



National Pg 3 NIDA launches digital format



National Pg 4 Samia expected to open power project today



National Pg 6 Documentation of GBV cases



WB set to disburse \$775m in resilience, maternal care loan

By Guardian Reporter

THE World Bank has approved two financing programs for Tanzania totaling \$775m via the International Development Association (IDA).

Nathan Belete (pictured), the World Bank regional director accredited to Tanzania, said in a statement yesterday that the financing consists of \$500m credit for development policy financing targeting inclusive and resilient growth, along with \$250m credit tied with a \$25m grant for the maternal and child health program.

The country office said that Tanzania has experienced a contraction of its tourism sector and a spike in import prices for fuel and other commodities in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine.

"Prudent macroeconomic management has allowed the country to weather these external shocks and minimize the erosion of hard-won development gains," it stated.

The component for inclusive and resilient growth development policy financing is the first in two

With this new financing, we hope to accelerate progress in areas where outcomes have been lagging in regard to high maternal mortality

operations to support policy and institutional reforms that are critical to unleashing private sector growth, it said.

Increasing transparency, boosting risk management capacity and building economic resilience against future shocks driven by climate change and other external factors are part of the component, the statement noted.

"The World Bank is putting its full support behind policies aimed to ensure a robust private sector-led recovery that will help the country reach its economic potential, while also making growth more inclusive and resilient to future shocks," it explained.

The \$275m package for maternal health programmes will help the country improve the quality of essential healthcare services and scale up delivery, with a \$250m component for the lender's program for results initiative for Mainland regions and a \$25m investment project financing for Zanzibar, the director noted.

A \$25m grant issued by the bank's Global Financing Facility for Women, Children and Adolescents targets women

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TPA to retain TICTS workers ahead of January 1 takeover

By Guardian Reporter, Bagamoyo

NO job losses are expected among employees of the Tanzania International Container Terminal Services (TICTS) whose contract ends on December 31.

Juma Kijavala, the deputy director-general for the Tanzania Ports Authority (TPA), told reporter here yesterday that all employees of TICTS will remain on their jobs with their interests safeguarded.

At the start of January 2023, TPA will take over operations of the firm, pending an ulterior decision of the government on the container terminal agency for two decades being operated by TICTS.

"The TICTS contract has expired, so TPA is taking over the area to run it," he said, projecting that services will be better than during the agency and all the rights of the workers will be observed in the same way.

He likened the TICTS contract with landlord hiring services to a tenant, with the discretion to retain such services on expiry of the contract. So the area will be under the port management and the government will decide who should develop it, he stated.



The TICTS contract has expired, so TPA is taking over the area to run it

With TICTS staff shifting to TPA their jobs will be safe, citing an agreement on TICTS equipment and infrastructure as already done. They will be purchased and continue to be used by TPA, he stated.

TICTS had a five-year lease agreement which expired on September 30, 2022 but it was extended for another three months to give more time for the two parties to discuss the possibility to renew the contract.

In September 2017, then President John Magufuli directed TPA to review its contract with TICTS, five months after CAG Prof Musa Assad issued an opinion that the contract had numerous defects.

After reviewing the contract in 2017, the government doubled the annual fee TICTS pays for leasing the lucrative container terminal from \$7m to \$14m, touching off a spate of price hikes and divestment signs, observers noted.



Ishmael Niilo (R), Songe ward livestock officer in Kilindi district, Tanga Region, shows a farmer the boundary between his farm and grazing area at Kwenyengo after resolving a land dispute yesterday. Others are community service members in the ward. Photo: Correspondent Dege Masoli

Fertiliser: Itracom 0.2m tonnes plant starts, projects 1m tonnes

By Guardian Reporter

ITRACOM Fertiliser Co, has started production at its Dodoma factory, with Prime Minister Kassim Majaliwa visiting the factory on Tuesday.

Nduwimana Nazaire, director general of the firm whose base in East Africa is Burundi, said in welcoming the premier that construction work began in July



President Samia is glad to learn that the factory has started production

2021 and the firm launched operations at 200,000 tonnes annually, with medium term projection for one million tonnes capacity.

The firm now employing 972 people has machinery for the second and third lines that had already been delivered, with installation start early next year, he said. In his remarks the premier said the

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TCRA gives January 31 deadline for simcards, proper NIDA numbers

By Guardian Reporter

USERS of telecommunications services have until January 31st to register their SIM cards with respective National Identification Number (NIN) or be deactivated.

Dr Jabir Bakari, director general for the Tanzania Communications Regulatory Authority (TCRA) said in Dar es Salaam yesterday that unverified active SIM cards still unverified after the deadline will be put off air.

The exercise is meant to deflect communication fraud and ensure user safety, he said, underlining that

it is a requirement for each user of telecommunications services to verify active phone numbers using a citizenship ID.

Alternatively, they can use a NIDA-provided national identification number which can be obtained from offices of the National Identification Authority (NIDA), he said.

The agency has embarked on a public awareness campaign to reduce the number of sim cards registered by third party identification, he said, insisting that some telecommunication service users were misusing their sim cards by exploiting

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Fertiliser: Itracom 0.2m tonnes plant starts, projects 1m tonnes

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government's efforts in making sure adequate fertiliser is produced in the country have started to bear fruit, with the opening of the new factory.

"President Samia Suluhu Hassan is glad to learn that the factory has started production," he said, noting that the presence of the factory was due to the president's efforts in making sure fertilizer is more readily available and at affordable prices.

Itracom's investment was in tandem with plans for factories in related areas of agriculture limestone, fertiliser packing material and a dairy factory, he stated, noting that such projects will assist the government in tackling the stiff employment headache.

Investors require that the sites

of putting up an investment incorporate all essential services needed for sustainable production, like a reliable road network, water supply, communications and electricity, he stated.

He also used the occasion to appeal to employees at the factory to observe professional standards and trust, so that what the company says of the workforce can attract other investors to set foot in the country.

Agriculture minister Hussein Bashe said efforts to create a good investment environment propelled the fertilizer investor to build the factory, widening availability of the vital farm input.

Distribution agents for subsidised fertiliser need to observe diligence as the government is watchful. It will take steps against all those found to engage in fraudulent acts, he added.



Minister of State in the President's Office (Public Service and Good Governance) Jenista Mhagama (R) presents Prevention and Combating of Corruption Bureau programme to the director general Commissioner of Police Salum Hamduni during the opening of PCCB annual general meeting in Dodoma yesterday. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

WB set to disburse \$775m in resilience, maternal care loan

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of reproductive age and those in their teens. Children under the age of five, newborns and infants will benefit from a package of high impact, quality and cost-effective reproductive interventions, covering maternal, newborn, child, adolescent health nutrition (RMNCAH-N) interventions.

Amit Dar, the regional director for strategy and operations, said that over the past two decades, Tanzania

has significantly reduced the disease burden and improved health outcomes due to improvements in the control of major communicable diseases and vaccine preventable diseases.

"With this new financing, we hope to accelerate progress in areas where outcomes have been lagging in regard to high maternal mortality, high fertility rate, elevated newborn mortality and high rate of malnutrition," he added.

TCRA: Tie up SIM cards, NIDA numbers by Jan 31

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a loophole that allows them to remain under the registration of third parties.

TCRA wants to ensure that all users are identified by their sim cards, registered using their own national identification information and not via borrowed identification, he asserted.

There could be unscrupulous users engaging in unlawful and disagreeable activities using telecommunication services in that way, so the current exercise aims at deterring perpetrators from disturbing the telecom usage ecosystem, he declared.

The exercise is meant to establish a more accurate database of valid active SIM cards in the country, enhance lawful ownership of sim cards and ascertain well projected data of vivid telecommunication service users countrywide, he said.

