Forum on Chinese Modernization and the World in Shanghai yesterday, pointing out that a China moving toward modernization is a boost to the force for peace and justice.

Dominance and hegemony is not the aim of China's development, Qin (pictured) said, adding that the notion that strength will lead to hegemony is incompatible with Chinese culture, and defiance of hegemony is a noble character of Chinese diplomacy.

He pointed out that China is the only country in the world that has put in its Constitution the commitment to a path of peaceful development, the top contributor of peacekeeping personnel among the permanent members of the UN Security Council, and the only country among the five Nuclear-Weapon States that has made the promise of no-first-use of nuclear weapons.

"We have joined over 20 multilateral arms control treaties, and pushed for the conclusion of a joint statement among the five Nuclear-Weapon States on preventing nuclear war. We advocate peaceful resolution of international disputes through consultation and dialogue," said Qin.

He said the Global Security Initiative (GSI) put forward by President Xi Jinping has pointed out the right direction of pursuing common and universal secu-

urity. "It is better to remove enmity than keep it alive," he said, quoting a Chinese proverb.

Noting Saudi Arabia and Iran have resumed diplomatic relations facilitated by China, Qin said that it is encouraging to see that more countries are shaking hands and embracing peace.

In the face of the protracted Ukraine crisis, Qin said, China does not inflame or take advantage of the situation. Rather, China has taken an impartial stance and pushed for peace talks in order to reduce the pressure and lower the temperature around the crisis, he said.

"Facts have proved that a China moving toward modernization is a boost to the force for peace and justice," he said.

Modernization not privilege

Qin also stressed those who have realized modernization should not tear down the bridge or block other countries' path to modernization, and they should not suppress, contain or stop other countries that choose a different path to modernization.

China will defend the right to development of all countries with greater determination, Qin said, adding modernization is an inalienable right of every country, not a privilege reserved for a few.

He pointed out that China has no intention to engage in major-power competition. "What we are firmly defending is our own development interests and the Chinese people's right to pursue a better life," he said.

Qin said China respects the



modernization path chosen by the people of other countries, and opposes attempts to create ideological confrontation and a new Cold War, interference in others' internal affairs and imposition of one's will on others.

China stands committed to the right direction of globalization, opposes attempts to build walls and barriers and push for decoupling and severing supply chains, and opposes unilateral sanctions and maximum pressure, said Qin.

China is doing its utmost to ensure stable and smooth functioning of industrial and supply chains, so that economic globalization and the modernization of all countries could move forward in tandem and complement each other, he said.

Solemn duty to uphold post-war order

Qin said the country sees it as its solemn duty to defend the authority of the UN and uphold the post-war international order.

Recently, there have been some absurd rhetoric accusing China of

challenging the so-called rules-based international order, of unilaterally changing the status quo across the Taiwan Strait through force or coercion, and of disrupting peace and stability across the Strait, Qin said.

"Such claims go against basic common sense on international relations and historical justice. The logic is absurd, and the consequences dangerous," Qin said.

He said having suffered among the heaviest casualties in the world anti-fascist alliance during WWII, and as a founding member of the UN and the first country to sign the UN Charter, China sees it as its solemn duty to defend the authority of the UN and uphold the post-war international order.

"We have the best record in abiding by the purposes and principles of the UN Charter, international law and the basic norms of international relations. We need no reminder by certain countries or groups of countries," Qin said.

Fair-minded people can see full well who is exploiting and discarding the UN at its own will, who is disrupting the international order, and who is engaged in hegemonic, bullying and high-handed practices, he said.

Taiwan has been an inalienable part of China's territory since ancient times, and both sides of the Strait belong to one and the same China. This is Taiwan's history, and it is also the status quo of Taiwan, Qin said.

Taiwan's return to China is a component of the post-war international order, written in black

and white in the Cairo Declaration and the Potsdam Proclamation, he said.

It is not the Chinese mainland, but the "Taiwan independence" separatist forces and a handful of countries attempting to take advantage of "Taiwan independence", that are disrupting international rules, unilaterally changing the status quo, and undermining stability across the Strait, Qin said.

Their definition of rules, status quo and stability is in fact aimed to hollow out the one-China principle, achieve "peaceful division" of China, and ultimately tamper with the history of WWII, subvert the post-war order, and trample on China's sovereignty, he said.

"This is unacceptable to the 1.4 billion Chinese people. China will not lose any part of its territory that has been restored. And the established post-war international order will not be upended," he said.

Qin said it is right and proper for China to uphold its sovereignty and territorial integrity.

"We would like to make it clear to those who seek to sabotage international justice in the name of international order: The Taiwan question is the core of the core interests of China, and there will be no vagueness at all in our response to any one who attempts to distort the one-China principle; we will never back down in face of any act that undermines China's sovereignty and security. Those who play with fire on Taiwan will eventually get themselves burned," he said. **Xinhua**

Agencies

Twitter strips some celebrities of paid verified status

TWITTER on Thursday began removing legacy blue checkmarks from user profiles, with famous people including pop icon Beyonce and Pope Francis losing their verified statuses.

Some personalities such as basketball star LeBron James and author Stephen King still had their checkmarks.

"The Shining" author King, who has previously called Musk a terrible fit for Twitter, tweeted: "My Twitter account says I've subscribed to Twitter Blue. I haven't. My Twitter account says I've given a phone number. I haven't."

Musk tweeted back to him: "You're welcome namaste," with a hands folded emoji.

The Verge reported that James, who has previously said he would not pay for verification, had not paid to keep the check mark.

Musk tweeted separately: "I'm paying for a few personally," and later tweeted "Just Shatner, LeBron and King," referring to Star Trek actor William Shatner, who had last month complained about being forced to pay to keep his blue checkmark.

Among those losing their badges were former US president Donald Trump, Microsoft Corp cofounder Bill Gates and reality TV star Kim Kardashian.

Under Musk's ownership, Twitter has changed how it hands out the coveted blue checkmarks that were earlier given to noted individuals, journalists, executives, politicians and establishments after verifying their identities. They served as a mark of authenticity.

Musk said in November that Twitter will begin charging \$8 per month for the badge in an effort to launch new revenue streams beyond advertising.

The company later offered check-marks in other colors - gold for businesses and a gray for government and multi-lateral organizations and officials.

It has also started displaying labels like "state-affiliated" and "automated by" against accounts to show when an account is linked to a government or is a bot.

US non-profit National Public Radio (NPR) stopped posting content on its 52 official Twitter feeds after Twitter labeled it "state-affiliated media" and later "government-funded media".

Public broadcaster Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) also paused its activities on Twitter and sparred with Musk over Twitter's definition of government-funded.

Agencies



No arms supplies to Kiev from Seoul in past to maintain stable ties with Moscow - Yonhap

SEOUL

SEOUL has not supplied weapons to the Kiev regime because it thinks it necessary to maintain stability in relations with Moscow and the decision on weapons deliveries is not restricted by law and depends on Russia's actions, Yonhap reported on Thursday, citing the South Korean presidential administration.

A senior presidential official noted that the nature of aid being supplied to Ukraine had not changed and that South Korea provides humanitarian and financial aid. He pointed out that South Korean laws do not prohibit supplying arms to foreign countries in the state of war, nor are there any provisions in the Foreign Ministry's instructions forbidding providing military aid to third countries in a difficult situation.

"The reason we are not doing it lies in the necessity to maintain stability in Russian-South Korean relations while supporting the international community's policy on protecting the freedom of Ukrainian people," the administration explained.