This shall enhance correct reportage of communication sector performance, he remarked, demanding that each user fully perform the sim card verification exercise.

"We shall succeed in calming minor disturbances in the telecommunication service atmosphere created by the few unscrupulous users misusing communication space. Hence it will be safer for each of us in receiving services," he further noted.

Thadayo Ringo, the TCRA customer and consumer affairs manager, said that the verification process is easy to execute, completed by anyone using a telecommunication device. TCRA has assigned code *106# use free of charge for the purpose, he said.

"Users will need to dial *106#, after which a service menu with options 1 through 5 will appear on their device screen. If they select option 3, they will be able to view quantity of phone numbers registered from all networks that are associated with the nationality ID number.

If the user discovers additional known or unknown mobile phone numbers associated with their NIDA identification number, they shall be required to take action like contacting the service provider's agent kiosks or mobile network operator's nearby service shop to delete the unaccounted-for number(s)," he elaborated.

TCRA has observed that some users of mobile network services have avoided verifying their sim-cards avoid being identified by their original identity and detection of criminal acts they commit using telecommunication services. They opt instead for a technique of purchasing sim cards from law-breaking agents, sim cards potentially used to commit unlawful acts.

The law requires all users of telecommunication services to have their sim cards registered using own national identification, which TCRA is moving to enforce.

Secondary users who acquired sim-cards registered using identification data of third parties must re-register by changing identification information before the end of January or have their sim cards deactivated, he affirmed.

Early last month TCRA announced that 52,087 mobile phone numbers had been blacklisted or phased out, especially those linked with mischievous messages to send money to the specified number.



Users will need to dial *106#, after which a service menu with options 1 through 5 will appear on their device screen

Ruto marks 100 days in office amid crisis and disillusionment

NAIROBI

LONG gone are the days of campaign. Kenya's leader William Ruto will mark his one hundredth day in office on Thursday.

He came to power casting himself as a champion for the downtrodden. However, ordinary Kenyans fell like their lot has not improved.

Shop attendant Winnie Wanjiru Mwaura was brimming with hope when she signed up to be an election agent for William Ruto during the August 9 polls and elated when he became president.

But barely 100 days after the rags-to-riches businessman took office on September 13, the 21-year-old wants nothing to do with him.

"Life has only become worse under him," the first-time voter said.

Herman Manyora a political analyst who backed Raila Odinga explains why some of Ruto's voters accuse the President of renegeing on his promises.

"The first 100 days would be a disappointment to the extent of the administration not living up to their promises. They made very clear, concrete promises, and these were to be actualised in the first 100 days. Some of them, they have asked for more time instead of a 100 days they ask for a year, some of them have turned their backs against."

"If we take care of the bottom, we take care of everybody," the 56-year-old leader once told a campaign meeting, outlining his plan for a "bottom-up" economic transformation.

Since then, the notoriously ambitious politician has been on a publicity overdrive, travelling across the East African nation and beyond, while touting Kenya's economic potential in speeches.

As far as voters like Mwaura are concerned however, Ruto has done far too little to improve the lot of ordinary Kenyans in a country where about a third of the population lives in poverty.

Ruto initially promised to restructure the economy by slashing government debt, bringing down prices of essential commodities, and creating a "hustler fund" to offer personal loans to any Kenyan with a cell phone and a mobile money account.

But his first act after assuming office was to slash food and fuel subsidies introduced by his predecessor Uhuru Kenyatta.

While Ruto argued that the interventions had "not borne any fruit", their removal was a request from the International Monetary Fund, a major lender to the East African economic powerhouse.

"The move to remove the fuel subsidy was not very strategic as it

has led to a slower economy, rising inflation and higher interest rates," Ken Gichinga, chief economist at business analytics firm Mentoria Economics argued.

The Central Bank of Kenya raised interest rates by a cumulative 1.75 percent in 2022, the most in seven years, while inflation soared to a five-year high of 9.6 percent in October.

Even Ruto's pet project, the 50-billion-shilling (\$408-million) "hustler fund", has sparked controversy, with some accusing him of renegeing on promises to make the credit scheme interest-free.

The fund, launched last month, will offer personal loans of up to 50,000 Kenyan shillings, with interest charged at eight percent a year - lower than the rate of inflation.

Borrowers have already complained of difficulty in getting loans higher than 1,000 Kenyan shillings approved, despite the fund's stated objective of boosting financial access for the country's poorest citizens.

"They inflated the prices of goods, then give you a 500-shilling loan which can only buy two packets of maize flour," Michael Wafala, a 35-year-old mechanic, told AFP.

For shop attendants like Mwaura,

who earns just 700 Kenyan shillings a day, the fund will do little to change her fortunes.

Still, she borrowed 1,000 Kenyan shillings to pay for a trip to the hair salon.

"I used the loan to get my hair braided," she said. "What else can one do with a 1,000-shilling loan?"

Ruto also failed to deliver on his campaign pledge to achieve gender parity in his cabinet, naming just seven women to his 22-member team.

Meanwhile, critics have accused his administration of engaging in political vendettas.

Earlier this month, four election commission officials who had cast doubt on the poll results that brought him to power, were suspended by the government.

"They are not behaving like they are in power; they are still fighting wars that you would expect to be fought during an election," political analyst Herman Manyora said.

Despite a "disappointing" start however, Manyora said it was too early to dismiss the president and his team.

"We would give them five out of 10 because the ship is floating," he said, adding that he was cautiously hopeful.

For Ruto's hustler voter base however, the verdict is already a foregone conclusion.

"Ruto has a sweet tongue but I haven't seen anything from the new administration," said a car washer, who gave her first name as Jane.

AGENCIES



Bishop Dr Charles Gadi of Good News For All Ministry leads a prayer for rain in US and Tanzania which face drought. The event was held in Dar es Salaam yesterday. Left is Rev. Bezabe Massawe. Photo: Guardian Photographer



Lands, Housing and Human Settlements minister Dr Angeline Mabula (L) receives a briefing from NMB acting chief executive officer Filbert Mponzi (R) on how to make payment of land tax and other payments during the introduction of partnership between the government and NMB Bank in Dar es Salaam yesterday. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

Lands ministry, NMB Bank forge alliance to help collection of taxes

By Guardian Reporter

MINISTRY of Lands, Housing and Human Settlements Development and NMB Bank yesterday announced formation of a strategic partnership to ease collection of land rent and other levies through the lender's payment channels.

Announcing the development at NMB's head office in Dar es Salaam, Minister Dr Angeline Mabula, said the alliance takes the tax payments service closer to the people.

Explaining, she said that was because the bank has a relatively wider market outreach that comprises 228 outlets, over 17,000 agents and a good number of digital channels.

Land owners can now make land rent remittances through NMB Wakala, NMB Mkononi, the superhighway NMB direct and the unrivalled NMB branch network.

Under the arrangement, the lender will be also offering them the rent assessment service and the whole package was described by Minister Mabula as top-class creativity and innovation of the highest level.

"In the current financial year, the ministry targets to collect 250.1bn/- in land rent but so far we have managed to garner only 72bn/-," the cabinet minister told the press gathering.

"Through this partnership," she explained, "we expect to improve the rate of collection, which currently is not very convincing, but because NMB Bank is almost everywhere in this country and has innovative payment channels therefore payment of the rent has been simplified and made easier."

Dr Mabula also challenged those who owe the government land rent to use this development to clear their arrears and the grace period accorded to them by the head of state not to pay the interest for untimely remittances.

In fiscal year 2022, President Dr Samia Suluhu Hassan granted

forgiveness to defaulters of land rent the one per cent penalty if they paid the principal amount between July and December this year.

The minister said to date the response has been lackluster hence the need to seek ways to address the challenge. According to her, seeking strategic partnerships is part of executing the budget of the ministry this fiscal year, which include collection of 250.1bn/- land rent and implementing other pivotal sectoral projects like the land surveying and planning undertaking.

Dr Mabula said statistics show that so far only 2,819 land owners have exploited Dr Samia's grace period leading to collection of some 11.99bn/- as principal amount. She said the default interest forgiven so far amounts to about 6.94bn/-.

She said NMB staff have been specifically trained and coached to handle the land assessment and payment service.

Speaking earlier, NMB Acting CEO Filbert Mponzi, said the partnership augurs well with national building efforts. He said the bank through this new alliance continues to lead in forging strategic development partnerships with the government.

According to him, NMB pioneered sectoral collection of government revenues by being the first to join the GePG and so far it leads in collecting the largest amount of these proceeds.

"Today, through this partnership we are showing how well prepared we are to collect land rent and other levies for the ministry through our different channels notably NMB Wakala, NMB Mkononi, NMB Direct and the 228 branches," he said.

Mponzi called on NMB customers to seize the opportunity and fully exploit it as he urged those who are yet to bank with the top lender to do so in order to also enjoy the mouthwatering fruits of the partnership.

By Guardian Reporter

NIDA launches digital format

THE National Identification Authority (NIDA) has launched a new digital format enabling eligible individuals to apply for national identification numbers (NIN) online.

Geoffrey Tengeneza, the NIDA head of communications, told journalists in Dar es Salaam yesterday that the format shall similarly enable Tanzanians living outside the country (Diaspora) to apply for NIN and obtain identification cards whenever they are.

He said people also complained over wrong publication of names and the cost to travel to NIDA offices.

He said the system is expected to speed-up the registration exercises

as they will personally write their names and other information correctly. He said previously, the authority had to pay overtime allowance for officers registering citizens after working hours.

"The previous system was costly, forcing people to stay in queues for over six hours. Such long queues discouraged many people from applying for NIN. They were not ready to spend many hours to register, thus deciding to do their economic activities," said Tengeneza.

He said the previous system also required a number of equipment

for scanning different documents for every registered individual. He said the one will enable .

Tengeneza said that under the new system, applicants will have to enter into online.nida.go.tz and follow instructions that will lead him/her fill form and print it. He said the printed form should be taken to the village or street chairman for stamping.

He said the form will then be returned to NIDA together with other documents including birth certificate and identity card. He said thereafter, applicants will be interviewed by immigration officers

and have their photographs and fingerprints taken.

For the Diaspora, he said they will register online and go through similar processes assisted by officials from particular embassies. He said since many Tanzanians own smartphones and computers, the number of applicants is expected to increase tremendously.

The official noted that so far, a total of 23,000,000 Tanzanians have been registered by NIDA while it has produced 11,187,656 IDs. He said that 9,624,261 people have already taken their IDs while those with NIN are 19,845,757.

Mwinyi urges scholars to conduct research for development issues

By Guardian Reporter,

Zanzibar

ZANZIBAR President Dr Hussein Mwinyi has challenged scholars in the Isles to conduct research for development issues.

Speaking at the 20th graduation ceremony for Zanzibar University (ZU), he said research has double benefit namely development of the country and academic promotion of scholars.

"In today's world countries depend on scholars for development through research and consultancy," he said.

President Mwinyi acknowledged that it costs money to conduct research but went ahead to challenge academics to do research for socio-economic development.

He said scholars should not feel comfortable living within or near communities living in abject poverty. Instead, they should always seek ways to bring relief to the people through research.

"It encourages to see that some of our people engage in studies meant to improve livelihoods instead of leaving the same to foreigners," he said.

President Mwinyi also challenged the academics not to go about their business as usual since the world has changed and the country needs a young generation of scholars who are capable of moving with time.

"We need a new generation of scholars

who are not only competent but proactive and do not wait to be told what to do," he said.

"Education remains a key driver of economy and development not only in Zanzibar and also in Tanzania as a whole and the rest of the world."

Lela Mohammed Mussa, Zanzibar minister for Education and Vocational Training urged universities and colleges in the Isles to develop programmes that can produce experts for the blue

economy to boost development.

"Blue economy is an important agenda for our government but we do not have enough experts in the area," she said.

ZU chancellor Dr Abdulqadir Othman Hafiz said the higher learning institutions should implement the projects and programmes in Zanzibar.

A total of 568 students graduated this year, including 251 males and 317 females in various programmes including certificates, diplomas and degrees.



Call for Request of Applications

TANZANIA MAJI NA USAFI WA MAZINGIRA (MUM) ACTIVITY - CALL FOR APPLICATIONS MUM-RFA-003

The Tanzania Maji na Usafi wa Mazingira (MUM) Activity is a five-year activity (August 2021 - August 2026) funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Mission to Tanzania. USAID Tanzania's Activity will work directly with national, regional and district stakeholders and in collaboration with local governments, private sector, and communities to improve Tanzania's systems for planning, financing, and implementing actions to expand access to WASH and WRM services using four complementary implementation strategies, namely: Building ownership through continuous stakeholder engagement, strengthening organizational systems and services, applying market-based principles, and learning by doing in 10 districts in four regions of Morogoro, Iringa, Njombe and Rukwa in the Rufiji, Lake Nyasa, and Lake Rukwa basins.

MUM has designed the grant scheme to support entrepreneurs to pursue sanitation and hygiene business. The activity is currently accepting application from qualified small enterprises operating in MUM target districts, with preference for women and youth-led firms. Please see <https://tetratech.force.com/ard> for full details and to download the Request for Applications MUM-RFA-003. All interested small enterprises may either reach out to MUM grants unit by email at: tanzaniamum.grants@tetratech.com to request the full grant application document, or can download it directly at Tetra Tech grants portal (<https://tetratech.force.com/ard>). The application due date is January 20, 2023.

This call does not legally obligate Maji na Usafi wa Mazingira (MUM) Activity in partnership with any small enterprise. No commitment is made, either expressed or implied, to compensate small enterprises for cost incurred in the preparation or submission of their applications.

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D-Day as President Samia Suluhu opens giant power project

By Guardian Reporter

TODAY is D-Day as President Samia Suluhu Hassan is expected to press a button to signal the opening of the diversion channel for the Julius Nyerere Hydropower Project (JNHPP) being built at the tune of 6.55trn/-.

The Head of State is set to officiate at the opening of the diversion channel that will direct water into the dam for the generation of the 2.115 megawatts (MW).

Briefing reporters in Dar es Salaam yesterday Minister for Energy January Makamba said that the project has been completed by 78.68 percent.

He described the opening of the diversion channel by President Samia as a significant momentum in the implementation of the project, adding that the remaining part is switching on the turbines to start generating power.

He noted that the move pave the way for filling water into the dam to start generating power at the largest hydropower project in the region, adding that the dam to be used to generate water at the project measures about 916 km² and will be more of a lake than a dam given its vast size.

According to him, apart from generating electricity, the project is also crucial for controlling frequent flooding along the river and boosting tourism, since it has been built within the Julius Nyerere National Park where River Rufiji traverses.

The minister mentioned other benefits associated with the dam at JNHPP as fishing as well as irrigation

farming, noting that, unlike other hydropower plants which depend on flowing water to generate electricity, the water to be stored at the JNHPP dam can produce electricity for three consecutive years even when there would be no rain.

He stated: "There are some people who have been doubting the sustainability of JNHPP due to effects of climate change, but the truth is there will be enough water which can be used for up to three years in case there are no rains to fill up the river.

"For instance, Kihansi hydropower which depends on flowing water has an installed capacity to produce 180 megawatts but it only generates 17 megawatts at present, while Mtera which has a dam generates at full capacity at 80 megawatts despite lack of rains."