"We can think of it in reverse, that what we do in the future will depend on Russia," the senior official said. He added that the president's remarks were based on "common sense" and that Russian authorities were "commenting on something that isn't happening."

In an interview with Reuters published on Wednesday, South Korean President Yoon Suk-yeol did not rule out the possibility that Seoul might start supplying weapons to Ukraine if there was a serious threat to civilians or a "serious violation of the laws of war."

Commenting on the situation, Russian Presidential Spokesman Dmitry Peskov said that weapon supplies to Ukraine would mean Seoul's indirect involvement in the conflict.

He added that there was "nothing cardinal new" about Yoon's interview. Deputy Chairman of Russia's Security Council Dmitry Medvedev believes that Seoul should think about the reaction of the South Korean population when the latest Russian weapons appear in the DPRK.

Agencies

CHINA'S GDP reached 28.5 trillion yuan (about \$4.14 trillion) in the first three months this year, up 4.5 percent year-on-year or an increase of 2.2 percent compared with the fourth quarter of 2022, according to data released by the China's National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) on Tuesday, April 18.

China's national economy made a good start this year, said NBS Spokesperson Fu Linghui at a press conference.

Fu, also the director general of the Department of Comprehensive Statistics of the NBS, explained that as the country has achieved a smooth transition in COVID-19 response and front-loaded the policies to stabilize growth, employment and commodity price, it has accumulated more positive factors.

The Chinese economy enjoyed strong impetus for development in terms of

Chinese economy grows 4.5 percent year on year in Q1

consumption, investment and export.

Since this year, the country's policies to promote consumption have produced continuous effects, and the market saw a prominent rebound, Fu noted, adding that consumption has played a more important role in driving economic growth.

According to him, final consumption contributed 66.6 percent to the country's economic growth in the first quarter, higher than the whole-year figure in 2022 and the largest driver of economic growth.

As the diminishing impacts from COVID-19 expand consumption scenarios, transport, catering, entertainment and tourism consumption saw rapid growth.

In the first three months of this year, the revenue of China's catering industry saw a year-on-year uplift of 13.9 percent.

In the first quarter, China's fixed-asset investment went up 5.1 percent year-on-year, playing a positive role in driving economic growth. Manufacturing investment saw a 7 percent expansion, maintaining a sound momentum for growth and obviously higher than the growth of overall investment. In particular, investment into high-tech manufacturing sectors expanded by 15.2 percent.

Since this year, regions across the country have worked actively to advance infrastructure construction. In the January-March period, infrastructure investment increased by 8.8 per-

cent year-on-year, laying a solid foundation for future development.

"Investment has been on a steady trajectory of growth this year, with a continuously optimized structure, which is conducive to promoting economic growth and long-term development," Fu said. According to him, China will focus more on improving the quality of investment and further stabilize non-state investment.

China has vigorously pursued more stable and higher-quality foreign trade and actively expanded trade with emerging markets and developing countries along the Belt and Road.

In the first quarter, the country's total foreign trade increased 4.8 percent year-

on-year. In particular, exports went up 8.4 percent upon a high aggregate last year. Its trade with Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) partners grew 16.8 percent, and that with other members of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) grew 7.3 percent, with an 20.2 percent rise in exports.

Fu said China's growth was a hard-won result given the slowing economic growth of the world and external uncertainties. China's foreign trade has maintained its strong resilience and vitality despite pressure and challenges, and it is possible for the country to achieve its goal of stabilizing foreign trade and improving its quality this year with stabilizing policies, he remarked.

China's economy has maintained a sound momentum for growth this year, which lays a solid foundation for the country to reach its annual development goals, Fu told the press conference.

The country is witnessing a gradually increasing endogenous momentum for development, and is expected to embrace better economic recovery this year, he said.

Responding to the so-called deflation worries, Fu noted that deflation refers to a continuous fall in the general price level, often accompanied by reduced money supply and economic recession.

"Generally speaking, deflation is not occurring in China," Fu said, citing a mild uptick in the consumer price index, rapid growth in the money supply and a fast economic rebound.

People's Daily

UK Deputy PM Dominic Raab resigns after bullying probe

LONDON

BRITISH Deputy Prime Minister Dominic Raab resigned from the government yesterday following an independent investigation into complaints that he bullied colleagues, the latest scandal to force out one of Prime Minister Rishi Sunak's top ministers.

The loss of the third senior minister over their personal conduct in the last six months will damage Sunak's efforts to revive the governing Conservative Party's fortunes and is a major embarrassment as he had entered Downing Street in October promising a government of integrity.

Raab resigned in a letter to the prime minister before the report was made public, and his departure was a setback for Sunak just two weeks ahead of English local council elections where his Conservatives are predicted to fare badly.

Sunak's office declined immediate comment.

"I called for the inquiry and undertook to resign if it made any finding of bullying whatsoever," Raab's letter said. "I believe it is important to keep my word."

As deputy prime minister, Raab had

no formal powers but stepped in for the prime minister if he was away from parliament or incapacitated. However he was a close political ally of Sunak and helped launch his campaign to be prime minister last summer.

The resignation will also do little to improve the public perception of his government following the scandal-ridden tenure of Boris Johnson and the chaotic economic policies that brought down Liz Truss after less than two months.

'Dangerous precedent'

The months-long investigation into Raab's behavior heard evidence from multiple government officials about complaints of bullying at three different departments.

Raab, who was also justice minister, requested the investigation in November following formal complaints about his behavior by government officials. He said he felt "duty bound" to accept the outcome of the inquiry but also staunchly defended his conduct.

He said the report had concluded he had not once sworn, shouted or physically intimidated anyone in four and a half years, and had dismissed all but two of the claims against him.



Britain's Deputy Prime Minister and Justice Minister Dominic Raab leaves after a cabinet meeting at 10 Downing Street in central London on April 18, 2023. (PHOTO / AFP)

Raab apologized for any unintended stress or offense caused by what he described as the "pace, standards and challenge" he demanded as a minister but said the decision to set threshold for bullying so low "set a dangerous precedent" for the conduct of good government.

This will "have a chilling effect on those driving change on behalf of your government - and ultimately the British people", he said in his letter.

Raab referred to the two incidents where there was a finding of bullying against him - one at the foreign office in dealing with a senior diplomat's handling of the Brexit negotiation over Gibraltar, and one where he gave critical

feedback during an earlier stint at the Ministry of Justice from 2021 to 2022.

Keir Starmer, the leader of the main opposition Labour Party, accused Sunak of "weakness" for failing to sack his deputy rather than letting him resign.

Another of Sunak's senior ministers, Gavin Williamson, also quit in November after bullying allegations, and the prime minister sacked Conservative Party chair Nadhim Zahawi in January after he was found to have broken the ministerial code over his openness about his tax affairs.

Sunak is facing his own investigation by parliament's standards watchdog into his behavior over whether he properly declared his wife's shareholding in a childcare company which stands to benefit from new government policy.

The son of a Czech-born Jewish refugee who fled the Nazis in 1938, Raab studied law at Oxford University before becoming a lawyer working on project finance, international litigation and competition law. He became a member of parliament in 2010 and has had several senior ministerial jobs.

Agencies

Poll reveals level of Russian public's confidence in Putin

MOSCOW

THE proportion of Russian citizens' confidence in President Vladimir Putin amounted to over 80%, according to the All-Russian Public Opinion Research Center that published the results of a survey conducted between April 10 and 16 among 1,600 respondents aged over 18.