There are some people who have been doubting the sustainability of JNHPP due to effects of climate change, but the truth is there will be enough water which can be used for up to three years in case there are no rains to fill up the river

Children from poor households emerge winners in toy contest

By Beatrice Philemon

FIFTEEN children out of 200 from poor households in Kunduchi ward, Kinondoni District have emerged winners of the 2nd Toy Contest walking away with different prizes.

The contest organised by Korean youth Volunteers-"Team Light" in collaboration with Dial Community of Tanzania was aimed at providing an opportunity for children to show and promote their talents. Apart from making them happy, it also meant to encourage them to love what they do.

Dar es Salaam Based Company-Aron Group Tanzania Limited, Chief Executive Officer, Taegyun Kim thanked the South Korean donors for their support which allow children from poor families to show their creativity.

He said they received more than 200 toys from safe plastic waste, boxes, garments that include toy cars, trucks, toy houses, and toys for girls and boys.

He said Team Light, Aron Group Tanzania Limited in collaboration with Dial Community of Tanzania will organise such contests every year to help more children participate.

Korean Youth Volunteer, Eunbi Cho said they decided to organise the contest because they want to give children an opportunity to showcase their creativity and express their ideas.

"We want them to have funny, we just let them make their toys and we do some games with children and some of the children who made extra efforts have received awards," she said.

"Children get a chance to show their toys and talk about them confidently, they speak about their dreams and share ideas on how to make them come true," she said.

Jovet Mengi from Mtakuja primary school emerged the first winner and received toy cars and a certificate. He made a wood toy truck and other safe plastic waste.

Hemed Hassan from Mtakuja primary school emerged the second winner and received a toy train. He made a cargo truck from safe waste

while Paulo Fransis emerged the third winner and went away with the dream prize.

The remaining 185 children who participated in the contest went home with 2kg of rice and snacks.

In an interview with second winner, Hemed Hassan says that "I am very happy to participate in this contest because I got a chance to show my creativity and later on win a best prize, I am truly grateful for the recognition I have received for my work," he said.

He advises children who have participated in toy contests to put more effort and make toys that are good, don't give up for what you have made, next time "you will also win," he said.

He also expressed thanks to Dial Community of Tanzania for supporting children from poor families in -terms of shoes, school uniforms, transport fees, food items and medical treatment, thus improving their academic performance.

Director, Dial Community of Tanzania, Inwook Park advised children to make toys for their dreams not for competition.

Dial Community of Tanzania was established in 2013 and has supported children from poor families by training them on how to make bread, tailoring course as well as playing soccer.



I am very happy to participate in this contest because I got a chance to show my creativity and later on win a best prize, I am truly grateful for the recognition I have received for my work



A member of the East Africa Legislative Assembly from Tanzania, James ole Millya (L) takes oath of office at the headquarters in Arusha yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Gift Thadey

DCEA destroys 2,584 kilos of drugs, two tonnes of marijuana and 569.25 kilos of heroin and cocaine

By Guardian Reporter

THE Drug Control and Enforcement Authority (DCEA) has destroyed 2,584 kilos of drugs including two tonnes of marijuana as well as 569.25 kilos of heroin and cocaine.

Speaking to journalists yesterday in Dar es Salaam shortly after the completion of the destruction exercise, Veronica Matikila, who represented the DCEA Commissioner General, said the action was done after the conclusion of court proceedings related to the

seizure of the drugs.

Matikila said the burning involved those which its proceedings are dated back to 2009 to date. She said the destruction is a normal process which takes place when court proceedings have been completed.

She said the burned narcotics were from the High Court's Division of Economic Sabotage and Corruption in Dar es Salaam, Kisutu Resident Magistrates court and other district courts namely, Kibaha, Kinondoni, Ilala, Temeke

and Kigamboni.

She said this is the second time for DCEA to burn drugs, adding the first time was in February 2022 in Mtwara Region where 355 kilograms of drugs were burned.

He said it is the fourth time that seized drugs are being burned by the authority since the establishment of DCEA in 2017. She said the first time was on October 8, 2019, whereas a total of 120.91 kilograms of drugs were burned and the second time was on November 12th, 2020, where it burned 118.174 kilogrammes.

Different institutions participated and witnessed the burning exercise; they are-court representatives, Chief Government Chemist, National Environment Management Council (NEMC) and the officials from the office of the Director of Public Prosecution.

She called upon Tanzanians to continue cooperating with security organs in providing information saying that Tanzania without the presence of drugs is possible; hence the need for every citizen to expose people who engage in illegal business.



Lands, Housing and Human Settlements Development minister, Dr Angeline Mabula (R) presents a title deed to Ubungo district resident in Dar es Salaam yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Munir Shemweta

UN Security Council relaxes arms embargo on DR Congo

KINSHASA

THE UN Security Council adopted a resolution Tuesday relaxing the embargo on arms exports to the Democratic Republic of Congo, a decision hailed by Kinshasa as an "injustice repaired."

The resolution removes language that previously required countries to inform the Security Council and its 15 members of any sale of arms or military assistance to the DRC.

Kinshasa has long deplored this requirement, saying it created an

unnecessary bureaucratic obstacle in its fight against armed groups.

The DRC has been under a UN arms embargo since 2000. The decision was made at the time in response to the extent of the violence in the central African country.

In 2008, the Security Council amended its sanctions regime to apply only to armed groups. But it still required Kinshasa to notify a monitoring committee of any arms purchases.

Earlier this year, the Security Council extended the sanctions

regime but reduced the notification requirements for certain arms purchases.

Kinshasa has since continued to push for a lifting of the restrictions as the DRC faces an upsurge in clashes with the M23 militia in the east.

The Security Council had been pressed to act amid accusations that it was preventing the Congolese military from protecting civilians.

"A battle won, an injustice righted," DRC government spokesman Patrick Muyaya said on Twitter after the resolution was

adopted.

The Security Council also voted to renew the mandate of the peacekeeping mission in the DRC, Monusco, for another year.

The M23, a mostly Tutsi armed group defeated in 2013, took up arms again late last year and stepped up its offensive in October, seizing large swaths of territory north of Goma, the capital of North Kivu.

Rwanda is accused by Kinshasa, the United States and several European countries of supporting the M23.



Passengers - bound for upcountry Mwanza and Bukoba regions wait at Magufuli Bus Terminal in Dar es Salaam yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Miraji Msala

Tanzania among 6 countries performing well in war against corruption - PCCB

By Guardian Correspondent, Dodoma

TANZANIA is cited as among six world countries that have made strides in fighting corruption.

Other countries are the Seychelles, Angola, Rwanda and Senegal, which have also made strides as per research by various organisations including Transparency International.

This was disclosed here yesterday by the PCCB Director General, Salum Hamduni, when addressing

the bureau's three-day annual general meeting.

Hamduni said the achievements are great because in the past the country was far behind in its war against corruption.

He said they have gone up 87 places in the corruption war out of 187 that were researched on by various organisations.

"We are thankful to attain that position and I believe we shall continue to go up in this war," said the PCCB DG.

He explained that the fight against

corruption is the responsibility of every one, hence everyone is supposed to watch others involved in acts of corruption.

Regarding the launching of a friendly programme for the fight against corruption, he said this will be taken to all places up to the wards where it will help the people know various projects going on in their areas.

He noted that the meeting aims to look into and come out with an assessment on their daily work performance in the various areas of

the country.

Earlier, PCCB Deputy Director Neema Mwakaliyeliye said the meeting has involved PCCB regional commanders and added that the launching of the programme will assist the community know about various development projects going on in their areas.

Neema also thanked the government for its huge collaboration in making sure corruption is effectively fought in the country's various areas.