"When asked about trust in Putin, 80.1% of respondents answered positively (+0.4% over the week), the approval rate of the Russian president's work was up by 0.4% and stood at 77.5%," the pollster noted.

"Positive assessment figures for the Prime Minister and the Russian government amounted to 54.8% (-0.1%) and 51.8% (-2.3%), respectively," the report stressed. Mikhail Mishustin was trusted by 63.3% of respondents (-0.2% over the week).

Those surveyed also expressed their confidence in the heads of various parliamentary factions. Russia's Communist Party (CPRF) leader Gennady Zyuganov was trusted by 33.5% of respondents (-0.1%), Sergey Mironov, the leader of A Just Russia - For Truth, received 30.7% (-0.6%), the leader of the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia (LDPR) Leonid Slutsky got 17.7% (+1.4%), and the leader of The New People party Alexey Nechayev procured 6.7% (-1.1%).

The poll also revealed that the level of support for the United Russia party stood at 39.0% (-0.8%), with the CPRF supported by 10.2% (-0.1%). The LDPR got 9.3% (+0.4%), A Just Russia - For Truth procured 5.2% (-0.3% over the week), and The New People party's figures came to 4.3% (-0.4%).

Agencies

Australia prime minister to attend NATO summit in July

SYDNEY

AUSTRALIAN Prime Minister Anthony Albanese will attend the NATO summit in July, his office said yesterday, days after his New Zealand counterpart, Chris Hipkins, confirmed his attendance.

Australia and New Zealand are not members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization but have a decades-long relationship with the Western alliance. Both countries attended last year's summit in Madrid as non-member participants.

The summit this year will be held in the Lithuanian capital Vilnius.

Albanese's office said in a statement that Australia shared with NATO members "a commitment to supporting democracy, peace, and security and upholding the rule of law" as the



Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese

group looks to expand and strengthen ties.

Finland became its 31st member this month in a historic policy shift, roughly doubling the length of the border NATO shares with Russia. Neighboring Sweden has also applied to join.

"The Prime Minister's attendance ... will be an important opportunity to rein-

force Australia's support for these global norms ... and advocate for Australia's economic, climate and trade agenda," the statement showed.

Albanese had previously said he was still considering whether to travel to the summit.

Australia, one of the largest non-NATO contributors to the West's support for Ukraine, has been supplying aid and defense equipment.

Agencies

Russia says almost nothing done to address grain deal concerns

BUDAPEST

ALMOST nothing has been done to address Russia's concerns over the Black Sea grain deal, Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said on Thursday, the latest in a series of downbeat comments by top Moscow officials about the pact that enabled Ukraine to resume exports.

Russia has repeatedly said it will not renew the deal beyond May 18 unless the West agrees to lift a host of restrictions on payments, logistics and insurance which it says are hindering its own agricultural exports.

"Here, practically nothing has been done," Lavrov (pictured) told reporters in Havana during an official visit. Footage of the news conference was broadcast by the Russian foreign ministry. Inspections of ships carrying Ukrainian grain from the Black Sea resumed on Wednesday under the grain deal, which was brokered by the United Nations last July, five months into Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

Lavrov will meet with UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres in New York on Monday, Russian UN Ambassador Vassily Nebenzia said.

Ukraine grain glut in Hungary

Separately, Hungary's Agriculture Minister

Istvan Nagy called on the European Union to introduce progressive subsidies for the transportation of Ukrainian grain in the EU to protect farmers in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE).

Nagy said that the introduction of such subsidies would ensure that the grain reaches its traditional markets instead of getting stranded and distorting markets in neighboring countries.

"In the spirit of European solidarity, we are advocating the introduction of progressive EU transit support so that Ukrainian grain can reach its former, traditional markets," he said.

Nagy made this call after talks with Mykola Soloskiy, Ukraine's minister for agrarian policy and food, during which he also discussed Hungary's temporary ban on the import of 25 product categories from Ukraine, including grain, rapeseed, sunflower seeds, cooking oil and some meat products until June 30.

However, Nagy clarified that transit shipments would not be blocked. He said that the measures were introduced to protect Hungarian farmers and consumers and that they were temporary.

Agencies



International passenger service adds new vitality to China-Laos Railway

ON the morning of April 13, 2023, an olive green Fuxing bullet train was ready to leave the Kunming South Railway Station, southwest China's Yunnan province, and kick off the cross-border passenger service of the China-Laos Railway.

The D887 high-speed train officially departed on 8:08 am and went all the way south, carrying the joy of both the Chinese and Lao peoples. An hour later, the D888 train left Vientiane for Kunming.

Now it takes passengers only less than a day to go from Kunming to the Lao capital, or the other way around, which has injected new vitality to the China-Laos Railway, a railway of friendship.

The China-Laos Railway was officially put into use on Dec. 3, 2021. Linking China's Kunming, Pu'er and Xishuangbanna, as well as Luang Prabang and Vientiane of Laos, it has become a golden logistics channel that connects China and Laos and even Southeast Asia at large after 16 months of operation. It vitalizes regional economic and trade cooperation and exchanges.

"The shipping cost for cargo transport between Kunming and Vientiane has been lowered by 40 percent to 50 percent since the China-Laos Railway opened, and that for domestic shipping in Laos by 20 percent to 40 percent," said Jin Zhiyuan, general manager of Sinotrans, a major freight service provider along the China-Laos Railway. According to him, the company will send over 100 containers to China through the railway.

So far, 25 Chinese provinces have launched cross-border trains along the China-Laos Railway, which reach Laos, Thailand, Myanmar, Malaysia, Cambodia, Singapore and other countries and regions along the Belt and Road. The number of cargo categories has been expanded from 10 to over 2,000, including electronic and photovoltaic products as well as cold-chain fruits. The value of cargos transported has exceeded 17 billion yuan (\$2.48 billion).

The transport efficiency and capacity of the China-Laos Railway have significantly improved. The time of customs clearance for cargos transported along the route has been reduced to five hours from more than 40.

The potential of this railway has been constantly released since this year. In the first quarter, the railway transported 5.16 million tons of cargos, up 215 percent year on year. In particular, 1.1 million tons were transnational, which was nearly three times the amount from a year ago.

The cross-border passenger service launched this time is of important significance to facilitating the flow of people along the railway and to promoting the development of the Chinese and Lao tourism.

It is learned that a train departs from both Kunming and Vientiane each day, and the whole trip costs 10.5 hours, including the time spent on going through customs.



Train D887 runs on a bridge along the China-Laos Railway in Jinghong, southwest China's Yunnan province, April 13. (Photo by Li Yunsheng/People's Daily Online)

"To better serve cross-border passengers, there are Chinese and Lao standard power sockets under each set of chairs on the train, information display, radio and service signs are offered in Chinese, Lao and English," said Zhao Yingjing, conductor of the first cross-border passenger train along the railway.

It is reported that the tickets for the passenger service were sold out in just 20 minutes after they were released.

"The tourism industry has sensed the new market created by the China-Laos international passenger service," said Yang Jiechen, head of a Thailand-based

tourism company. According to him, the train trip from China's Mohan port to Laos and Thailand is expected to become a hot tourism route.

The China-Laos Railway, like a "key" to the Indochina Peninsula, has opened an economic channel connecting China, Southeast Asia and South Asia.

The railway not only has improved the transport infrastructure of Laos, but also will drive the country's economic development, said a Lao PhD student of Yunnan University, who names himself Wen Pengyu in Chinese.

People's Daily



The shipping cost for cargo transport between Kunming and Vientiane has been lowered by 40 percent to 50 percent since the China-Laos Railway opened, and that for domestic shipping in Laos by 20 percent to 40 percent

Can the British monarchy survive in its gilded cage?

LONDON

AS Britain prepares to crown King Charles III in a ceremony with traditions dating back some 1,000 years, the monarchy confronts a question it has faced down the centuries: how does it survive in the modern world?

For the House of Windsor, that does not mean dealing with growing hostility from politicians or the public, for which there is little evidence, but rather their indifference and simply becoming negligible.

And in a world where mobile phones are ubiquitous, brutal social media commentary is rampant, and the media's voracious appetite for royal stories is insatiable, the greatest issue might be that the family themselves no longer fancy the job.

"One thing that Prince Harry has really reminded us, if we needed any, is just how incredibly painful it is to live in a cage in which you are constantly scrutinized," royal author Tina Brown told Reuters.

"It's a pretty terrible thing to contemplate that your own life is something that you have no control over and that ultimately, it's just not going to change and you are going to be in a zoo forever.

While many other European monarchies have come and gone, or are far diminished in scale and importance, the British royal family has remained remarkably resilient.

Polls show the monarchy is supported by the majority of Britons, although that backing has slipped slightly since the death of Queen Elizabeth last September, and Charles does not enjoy quite the same overwhelming popularity of his mother.

But surveys also constantly indicate the young are less bothered about the institution than older generations, and as Elizabeth herself once said, while it was hard for them to gauge public opinion, partly because of deference, "read it we must".

Republic, a group that wants to abolish the monarchy, has pointed to a poll which showed a majority of people were not interested in the coronation.

"Most of us aren't that interested, and most of us think the royals should pay," its chief executive Graham Smith said.

Relevance

"Relevance is absolutely crucial to the monarchy," said Robert Hardman, a long-time royal correspondent and author of 'Queen of our Times'.

"The big threat to the future of the House of Windsor is not mobs storming the gate, it's not revolution, it's becoming irrelevant. The queen always used to say we have to be seen to be believed."

But therein lies the catch for the royals. There has long been a symbiotic relationship between the press and the royals, with papers extensively covering their engagements such that barely a day passes without an appearance on the front page of a national newspaper.

But, in return, the royals are considered public property with an expectation that they play the press "game" in return for gilded lives in palaces.

"Monarchs and their families need the media just as the media need them," Harshan Kumarasingham, senior lecturer in British politics at the University of Edinburgh.

"A monarchy exists in a very precarious existence where it can be at the centre of our adulation, but it can also be at the centre of our criticism and fears."

In his memoir "Spare", Netflix documentary series and TV interviews, Prince Harry, the king's younger son, made it clear that such a life in a media goldfish bowl was not one he was prepared to put himself nor his US wife Meghan and their children through any more.

He also accused his family or those working for them, notably elder brother and heir Prince William and his stepmother Camilla, now the queen consort, of colluding with the press to plant negative stories about him in order to enhance or protect their public image.

In his younger days, Harry made front page news when he was pictured wearing a Nazi uniform at a costume party, had run-ins with paparazzi outside nightclubs, and was later pictured naked while partying in Las Vegas.

With everyone having cameras on their mobile phones, there will be even more risk of exposure for the three young children of Prince William who face having every minor misdemeanour, inappropriate comment, or embarrassing mistake captured on film.

"When people talk about the privileges, I would say that the difficulties and the and the imprisonment of it, far outweigh really the privileges," Tina Brown said. "So I'm not sure whether one should expect that of modern people."

However, whatever difficulties it has faced over the years, from wars, divorce, internal squabbles or even abdication, the monarchy has always shown a remarkable ability to bounce back from adversity.



Tusker FC striker, Tanzanian Ibrahim Joshua.

Dar forward returns to boost Tusker FC title charge in FKF Premier League

By Correspondent Nassir Nchimbi

KENYA Premier League side, Tusker FC, has been handed a massive boost ahead of the title run-in, given striker Ibrahim Joshua, who had been out of action for two months with a knee injury, is now back in training.

The Tanzanian international has struggled with injuries this campaign. He picked up an injury in the opening game of the season against the Kakamega Homeboyz at the Bukungu Stadium in Kakamega.

He returned in January, and weeks later he suffered another setback.

The Brewers, who stood to top the standings on Wednesday with a win against Wazito FC at the Ruaraka grounds, will be hoping to have Joshua fit for the remainder of the season. He returned to training on Monday.

In an earlier interview, Tusker FC coach Robert Matano disclosed that he will have Joshua and the other players like Shami Mwinyi, Deogratious Ojok, and David Majak, among others that have come out of injury

layoff, back soon.

Matano said: "On injuries, things are looking good, we have players coming back soon. Joshua is coming back, and Ojok is not far away either... most of the players that were injured will be available soon."

The tactician further revealed that defender Boniface Onyango will be out for longer.

The utility man underwent knee surgery in February and has not featured for FKF Premier League defending champions ever since.

"Only Boniface Onyango will be out for longer, he still has around two more months to recover from injury," he added.

Defending champions are high riding and gunning to fully take advantage of Gor Mahia's misfortune and roar back to the top of the table when they face Wazito FC.

The brewers who are a point behind Gor Mahia, alias 'K'Ogalo', with a game to spare will certainly dislodge the record 19-time Kenyan Premier League champions from the helm with a win over strugglers Wazito FC.

After derby flop, Yanga needs good results from CAF CC quarterfinals than Simba SC

By Correspondent John Kimbutu

PSYCHOLOGICAL contests between the city archrivals are mediated at every stage, where the key contest each year is the Premier League, as it opens the doors for all other contests, and indeed, evaluations.

Side by side with the pursuit of the title, each contest between the two is a high point in club expectations, helping to shape the club agenda not just concerning the squad, but even in terms of the leadership. The latest results do not show a visible impact on either of these aspects.

The key lesson of the latest derby is that the Msimbazi Street side, irrespective of regaining or not regaining the Premier League title, has shown it has what it takes to beat the defending champions convincingly, as 2-0 is an illustration of having dominated if not the game, then the show of skills.

Statistical summations of the game did not suggest that Simba SC dominated the play, for instance, in the number of corners, but its chances and how they were taken were more forthright.

Yanga had fewer good chances in comparison to their rivals and failed to convert any of them.

Adding to Yanga's failure to remain in the 2022/23 CAF Champions League run, though in a way it was a blessing for them to still show visible prowess on the continental stage, it suggests that the side has a greater need to add substance, even if it is arguably as good a competitive side as any.

Without such addition, it risks playing second fiddle to its next-street rivals for a while to come.

It is a problem that is surely more acute than the 'second best' results in the CAF Confederation Cup run, at this stage.

One can assert that lessons learned during this or that match in the continental run are likely to be remembered by pundits, that is, soccer analysts but lessons arising from the



Tanzania's Yanga midfielder, Zawadi Mauya (R), races past Nigeria's Rivers United player when the two teams took on each other in a 2021/22 CAF Champions League's First Preliminary Round tie that took place in Dar es Salaam in December 2021.

derby are being interred by the fans.

In that case, options for Yanga's leadership concerning outcomes of the continental competition, especially as the side finished top in the 2022/23 CAF Confederation Cup Group Stage, are likely to be negligible.

But ending four years of an unbeaten run against their archrivals is a challenge they will have to handle.