Mobile application enables Kenyans to become actors in wildlife conservation efforts

NAIROBI

THE National Museums of Kenya has launched an app to help the country's wildlife authorities track and log rare and common mammals and record whether the species and their habitat are thriving.

At the Soysambu Conservancy in Nakuru, southern Kenya, tourists come to experience the rich biodiversity.

When John Perret, the owner of a camel safari, takes out his phone, it is not merely to take a picture.

He is actually using the Makenya Mammal Atlas Kenya app which allows users to record all the details of any mammals they spot.

"This app now helps us to really map where these animals are and if they're in trouble we can get the authorities to come and help us and it gives me a great opportunity to show the tourists exactly where they are", the operator says.

"This will be a continuous census and we will know how well our animals are performing", he also notes.

In addition to benefiting tourism and those who work for animal welfare, the free app can be a tool for raising awareness. Researcher Simon Musila wants the general public to seize this opportunity to positively impact wildlife conservation.

"We want to also encourage the general public to participate in conserving mammals and one of the basic ways they can actually do that is whenever they see mammals anywhere they submit a record, that way is one of the important ways for them to participate in conserving mammals", he says.

The Kenyan Wildlife Service (KWS) says around 25,000 species of animal and 7,000 species of plants have so far been recorded.

If making an inventory of the

species is important, collecting additional data that enables monitoring the living conditions of the animals is another objective of the app.

"It will also include the recording of the breeding conditions specifically if you see an endangered species and you see that it has young ones that are quite encouraging because we will know that that species actually will survive in the environment", Musila says.

"[...] It will be a game changer because it will also capture the habitat type where that species is found", the researcher at the National Museums of Kenya adds enthusiastically.

"If the habitat is in good condition then we know that the endangered species will survive in that particular habitat in the long run."

It is indeed essential to identify conditions in which animals are still able to thrive or at least cope. The effects of drought across parts of Kenya threaten species like rhinos.

The Mammal Committee of Nature Kenya, the National Museums of Kenya, and collaborators created the app.



This app now helps us to really map where these animals are and if they're in trouble we can get the authorities to come and help us and it gives me a great opportunity to show the tourists exactly where they are



BANK

PUBLIC NOTICE

KCB CORPORATE SUKUK: PUBLIC OFFER RESULTS AND ALLOCATION ANNOUNCEMENT

KCB Bank Tanzania Limited ("KCB" or "Issuer") hereby announces that the Capital Markets and Securities Authority ("CMSA"), in the exercise of its powers under the Capital Markets and Securities Act (Chapter 79 of the Laws of Tanzania) on 25th October 2022 approved the issuance of KCB Corporate Sukuk worth TZS 10 billion with a Greenshoe Option of TZS 5 billion.

STATUS OF THE PUBLIC OFFER

KCB Corporate Sukuk's offer was opened on 09th November 2022 and closed on 05th December 2022. Following the closing date, KCB Bank Tanzania limited is pleased to announce that it received applications for Sukuk worth TZS 11 billion, which is 110 per cent of the issued amount of TZS 10 billion.

APPROVAL TO INCREASE THE GREENSHOE OPTION AMOUNT

KCB Bank Tanzania limited received approval from CMSA to issue Corporate Sukuk worth TZS 10 billion with a Greenshoe Option of TZS 5 billion. Following receiving applications worth TZS 11,042,500,000, representing subscription level of 110%, KCB Bank Tanzania limited has accepted all bids received for the KCB Corporate Sukuk.

RESULTS OF THE PUBLIC OFFER

A summary of the key result statistics of the offer (the "Offer") are set out below:

Issuer	KCB Bank Tanzania Limited
Description and status of Issue	Unrated, unsecured, subordinated, non-cumulative Corporate Sukuk
Tenor	Three Years
Issue Date	16 th December 2022
Total Amount Offered (TZS)	10,000,000,000 (with a Greenshoe Option of 1,042,500,000)
Total Bids Received (TZS)	11,042,500,000
Performance Rate	110%
Total Amount Accepted (TZS)	11,042,500,000
Expected Profit Rate	8.75% per annum
Issue Price	Par
Minimum Denomination	TZS 500,000 (with multiples of TZS 100,000)
Use of Proceeds	The net proceeds from the KCB Corporate Sukuk will be used to finance KCB Sahl Banking sharia-compliant asset portfolio within the Islamic Banking Window. The funds will be used with other Shari'ah compliant funds, for investment in the pool of KCB Sahl Banking.

ALLOCATION POLICY

Given the subscription level of 110%, KCB bank Tanzania Limited has:

- Decided to exercise the Greenshoe option, making the amount available for allocation sum up to TZS 11,042,500,000; and
- accepted all valid applications received. Applicants will therefore receive 100% allocation.

CLARIFICATIONS

In need of any further clarifications, applicants are advised to consult their stockbrokers or KCB Bank Tanzania Limited (email: Fursa.Sukuk@tz.kcbbankgroup.com or +255 766 509 640) regarding your application.

SALIENT DATES

Please see the salient dates following the offer close:

Description	Date
Notification Date (via email/telephone)	Tuesday, 20 th December 2022
Issue Date	Friday, 16 th December 2022
CDS Account upload date	Wednesday, 11 th January 2023
Listing Date	Friday, 13 th January 2023

APPRECIATION

The Management of KCB Bank Tanzania Limited wishes like to thank all entities that made this issuance possible. These include Board and Management of the Capital Markets and Securities Authority (CMSA); Board and Management of the Dar es Salaam Stock Exchange (DSE); the Bank of Tanzania (BoT); KCB Tanzania Limited's Lead Transaction Advisor, FIMCO Limited; Sponsoring Broker, Vertex International Securities Limited; Legal Advisor, CRB Africa Legal; Shariah Advisor, CIFCA; Reporting Accountants, KPMG; Receiving bank and Registrar, CRDB Bank Plc.

Issued by:

The Managing Director,
KCB Bank Tanzania Limited,
Harambee Plaza, Ali Hassan Mwinyi Road/Kaunda Drive

DATE: 20th December 2022

This announcement has been issued with the approval of the Capital Markets and Securities Authority pursuant to the Capital Markets and Securities (Advertisements) Regulations, G.N. No. 15 of 1997.

Women rights defenders urged to document true facts on GBV cases

By Francis Kajubi

WOMEN rights defenders have been urged not to manipulate information about gender based violence in order to facilitate ease of filing of legal proceedings against the suspects.

Speaking yesterday at a one-day workshop on the impacts of climate change in relation to gender based violence against women and children, Hilda Dadu, National Coordinator, Coalition for Women Human Rights Defenders Tanzania (CWHRD-Tz) said documentation of true facts is an important tool for defending women who have happened to be victims of GBV especially in the court of law.

Organised by CWHRD-Tz, the workshop held in Bagamoyo district in the Coast region, brought together over 20 women rights defenders from non-government organisations from Dar es Salaam and Bagamoyo district council.

According to her, the workshop targeted at training women human rights defenders on advanced approaches of monitoring, documenting, investigating and reporting GBV cases related to climate change effects.

"Our goal is to make women and human rights defenders understand the basics of keeping a valid information about GBV.

The information should identify what kind of violence, the victim, the place she reside, when did it happen and what measures were taken against the suspects," said Dadu. She emphasized that defenders are fact finders and don't rely on ear say information.

Neema Saidi, Environment Officer in Bagamoyo district council, urged women defenders to sensitize women at the family level on the importance of shifting from firewood and charcoal consumption to clean energy sources for the sake of protecting environment and water sources.

"In these days of severe climate change implications such as drought, heavy winds and floods women must lead the tree planting

campaigns as they are the ones who are most subjected to GBV in search of water and animal feed," said Saidi.

She further urged the defenders to educate pastoralists on the importance of keeping a small number of livestock in sake of environmental conservation.