How far this situation is coming up in the minds of the fans, pundits or leadership is arguably a bit early to discern, one reason being that Yanga's head coach Nasreddine Nabi did not acknowledge any shred of the superiority of the outfit's archrivals.

He had some data to back up that position, he had a good amount of data to back up the position that the referee mishandled the game in allowing a corner that resulted in the first goal, but pundits were more or less unanimous that the referee's decision was valid or warranted.

He did not admit that his midfield was not at par with the game as the pundits were

largely pointing out, thus Nabi's position was a bit weak.

One reason for having to rush to the offensive by disputing refereeing decisions, even as several pundits indeed thought that the lady in charge of the game was sort of overwhelmed, is the fact that losing a derby is a punishable offense nearly everywhere in Africa.

There was, in the past five years or fewer, a coach who said Yanga stood little chance against Simba SC in a forthcoming, and despite that he had just been newly recruited, having a few months with the squad, he was rapidly given a golden handshake and off he went. A lack of confidence in a derby is a sin. Still, the club will have to do some real analysis to figure out the margin of error that belongs to players in the sense of not being exactly fit for a certain position, to find out who was arguably weaker than they expected.

There is no need to cite names but individuals like Bernard Morrison appear to have outlived their strategic usefulness, while some cases are debatable like Bakari Mwamnyeto

for the Jangwani Street side.

Across the street, there are a few ripe bananas to drop to the ground, a mixed sentiment environment is visible for now off, now on players.

On the whole, a realistic assessment of the run of the derby will leave the issue in a positive mood but if on the contrary the matter is taken up negatively it will be different.

All effort at blame allocation, rather really than sharing by sharing it, on her basis of a realistic assessment of potential by the coast- no aspiring to ambitious physical trainers will be astonishingly negative.

The club has to remain remorseful and largely satisfied with its performance, aware that it did not have what it takes to tame the Simba SC attacking force, like when choice striker Jean Bakele hit the horizontal bar twice.

It is easy to see the damage that would have been occasioned had the two acute strikes been scored.

The point is the capacity to stop such chances or score them. It is way above current references or models.

Simba SC, Yanga divide opinions over CAF inter-club tourneys quarterfinals

By Correspondent Nassir Nchimbi

THIS season's CAF Champions League quarterfinal fixtures pitting Tanzania's Simba SC against continental football giant, Wydad Athletic Club of Morocco, happen to be fantasy encounters tough in reality.

Simba SC is reeling from an aggregate 6-1 loss to Morocco's other soccer big gun, Raja Club Athletic, in the tournament's Group C clashes that took place on February 18 and March 31.

Raja Club Athletic, also the 2022/23 CAF Champions League quarterfinalist, is another team based in Casablanca with over three million followers.

There is also another difficult match, this season's CAF Confederation Cup's quarterfinal tie between Tanzania's Yanga and Rivers United of Nigeria.

Why were some Yanga fans cheering after the side was paired against Rivers United in the continental showdown's last-eight draw? I still do not understand such a reaction.

Has such a celebration come about because Rivers United has a different price tag to the one that other CAF Confederation Cup group leaders, including Egypt's Pyramids FC, have?

I hardly see the Simba SC against Wydad Athletic Club fixture as an easy clash for the former. I believe that if Simba SC knocks Wydad Athletic Club out then the Tanzanian outfit will go on to win the 2022/23 CAF Champions League title.

It is difficult for Simba SC to beat Wydad Athletic Club for three main reasons. It is also possible that it is difficult for Simba SC to beat any other

team that the outfit would be paired against besides Wydad Athletic Club at this stage.

Tanzania's soccer followers may need to only focus on Wydad Athletic Club which has already been paired against Simba SC.

Simba SC will need miracles to overcome its opponent in the coming ties. If a person looks at the way Simba SC was dominated by Raja Club Athletic in both matches in Group Stage and looks at the latter's position in this season's Moroccan Premier League, he/she will know the difficult situation in which the former is in.

Wydad Athletic Club, for several years, turned out to be stronger than Raja Club Athletic and, in reality, the former has surpassed the latter by 12 points in this season's Moroccan Premier League. Raja Club Athletic is lately sitting fifth while Wydad Athletic Club occupies second place.

This just shows soccer followers that Wydad Athletic Club is tougher than Raja Club Athletic in the Moroccan Premier League at the moment, let alone the fact that the former are the defending champions of the CAF Champions League.

There is further a fact that Wydad Athletic Club is confronting Simba SC which continues to re-establish itself.

Simba SC has yet to possess the edge the club had at a time it had players Louis Miquissone, Clatous Chama, Hassan Dilunga, and Rally Bwalya that were shining for it.

The Msimbazi Street squad is lately a club with performers like defender Joash Onyango, whose current form



Tanzania's Simba SC midfielder, Mzimiru Yassin (C), negotiates his way past Morocco's Raja Club Athletic midfielder Abdelillah Hafidi as the clubs locked horns in a 2022/23 CAF Champions League Group C tie which took place in Morocco on March 31. Raja Club Athletic hammered Simba SC 3-1. PHOTO: COURTESY OF SIMBA SC

worries the majority of his club's fanatics.

If Simba SC failed to match Raja Club Athletic's pace, will the Tanzanian club manage to withstand Wydad Athletic Club's speed?

The third reason is the fact that the first leg will be played at Benjamin Mkapa Stadium in Temeke, Dar es Salaam today.

Simba SC will not only need to win but also score a lot of goals against Wydad Athletic Club. Grabbing victory over the Moroccan soccer

big gun is something that will surprise many people.

Notching goals in the match against Wydad Athletic Club is one thing, scoring a lot of goals is though completely another feat that will be quite amazing.

Will Simba SC be able to do so? It is clear that Simba SC footballers stand to have the toughest match of their lives in Casablanca, therefore, if they want to try to make it to the next stage, then everything should end in

Dar es Salaam.

A few goals that the Tanzanian side will allow in Casablanca is an aspect that can help it make it to the semi-finals, but the team needs to score a lot of goals in Dar es Salaam.

In this weekend's quarterfinal match, regardless of what happens in Dar es Salaam, Wydad Athletic Club will seek to intimidate Simba SC players.

The Moroccan outfit's passionate fans will enter the field with noisy

celebrations aiming to motivate their outfit to once again stay on course for progression to the semi-finals while believing that they are going to defend the CAF Champions League silverware.

Whatever it is, Simba SC needs to fight hard to get good results. Suffering a knockout is one thing, but bowing out in a humiliating manner is a quite different experience.

All I know is that when Simba SC plays these kinds of matches, the outfit happens to be a more determined contender, this time the side ought to be more flexible.

Moving on to this season's CAF Confederation Cup, I was surprised to see some Yanga supporters cheer after they learned that their outfit will confront Rivers United in the quarterfinals.

My mind tells me that if Yanga had faced Rivers United 24 months ago, the former would have made it to the CAF Champions League Group Stage.

Yanga was eliminated

by Rivers United with a similar result of a 1-0 loss in both home and away fixtures of the continental tournament's First Preliminary Round.

Striker Fiston Mayele and midfielder Khalid Aucho did not play for Yanga in the fixtures because their licenses were delayed.

Yanga also did not have the quality its squad has currently. However, this is a one-sided story, what about Rivers United?

Does Yanga know to what extent has Rivers United improved after the latter faced the former in the last clash in Port Harcourt in the 2021/22 season?

I think Yanga supporters enjoyed witnessing their club being paired against Rivers United because the former avoided Egypt's Pyramids FC and USM Alger of Algeria.