She said the days of keeping big numbers of livestock are gone since climate change is affecting areas for grazing.

She further noted that in Bagamoyo one has to plant three trees before he cuts down one. This is just for the purpose of residential and commercial properties construction.

Saidi asserted that the same criteria applies for investors in need of land for their factories.

Hawa Rodrigues, Legal Project Officer CWHRD-Tz said that the coalition has drafted the Bagamoyo bylaw on climate change and related GBV effects 2022 that will be adopted by Bagamoyo district council in climate change adaptation measures.

"The bylaw touches on issues related to public health, food security, protection of water sources, environmental hygiene, construction of public toilets, and construction of sewage infrastructure," said Rodrigues.

According to her, the bylaw also requires men who leave behind their families in search of good land for agriculture and other economic activities due to climate change effects have to relocate with their families because women are mostly affected with GBV when left alone with children for a long time.

Alala Shaibu, Bagamoyo Girls Education Association Chairperson called upon the district councilors to suspend bylaws that allow issuance of tree cutting permits, sand mining and construction of residential and commercial properties along coast areas in protection of the environment.

"Bylaws should be amended if we are to protect women against GBV cases caused by climate change related issues," said Shaibu.

Ghanaian man seeking business opportunity in Hainan province

HAIKOU, China

KINGSFORD John, from Ghana, just finished the market survey and is now preparing to import shea butter, chocolate, cocoa powder and African soap from his hometown to south China's Hainan Province next year.

John, 31, came to Hainan in 2017 as a student, studying electrical and mechanical engineering at Hainan Normal University. Before graduation, he founded an international trading company in 2020 in Haikou, the capital of Hainan.

Hainan officially launched the construction of the Hainan Free Trade Port in 2020. Eyeing a series of preferential policies, especially the zero tariff policy on imports, John felt it was a huge opportunity to start a business.

"We import the shea butter, we add value to it, and we get some tax benefits, so it's a great deal for us," he said.

"There are so many things in Africa that the world doesn't know about, and this is an advantage for me in bringing such products to Hainan," he added.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, business has been hard over the past two years, and so John put a lot of focus on doing market research, especially on shea butter.

He found that shea butter is quite popular in the American and European markets, and that it is very expensive there. "Either the production or the supply tends to be limited, while the demand is high," he explained.

Shea butter is classified as one of the best products from Africa, as it is needed globally in cosmetics companies, the food industry, the pharmaceutical industry and also for personal care, John said.

"However, the demand for shea butter is not so high in Asia, because a lot of people here don't know

about it," he said. "So we want to bring shea butter to Hainan, and we will re-package it and then re-sell it to the Asian market."

During his journey of entrepreneurship, John has encountered lots of problems, including the time difference between China and other countries, and the challenge of winning the trust of buyers.

In order to communicate at work, he has to engage in Zoom meetings with people from different countries, who are interested in his shea butter.

"Coming to Hainan is one of the best decisions I've made in my life so far," he said, adding that he had come to Hainan following the advice of an American friend, who used to live in Hainan.

"After I arrived in Hainan, it felt right for me, a good fit, and what my friend told me about Hainan was actually true," he said. "The weather is great, the air is clean, and there are so many beautiful places to go, like Sanya, Wanning or Dongfang."

Having been in Hainan for five years, he feels that it is indeed a safe and healthy place to live, and also a place where the people are very friendly and kind. He has made many new friends in Hainan and has fallen in love with the island even more with the passage of time.

Besides focusing on his career, John loves to play football with his friends in his spare time. He also enjoys the local food -- during Spring Festival, he made dumplings with his friends to experience traditional Chinese culture.

John is quite confident about the future of Hainan and he believes that there will be massive changes in Hainan over the next five to ten years. "Hainan Free Trade Port is a big opportunity, and people who want to do business will start coming here and will establish their business here," he said.



Agriculture deputy minister Anthony Mavunde speaks with regional consultative council members yesterday. Left is Dodoma regional commissioner Rosemary Senyamule and Kongwa MP Job Ndugai. Photo: Correspondent Ibrahim Joseph

TANESCO SACCOS offers 300 bedsheets to ORCI

By Guardian Reporter

ILALA District Commissioner Ng'wilabuzi Ludigija has called upon cooperative societies to continue supporting efforts of the Phase VI government in assisting the community, especially in the health provision sector by providing drugs and medical devices.

The DC made the remarks in Dar

es Salaam yesterday when handing out 300 bedsheets valued at 11m/- donated by TANESCO SACCOS to the Ocean Road Cancer Institute (ORCI).

"Other SACCOSs should emulate on how to run SACCOS because this particular one decided to come up to assist the community.

DC Ludigija said that the government under President samia

Suluhu Hassan has made various improvements at the institute including the availability of medical devices, hence he called on other SACCOSs to continue providing various assistance to the institute to assist patients.

He said the assistance provided by TANESCO SACCOS at the institute will enhance the spirit of its staff and other workers to work hard.

"With the type of patients we have at this health facility, the bedsheets will be a great assistance to the workers in closely serving the patients by changing them from time to time, as they do at homes," he added.

TANESCO SACCOS Chairman, Somoe Ismail said the distribution of the items have also been done in Mtwara, Kilimanjaro, Geita, and they are now in Dar es Salaam Region at the Ocean Road Cancer Institute, and added that they plan to cover the entire country.

Meanwhile, patients at the health facility have expressed their gratitude by the assistance and appealed to other institutions to continue helping them.



National Identification Authority head of communications Geofray Tengeneza (R), speaks to journalists in Dar es Salaam yesterday about the new registration system through the Internet for the national IDs. Left is Registration and IDs manager Juliene Mafuru. Photo: Correspondent Jumanne Juma

Germany returns looted artworks

ABUJA

German Foreign minister Annalena Baerbock travelled to Nigeria's capital Abuja on Tuesday to personally hand over a collection of more than 20 objects that were stolen by British colonial troops over a century ago.

The artefacts were stolen from the ancient Kingdom of Benin located in what is now southwest Nigeria.

"We are here to right a wrong.

Officials from my country once bought the bronzes, knowing that they had been robbed and stolen. After that, we ignored Nigeria's plea to return them for a very long time. It was wrong to take them but it was also wrong to keep them. This is a story of European colonialism," said German Foreign minister, Annalena Baerbock.

In 1897 a British military expedition attacked and destroyed Benin City, making off with thousands of metal and ivory

sculptures.

Speaking at a ceremony with Nigerian officials, the German minister stressed the importance of this historical moment.

"We are not returning mere objects to you, to the Nigerian people today. We have learned from you within the last years, what we are returning is a part of your history, what we are returning is a part of who you are", she said.

Germany's initiative follows similar actions taken by former

colonial powers such as the United Kingdom, France and Belgium.

"The British Museum and all those holding onto our artefacts must understand that repatriation is a course whose time has come. They must also understand that many of these cultural objects are not mere art to us but the true essence of our being", declared Lai Mohammed, Nigeria minister for Information and Culture.

Earlier this year, Nigeria's neighbour Benin inaugurated an exhibition of artworks and treasures returned by France after two years of negotiations.

Youths at risk of losing parental care set to benefit from new programme to boost their employability

By Correspondent James Kandoya

A TOTAL of 600 youths at risk of losing parental care are set to benefit from a newly launched programme to boost their employability in the country.

The programme dubbed "Youthcan" is a five years project launched yesterday in Dar es Salaam by the SOS Children village in Tanzania.

Speaking at the official launching of the programme, head of programme at SOS Children Village in Tanzania Antony Binamungu said that the programme will give youths at risk of losing parental care an opportunity to get skills and life studies.

He said experience had shown that most youths lack job experience and therefore the programme engages different stakeholders to enable youths to get skills to be employed or self-employed.