The followers rejoiced because they saw their club was set to take on Rivers United, a club they still remember. It is Rivers United that Yanga locked horns with in two matches and was eliminated.

From flags to tattoos, Naples turns blue as title fever grows

NAPLES, Italy

NAPOLI haven't won the title yet, but Naples is already in party mode.

In anticipation of the club's first Italian football league title for three decades, the city is celebrating and decorating its streets with blue -- Napoli's colour.

Blue banners and flags stream from balconies and street corners and Napoli scarves and jerseys fill shop windows in this boisterous southern Italian city.

Even the bread has turned blue.

"I live for Napoli. It's my passion. So I had the idea of creating a special loaf in honour of Napoli... for my fan customers," baker Antonio Coppola told AFP.

Within the labyrinth of alleys that characterise this teeming metropolis, Coppola has started baking bright blue loaves decorated with an "N" whenever the team has a match.

Naples has always lived and breathed football but the prospect of Napoli winning their third Scudetto -- and the first since Diego Maradona led the team in 1990 -- has brought the passion to new heights.

A picture of Maradona as a saint looks down on Salvatore Russo's tattoo parlour as he works on a Scudetto-themed design on a customer's arm.

He has seen an uptick in people requesting Napoli tattoos as the competition reaches its final weeks, for which he has come up with a new design.

"I decided to put aside my superstition and tattoo the third Scudetto," Russo said, showing off his forearm bearing an image with the dates of Napoli's titles -- including 2023 -- hovering over its crest.

"The players will sew it on their jerseys, but I sewed it on my skin."

The artist, born just steps away from the huge Maradona mural at the heart of Naples' Spanish quarter, has already tattooed about 30 people with the design.

The most recent was Antonio Cardone, owner of a nearby curtain shop.

"We've almost won it," he told AFP. He is so confident that he is already thinking about a fourth title.

"I hope it comes soon because I'm already 56!" he joked, gritting his teeth as Salvatore's needle pierced the skin on his arm.

- Maradona and San Gennaro -

In Naples, long plagued by poverty, unemployment and organised crime, the passion for football transcends generations and social classes.

One well-dressed Neapolitan talking to AFP in the street earlier this week said he was a lawyer who had just left a court hearing.

AFP

Tuchel's Bayern face 'character test' at in-form Mainz

BERLIN

WITH six league matches remaining, Bayern Munich's title credentials will face a stern examination today at Mainz, one of the Bundesliga's form sides.

Bayern's Champions League elimination at the hands of Manchester City on Wednesday, along with their German Cup exit earlier in April, means only one chance of silverware remains for the trophy-hungry club.

Bayern lead the Bundesliga but Borussia Dortmund are just two points behind.

Bayern manager Thomas Tuchel said the Mainz clash would be a test after Wednesday's 1-1 home draw with City completed a 4-1 elimination on aggregate.

"On Saturday, we want to be ready for the next fight, which is definitely a character test."

Tuchel said Bayern could take "plenty of positives" from "matching it with the best team in Europe, the most in-form team in Europe". But he acknowledged that the contrasting 1-1 draws with Manchester City on Wednesday and with lowly Hoffenheim in the Bundesliga the previous weekend, suggest his team is inconsistent.

"Today (Wednesday) we were really on a high level. On Saturday, we were not."

"We need to be on a high level on Saturday against Mainz."

Of immediate concern is Bayern's misfiring attack.

The forwards, who include Sadio Mane, Serge Gnabry, Leroy Sane, Kingsley Coman, Thomas Mueller and Jamal Musiala, have failed to score for five matches.

In that period, four goals have come from defenders and one from a penalty converted by defensive midfielder Joshua Kimmich.

Tuchel cut his coaching teeth at Mainz from 2009 to 2014, a club known for making canny choices to overcome budget limitations.

Mainz manager Bo Svensson, who played for five years under Tuchel, said on Thursday the Bayern manager "was one reason why I took the path to become a coach."

Svensson said Tuchel helped him "find my identity and what I want to stand for".

Unbeaten in nine matches, Mainz have also won the last two times Bayern have visited in the league.

Dortmund host Eintracht Frankfurt on Saturday evening.

AFP

Man United collapse at Sevilla in Europa League while Juventus hold off Sporting

LONDON

MANCHESTER United imploded in Sevilla in the Europa League on Thursday while Juventus completed a good evening on away to Sporting and advancing to the semi-finals.

In the quarter-final second legs, United succumbed 3-0 at Sevilla to go out 5-2.

Juventus hung on to draw 1-1 with Sporting in Lisbon to advance 2-1 on aggregate while Bayer Leverkusen won 4-1 in Belgium to eliminate Union Saint-Gilloise 5-2.

Jose Mourinho's Roma beat Feyenoord 4-1 after extra time to advance 4-2.

United, who led by two goals with six minutes left in the first leg before conceding a pair of late own goals, completed the collapse in Spain.

Goalkeeper David de Gea had a disastrous night as lacklustre United were dispatched by the six-time competition winners.

After eight minutes De Gea ruled a pass to an isolated Harry Maguire, scorer of one of the first-leg own goals. This time, ambushed by three opponents, he gave the ball away and Youssef En-Nesyri accepted the present.

Sevilla dominated and could have scored again before centre back



Sevilla's Bono in action with Manchester United's Marcus Rashford. REUTERS

Loic Bade headed onto his own shoulder and looped the ball over De Gea in the 47th minute.

In the 81st minute, De Gea charged out but sliced a dropping ball. It fell to En-Nesyri who curled into the empty net to complete the victory.

"It's clear that when we make mistakes, it's very difficult to win a football game. We have to do better. That's a demand," said United coach Erik ten Hag.

Juventus received potentially good news earlier in the evening when Italy's highest sporting court revoked a 15-point Serie A points deduction for illicit transfer activity but asked that the case should be re-examined.

In Lisbon, Juventus started fast as Adrian Rabiot spun and scored

after Sporting failed to clear a ninth-minute corner.

The French midfielder then fouled Manuel Ugarte in the penalty area and Marcus Edwards converted the 20th-minute penalty.

The home team struggled against the Juventus defence and Ricardo Esgaio and Sebastian Coates missed Sporting's best chances in the closing minutes.

Juventus will next face Sevilla and coach Massimiliano Allegri said he had thought the writing was on the wall for United.

"I expected Sevilla to be honest. They are a tricky team," the Juventus coach said. "They have won so many Europa Leagues so they definitely have an advantage. The signs from the last game were in their

favour, I had that feeling."

- 'You want more' - In Brussels, Union Saint-Gilloise could not claim a second German scalp.

In the first leg in Leverkusen, Union Saint-Gilloise had managed a draw as they had in the round of 16 on their way to eliminating Union Berlin.

On Thursday, their hopes of a repeat began to fade after 90 seconds, as Moussa Diaby pounced on some poor defending and rounded goalkeeper Anthony Moris.

Mitchel Bakker volleyed a second after 38 minutes.

Morris then played the ball straight to Jeremie Frimpong who fired it straight back past the Luxembourg international after 60 minutes.

Casper Terho replied for Union but Adam Hlozek restored the three-goal advantage.

"Being in the semi-finals is great, but once you get there you want more," said Leverkusen coach Xabi Alonso whose team will face Roma for a place in the final.

After a cagey first hour in Rome, Leonardo Spinazzola levelled the tie for the home team with a deflected shot.

Paixao flicked Feyenoord level on the night and ahead on aggregate. But in the final seconds of regular time, Paulo Dybala scored for Roma to send the tie to extra time.