Binamungu said the programme has focused on youths in Tanzania mainland and Zanzibar adding that the programme will be sustainable.

"Our project is implemented in collaboration with other stakeholders including the President Office's Regional Administration and Local Government Authority (PO-RALG)," he said.

Samson Antony, National Youth Coordinator at SOS Children Tanzania said that the programme is implemented under three pillars.

Baruti mentioned the pillars as mentorship, training and practice to give youth opportunities to either be employed or self-employed.

The coordinator said the programme is implemented in five regions namely- Dar es Salaam, Arusha, Mwanza, Iringa and Zanzibar.

Youth Empowerment Officer in Zanzibar Evelyn Baruti said youths in Zanzibar will benefit from the newly launched programme aimed at providing skills and life studies to enter the labour market.

"If youth are empowered, they can do marvelous things. Therefore, the project is important for future youth development especially at

risk of losing parental care," she said.

Both Glory Kitomary from Arusha city and Feisal Mohamed Abdalah from Zanzibar have commended the organisation for the good and strategic programme.

They said that the programme was very important for them to get additional skills to be employed or self-employ.

SOS Children's Villages is an independent, non-governmental, nonprofit international development organisation headquartered in Innsbruck, Austria.

The organisation provides humanitarian and developmental assistance to children in need and protects their interests and rights around the world.

It first began its work in Tanzania in 1995 on the island of Zanzibar. The SOS Family Strengthening Programme focuses on alleviating hardship in the local community by providing a number of services.

It helped parents send their children to school by paying school fees and providing school uniforms as well as help with homework.

Also, it provided basic education for children who never had the chance to go to school.



Our project is implemented in collaboration with other stakeholders including the President Office's Regional Administration and Local Government Authority (PO-RALG)



Home Affairs minister Hamad Masauni, (C) speaks with heads of security agencies in his ministry in Dar es Salaam yesterday. Photo: MoHA

Arrest unofficial pyrethrum buyers, Mbeya farmers appeal to authorities

By Guardian Correspondent, Mbeya

PYRETHRUM crop stakeholders have appealed to the government in Mbeya Region to help in investigating and arrest all people who sponsor the purchase of the crop outside the laid down procedures known as "vishoka" claiming that they are conning farmers and undermine efforts to develop the crop.

The appeal was given here

Tuesday by pyrethrum stakeholders at a meeting that discussed how to strengthen the value chain of the crop that has been invaded by "vishoka" who have contributing to farmers getting low income from the crop.

The Chairman of Pyrethrum Tanzania (PCT), Jamal Issa said farmers are faced by the grave challenge from the "vishoka" who buy the crop at very low prices.

He said the situation harms

farmers as they do not get any profit after toiling hard to produce the crop.

He added that several times they have been talking to ward and district officials about the "vishoka" but nothing tangible has come out.

"It is now time for the farmers' plight to be closely addressed to enable them get profit from their pyrethrum cultivation which in Mbeya Region is leading in production and quality," Issa said.

Regarding the "vishoka" on behalf of Mbeya District Commissioner Dr Rashid Chuachua, Isangati Divisional Officer, Aron Sote said already steps have started to be taken including educating farmers to stop selling their crops to the "vishoka." Speaking on behalf of the ward residents, Santilia Ward Councillor, Mwijuse Mwarwanda said the main problem facing farmers in the area is lack of reliable market for their crops.

Initiative to address South Africa's dilapidated rural roads welcomed

By Susan Marais

AGRI SA has welcomed the initiative taken by the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (agriculture department) in convening a meeting between stakeholders in an attempt to fix the country's dilapidated rural road infrastructure

"This is an ongoing issue that Agri SA and its provincial affiliates have been actively involved in," Christo van der Rheede, CEO of Agri SA said.

"It's heartening to see that this campaign has started to gain traction and we hope that the momentum will grow going forward."

Earlier this month, the department convened a meeting between the Department of Co-operative Governance, Infrastructure South Africa, South African National Roads Agency (SANRAL), Agri SA, Agbiz, and other stakeholders to investigate how key rural roads, which had fallen into disrepair, could be rehabilitated and repaired.

Van der Rheede said the meeting formed part of the implementation of the Comprehensive Rural Development Programme (CRDP) and Agriculture and Agro-processing Master Plan (AAMP).

"Repair and rehabilitation of rural roads is critical to facilitate road logistics from farm to port, and to market."

A presentation by officials from the department indicated that the road infrastructure was a high priority due to the fact that national, provincial, municipal and other secondary roads promoted economic viability through the safer and swifter transportation of

agricultural produce.

"Currently, the biggest challenge is the fact that the maintenance responsibility of roads sits with a variety of stakeholders," Van der Rheede said, adding that a lack of a central digital depository made it difficult to determine who was responsible for a certain road or section of a road.

"However, SANRAL officials said that they were already addressing the problem and was [in the process of] compiling a national database to determine which road belongs to which authority."

However, if a province or municipality wanted to transfer the responsibility of road maintenance to SANRAL, a written request had to be sent to SANRAL by the relevant province's premier.

"It will be a good thing if SANRAL takes over this responsibility, because the majority of the roads under its care is in relatively good condition," Van der Rheede said.

"Many of our municipal and provincial roads are truly life-threatening to humans and animals. Not to mention the additional cost that [damaged] vehicles add to food production, which inevitably drives up food prices."

During the department's presentation, officials indicated that, between 2010 and 2019, it had been involved in the building and repairing of 205km of road infrastructure across South Africa.

Furthermore, the department had already committed itself to become involved in road infrastructure projects in the Free State, Limpopo, Mpumalanga, Gauteng, North West, and Western Cape in 2023, according to the presentation.



Water minister Juma Aweso (C) receives a briefing from Dar es Salaam Water and Sanitation (DAWASA) chief executive officer, Cyprian Luhemeja about implementation of Makongo to Bagamoyo water project in Dar es Salaam yesterday. Others (from left) are Bagamoyo district administrative officer, Kasilda Mtani and Kinondoni district commissioner, Godwin Gondwe. Photo: Correspondent Joseph Mwendapole

Govt advised to create new curricula in Kiswahili

By Guardian Correspondent, Mbeya

EDUCATION stakeholders in the country have advised the government to create new curricula to be written in Kiswahili with the aim of boosting the language and to enable pupils from elementary class up to universities to learn expertly.

They said it is now time for Tanzania to start cherishing Kiswahili by using it as a language for learning from elementary schools to universities.

Prof Joshua Madumulla, Kiswahili language expert from Mbeya based Catholic University (CUCoM) said there is a big problem for the people over the use of Kiswahili including in the education sector since the era of late Mwalimu Julius Nyerere.

He said apart from Mwalimu Nyerere mobilising in the use of Kiswahili, no efforts were made to make the language official in the education curricula.

"There are divisions of groups

- one mobilising for English to continue as a language for teaching and the other with many people wants Kiswahili to be used for both learning and teaching, hence we want to unite for the Kiswahili language to be used," he said.

He also cautioned the government not to dump aside Kiswahili in the education curricula in order to cherish and expand it, "otherwise we may become slaves of other peoples' languages."

Margaret Milinga, a Form V student at Samora Secondary School in Mbeya recommended Kiswahili language to be used for both learning and teaching starting from elementary schools to higher education.

She said the government should hold discussions with owners of private schools regarding the use of Kiswahili in their subjects with the aim of helping students understand what they are being taught.

THURSDAY 22 DECEMBER, 2022

Taking A New Look
At The News
ESTABLISHED IN 1995

Researchers need to devise ways to facilitate production of better seeds

A seed is an embryonic plant enclosed in a protective outer covering. The formation of the seed is part of the process of reproduction in seed plants.