Stephan El Shaarawy struck from close range to put Roma ahead 11 minutes into extra time and Lorenzo Pellegrini scored from a

rebound three minutes into the second period.

In the Europa Conference League, Fiorentina blew a three-goal first-leg advantage over Lech Poznan before scoring twice in the last 12 minutes to lose 3-2 at home but advance 6-4 on aggregate.

Gent took the lead against West Ham at the London Stadium when Hugo Cuypers put them ahead on aggregate after 20 minutes.

But Michail Antonio scored twice, Lucas Paqueta converted a penalty and Declan Rice also scored in a comfortable 4-1 win for West Ham to advance 5-2 on aggregate.

France's last representative in Europe, Nice went out 3-2 on aggregate after losing 2-1 in extra time at home to Basel. Kasim Adams headed the deciding goal in the 98th minute.

Meanwhile, Manchester United coach Erik ten Hag said his players lacked passion and desire in their 3-0 thrashing by Sevilla in the Europa League on Thursday.

"Tonight we weren't good enough, that was obvious, that was clear," Ten Hag told reporters.

"I have to acknowledge (the lack of fight), it's the truth, it's hard, it's tough, it's unacceptable."

After a 2-2 quarter final first leg draw at Old Trafford the Red Devils were soundly thumped at the Ramon Sanchez Pizjuan.

AFP

SA 'Mourinho' targets continental glory with Mamelodi Sundowns

JOHANNESBURG

RHULANI Mokwena is a suave 36-year-old South African who grew up dreaming of being a lawyer, but now lays down the law at Mamelodi Sundowns, the dominant football club in the country.

Crowned South African champions a sixth straight time this month, the Pretoria outfit have adjusted their sights to the CAF Champions League, which they won in 2016.

Sundowns are away to goal-shy but defensively strong Chabab Belouizdad of Algeria in a quarter-final first leg on Saturday, with the return match seven days later.

"We want to win the CAF Champions League regularly," says Mokwena about a competition that north African clubs have dominated with 10 titles in the past 12 seasons.

Football is embedded in the Mokwena family -- his father, Julius, played for crowd-pullers Orlando Pirates and he is a nephew of Jomo Sono, a South African great of the 1970s.

Mokwena has been likened to Jose Mourinho, one of the great modern-era coaches, in that both have been successful despite never playing at a senior level.

"That is quite a compliment, but I have a long road to travel before coming close to matching Jose," Mokwena tells

AFP.

"Jose, Pep (Guardiola), Jurgen (Klopp) and Carlo (Ancelotti) are the managers South African coaches look up to."

Modest Mokwena seemed embarrassed when reminded that Sundowns went on a 24-match unbeaten run after he became head coach last October.

He began the 2022-2023 season as junior partner to co-head coach Manqoba Mngqithi, but a three-goal drubbing from Pirates in a knock-out competition had major repercussions.

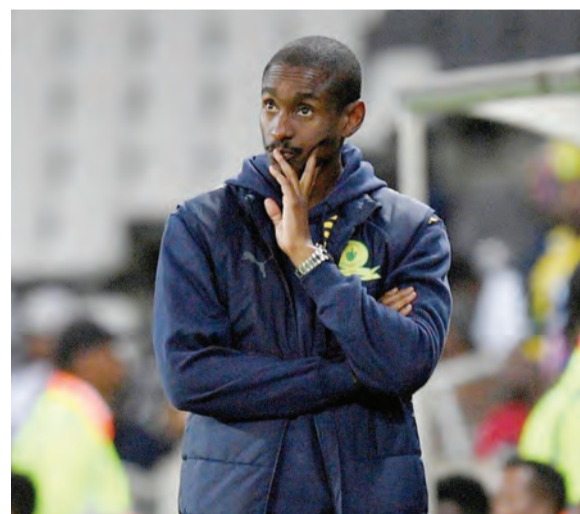
Mngqithi was demoted to "senior coach" and Mokwena became head coach, entrusted with the highest paid but most demanding club job in South Africa.

Coaches do not disclose salaries, but it has been widely reported that Mokwena earns about one million rand (\$55,000/50,000 euros) a month.

Sundowns are owned by one of the wealthiest South Africans, Patrice Motsepe, who was chosen as president of the Confederation of African Football (CAF) by acclamation in 2021.

Becoming the African football supremo meant Motsepe had to resign as Sundowns' chairman, and his eldest son, Thlopie, took over.

- Coaching reshuffle - The coaching reshuffle initially worried some Sundowns supporters as Mokwena had previ-



Rhulani Mokwena

ously been Pirates' caretaker boss and won just four of 14 matches.

Those fears quickly vanished as Sundowns won their first five matches under him, scoring 14 goals and not conceding.

His unbeaten run included South African Premiership, South African FA Cup and CAF Champions League

matches, and led to the league title with seven matches to spare, a record.

After becoming champions, however, Sundowns slumped, drawing three consecutive league matches, then losing to mid-table Stellenbosch in an FA Cup quarter-final.

"We do not want to become familiar with

losing," said Mokwena after a defeat that could have been avoided as both Stellenbosch goals stemmed from careless passes.

"Sundowns are the gold standard of South African club football. We are by far the best team in the country," said the coach.

Gavin Hunt, a four-time title-winning Premiership coach, says Sundowns must be judged by their Champions League results.

"They should be in the semi-finals or final every year because they are far ahead of everyone in South Africa."

Sundowns beat Egyptian club Zamalek in the 2016 final, but since quarter-finals were introduced the following year they have progressed past the last-eight stage only once in five attempts.

An impressive 5-2

AFP

Gwiji by David Chikoko



SPORT

Man U collapse at Sevilla in Europa League while Juventus hold off Sporting

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5 EATV MONDAY

TONIGHT @ 9:00

5Sports

11:00 DADAZ LIVE
12:00 Weekend Movie (r)
14:00 SKONGA (r)
14:30 Planet Bongo (r)
15:00 Funguka
15:30 Akili & Ma (r)
16:30 #HASHTAG
17:00 SSELEKT
17:55 Kurasa
18:00 eNewz
18:30 Bongo HIT
19:00 EATV SAA 1
20:00 DADAZ (r)
21:00 5SPORTS LIVE
22:00 Zote Kuntu
23:00 Kurasa (r)
23:05 EATV SAA 1 (r)

eastafrika RADIO

06:00 Supa Breakfast
10:00 MAMAMIA
12:00 Kipenga Xtra
13:00 Planet Bongo
14:00 EA Drive
20:00 Kipenga
21:00 The Cruise

88.1FM DAR ES SALAAM

Dodoma Jiji FC, KMC FC in Premier League relegation six-pointer

By Correspondent Michael Mwebe

DODOMA Jiji FC entertains Kinondoni Municipal Council FC at the Jamhuri Stadium this evening, with both sides involved in the 2022/23 NBC Premier League relegation battle.

Hosts Dodoma Jiji FC are sitting 11th in the standings, one point above the relegation zone.

Kinondoni Municipal Council FC is occupying 13th place in the standings, two points ahead of safety.

Dodoma Jiji FC has won just two of the club's last seven league matches, though a 1-1 draw in a clash against Coastal Union on April 9 was enough to lift them out of the relegation playoff berth.

The Capital City boys have claimed 16 points from 14 home matches this season, with their last victory as hosts being a 2-1 win over Tanzania Prisons in mid-March.

Ghanaian Collins Opare leads Dodoma Jiji FC in goals this season with the striker netting six. Former Kinondoni Municipal Council FC forward Seif Abdallah 'Karihe' has four goals.

On the flip side, Kinondoni Municipal Council FC suffered a fourth loss from their last five league matches when they were beaten 2-0 at home by Geita Gold FC on April 11.

There have been defeats against Young Africans (Yanga), Azam FC, and Ruvu Shooting.

Kinondoni Municipal Council FC is fortunate that the bottom two teams in the NBC Premier League standings are as bad as they are.

Otherwise, Kinondoni Municipal Council FC would be in far more relegation danger than the outfit is in right now.

The damaging home defeat in a tie against Geita Gold FC marked the end of Kinondoni Municipal Council FC's head coach Thierry Hitimana's reign.

Former Dodoma Jiji FC coach Jamhuri Kihwelo 'Julio' was soon appointed to take charge of Kinondoni Municipal Council FC up to the end of the season.

This will be 'Julio's first attempt at stopping the rot on the pitch, he has to instantly find a winning formula on the road.

Kinondoni Municipal Council FC has claimed mere five points from 12 away matches this season, with the club's last result on the road being a 1-0 loss to Azam FC in late February. They are the only side yet to win on the road this season.

If Kinondoni Municipal Council FC wants to rescue the club's season, it must win and to achieve that the outfit needs its strikers to don their scoring boots because goals have been a rarity for the club this season.

George Makan'ga and Matheo Anthony are joint-leading goal scorers for Kinondoni Municipal Council FC with four goals apiece.

In head-to-head stats, Dodoma Jiji FC and Kinondoni Municipal Council FC have met in five league matches since 2020/21.

Dodoma Jiji FC has racked up three wins to Kinondoni Municipal Council FC's two in the rivalry, while their meeting earlier this season at the Uhuru Stadium in Dar es Salaam in November 2022 was won by Dodoma Jiji FC.

Simba SC ready to secure first-leg advantage over Wydad AC in CAF CL last eight



Tanzania's Simba SC footballers participate in training at Benjamin Mkapa Stadium in Dar es Salaam yesterday to prepare for the 2022/23 CAF Champions League last-eight duel against Morocco's Wydad Athletic Club which will be played in the city today. PHOTO: Correspondent Jumanne Juma

By Correspondent Michael Mwebe

TANZANIA'S Simba SC will lock horns with Moroccan giants, Wydad Athletic Club, in the first leg of the quarterfinals of the 2022/23 CAF Champions League at Benjamin Mkapa Stadium in Dar es Salaam this afternoon.

Senegalese referee Issa Sy will take charge of the clash in Dar es Salaam. A video Assistant Referee (VAR) is expected to be introduced at this stage with Egyptian Mahmoud Ashor the designated official while Ugandan Mike Letti is the match commissioner.

Simba SC advanced to the quarterfinals of the premier continental club showdown for the third time after finishing second in Group C behind Moroccan giants Raja Casa-

blanca.

A 7-0 mauling of Guinea's Horoya AC and a double over Uganda's Vipers SC ensured Simba SC finished with nine points to confirm a place in the last eight with one game to spare.

Roberto Oliveira-coached Simba SC heads into this clash on the back of successive 2-0 victories over arch-rivals, Young Africans (Yanga), and Ihefu SC in the 2022/23 NBC Premier League.

The outfit will be hoping for a repeat performance in this match though Wydad Athletic Club's pedigree is difficult to ignore.

In team news, Simba SC is sweating over the fitness of the squad's first-choice goalkeeper Aishi Manula after he was left out of the clash with Yanga due to muscular fatigue.

Similarly, Malian midfielder Sadio Kanoute also remains a big doubt for the game having been sidelined in the last four games due to a hip issue.

Clatous Chama, who scored four times for Simba SC in the continental tournament's Group Stage, will be looking to inspire his side to victory once again alongside a confident Dennis Kibu and on-form Jean

Baleke who has three goals in the competition.

Meanwhile, Wydad Athletic Club, who beat Egypt's Al Ahly 2-0 in last season's final to lift the coveted trophy for the third time, won Group A with a record of four wins, one draw, and one defeat.

Wydad Athletic Club, popularly known as the 'Red Castle', claimed a 2-1 away league win against Union Touarga Sport last time out, meaning they have won 14 of their 23 Morocco Botola Pro matches this term.

Still, they remain one point behind the league leader, AS FAR FC, in the

Botola Pro League table, so they will be desperate to give their all in the CAF Champions League this season.

The defending champions will be without the services of Senegalese striker Bouly Junior Sambou due to yellow card accumulation.

Sambou has scored three goals for Wydad Athletic Club in the CAF Champions League this campaign.

The aggregate winners of the match will face the winner of the clash between Algeria's CR Belouizdad and South Africa's Mamelodi Sundowns in the semi-finals.

Azam FC out to heap more misery on struggling Ruvu Shooting

By Correspondent Michael Mwebe

AZAM FC will be bidding to reclaim the third spot in the 2022/23 NBC Premier League when they make the short trip to Morogoro to face basement side Ruvu Shooting at the Jamhuri Stadium this afternoon.

The Ice cream makers have dropped points in their last five league matches, which has allowed third-placed Singida Big Stars to leapfrog them by one point.

This means that there is no room for error in this game for Kally Ongala-coached Azam FC, which has won 15, drawn five, and lost six of their 26 league matches during an up-and-down campaign.

Given the gulf in class, Ongala's men should not struggle to collect maximum points against Ruvu Shooting.

That said, Azam FC's recent away record is a cause for concern, as they have only managed to win three of their previous ten games on the road in the league.

The 1-0 defeat away to Ihefu SC in early March means that Azam FC has now failed to win in their previous six league outings on the road. Nigerian midfielder Issah Ndalah put on a clinic showing for Azam FC last time out



Ruvu Shooting's fullback, Nathaniel Chilambo (L), challenges Azam FC's left-back, Pascal Msindo, when the clubs faced each other in a recent NBC Premier League duel which took place at Mabatini ground in Coast Region. PHOTO: COURTESY OF AZAM FC

against Mtibwa Sugar with a first-half goal before Iddy Selemani 'Nado' won it for the former in the second half to render Mtibwa Sugar

forward Onesmo Mayaya's effort useless.

Prince Dube, who has six goals is the dangerman for Azam FC up front alongside

the rejuvenated 'Nado' who has found the back of the net five times since coming back from a long injury lay-off.

At the opposite end of the standings, Ruvu Shooting finds itself sitting second from the bottom in the table - seven points from safety.

The hosts know that a victory would be a massive one for their chances of NBC Premier League survival.

They have only managed to win five of their 26 league games this season, recording five draws and 16 losses along the way.

The army outfit also holds the fourth-worst defensive record in this season's NBC Premier League, having conceded 33 goals.

Worse still, Mbwana Makata-coached Ruvu Shooting is the worst home team this season having collected just 11 points. No team has lost more games at home this season than Ruvu Shooting (eight).

In head-to-head stats, Azam FC and Ruvu Shooting have met in 23 league matches since 2010/11.

Azam FC has claimed 13 wins compared to two for Ruvu Shooting, while eight matches have been drawn.

Ruvu Shooting has avoided defeat in seven of the club's 11 home league matches in the rivalry, suffering four defeats in the process.

When the teams met earlier this season, at Azam Complex Stadium on November 2022, Azam FC claimed a 1-0 home win thanks to a second-half penalty converted by Congolese Idris Mbombo.

Flexibles by David Chikoko