Seeds are the product of the ripened ovule, after fertilisation by pollen and some growth within the mother plant. The embryo is developed from the zygote and the seed coat from the integuments of the ovule.

Seeds have been an important development in the reproduction and success of gymnosperm and angiosperm plants, relative to more primitive plants such as ferns, mosses and liverworts, which do not have seeds and use water-dependent means to propagate themselves. Seed plants now dominate biological niches on land, from forests to grasslands both in hot and cold climates.

The term "seed" also has a general meaning that antedates the above - anything that can be sown, e.g. "seed" potatoes, "seeds" of corn or sunflower "seeds". In the case of sunflower and corn "seeds", what is sown is the seed enclosed in a shell or husk, whereas the potato is a tuber.

Many structures commonly referred to as "seeds" are actually dry fruits. Plants producing berries are called baccate.

Seeds are produced in several related groups of plants, and their manner of production distinguishes the angiosperms ("enclosed seeds") from the gymnosperms ("naked seeds"). Angiosperm seeds are produced in a hard or fleshy structure called a fruit that encloses the seeds for protection in order to secure healthy growth. Some fruits

have layers of both hard and fleshy material.

The Ministry of agriculture has directed experts and agricultural institutions to use their expertise and available irrigation schemes to produce quality seeds.

There are no reasons for farmers in Tanzania to depend on imported seeds while the country has a number of irrigation schemes as well as agricultural experts who can facilitate production of quality seeds.

Seeds should be produced in the irrigation schemes during the drought seasons. This will ensure farmers of enough seeds during the rainy season. Rain seasons should only be used to plant crops and not production of seeds.

According to the ministry, Tanzania uses 186,000 tonnes of seeds annually whereas local production of seeds stands at 71,000 tonnes only. According to data more than 100,000 tonnes of the seeds are imported outside Tanzania.

He said the country's agriculture sector has been growing with the exception of some few crops which its seeds are inadequately produced. The crops include legumes, cashew nuts, coffee, cassava and palm oil trees.

President John Magufuli has directed to enhance local production of seeds through irrigation. Our farmers should use locally produced seeds and ensure its availability across the country. It is therefore the duty of the responsible ministry to start implementing the directive through its agricultural institutions and experts.

Tanzania has a total of 29.4 million hectares suitable for irrigation but only 475,000 hectares have so far been utilized.

International cooperation key to Africa's development

COOPERATION (written as co-operation in British English) is the process of groups of organisms working or acting together for common, mutual, or some underlying benefit, as opposed to working in competition for selfish benefit. Many animal and plant species cooperate both with other members of their own species and with members of other species (symbiosis or mutualism).

The United Nations (UN) is an intergovernmental organisation tasked to promote international co-operation and to create and maintain international order. A replacement for the ineffective League of Nations, the organisation was established on 24 October 1945 after World War II with the aim of preventing another such conflict. At its founding, the UN had 51 member states; there are now 193. The headquarters of the UN is in Manhattan, New York City, and is subject to extraterritoriality. Further main offices are situated in Geneva, Nairobi, and Vienna. The organisation is financed by assessed and voluntary contributions from its member states. Its objectives include maintaining international peace and security, promoting human rights, fostering social and economic development, protecting the environment, and providing humanitarian aid in cases of famine, natural disaster, and armed conflict. The UN is the largest, most familiar, most internationally represented and most powerful intergovernmental organisation in the world.

The UN Charter was drafted at a conference between April and June 1945 in San Francisco, and was signed on 26 June 1945 at the conclusion of the conference; this charter took effect on 24 October 1945, and the UN began operation. The UN's mission to preserve world peace was complicated in its early decades by the Cold War between the United

States and Soviet Union and their respective allies. The organisation participated in major actions in Korea and the Congo, as well as approving the creation of the Israeli state in 1947. The organisation's membership grew significantly following widespread decolonisation in the 1960s, and by the 1970s its budget for economic and social development programmes far outstripped its spending on peacekeeping. After the end of the Cold War, the UN took on major military and peacekeeping missions across the world with varying degrees of success.

The UN has six principal organs: the General Assembly (the main deliberative assembly); the Security Council (for deciding certain resolutions for peace and security); the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC; for promoting international economic and social co-operation and development); the Secretariat (for providing studies, information, and facilities needed by the UN); the International Court of Justice (the primary judicial organ); and the UN Trusteeship Council (inactive since 1994). UN System agencies include the World Bank Group, the World Health Organisation, the World Food Programme, UNESCO, and UNICEF. The UN's most prominent officer is the Secretary-General, an office held by Portuguese politician and diplomat António Guterres since 2017. Non-governmental organisations may be granted consultative status with ECOSOC and other agencies to participate in the UN's work.

The organisation won the Nobel Peace Prize in 2001, and a number of its officers and agencies have also been awarded the prize. Other evaluations of the UN's effectiveness have been mixed. Some commentators believe the organisation to be an important force for peace and human development, while others have called the organisation ineffective, corrupt, or biased.

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How can we cultivate a culture of 'concern'?

By Cameron Duodu

A very well-respected contributor to an online discussion group recently wondered whether we have "a thinking culture" in Ghana. The contributor wrote, quote: "I read a book recently by Nancy Kline titled, 'Time to think. ... This ['thinking'] is now almost dead in Ghana and Nigeria, where a return to constitutional democracy seems to have... throttled a once-vibrant civil society. ..."

"Intellectual subservience to Neoliberalism is at its apogee... Nancy Kline predicts ominous outcomes for people and societies that do not make time to think."

"A part of the Asian rise ... is just how seriously and deeply they thought about society and the models needed to get to the future first... When I lived in South Africa, there were book charts, just like is done for music hits. The media would talk regularly about the top 20 books..."

"Many of my friends belonged to book clubs, which made voracious reading cool. Or hot... I stand to be corrected, but in Ghana and Nigeria, I do not see this. In what way do the media encourage reading and the sale of books? And learning in general? I did encounter many book clubs for young people in Nigeria. Incidentally, that country retains a positive hunger for cultural sophistication... But these efforts had no support from the media."

"Ghana [for its part] has collapsed into a hunt for mammon. Boorish and Philistine in the extreme. Noisy, unfocused partisan politics fill the airwaves... Even activists in Ghana say, 'We have done enough thinking!' Shocking! No wonder they achieve so little that endures... The way we are living now, is not working'. Unquote

I wonder what this sharp-eyed social critic would say when I tell him that a Ghanaian, commenting on one of my many articles on how lunatic it is for us to sit down unconcerned and allow the destruction, by galamseyers, of the water-bodies we inherited from our ancestors, tried to discourage me from writing so much on the subject. In his wisdom, "No amount of articles will end galamsey."

In other words, although the only weapon I have in my possession with which to fight galamsey is my brain and my pen, I should throw those weapons away. Because "no amount of articles" I use them to write "will end galamsey." And this from someone who probably got "educated" in schools built with your taxes and mine!"

I must say it puzzles me beyond



comprehension that so many of our "educated" people seem unconcerned about anything, except what will bring food to their mouths. (I was going to say "and drink", but guessing from their attitude to the wanton destruction of our water-bodies, the "drink" element of what they need to survive is not that crucial to them! Why, "There will always be water!" (Their Lilliputian brains tell them).

One would have thought that such an obvious thing as the need for water, not only for ourselves but for the succeeding generations we are breeding with total abandon, would fill our heads and hearts with trepidation. But watch/listen to the daily "reviews" of the issues discussed by our electronic media. The other day, one of their reviewers was kind enough to mention that, "There is an article by Cameron Duodu in The Ghanaian Times." That was it!

Now, the article cited contained an unorthodox proposal that our chiefs should revive their "Asafo" groups and send them into the river banks to frighten away the ruthless gangs, made up of both locals and foreigners, who do not scruple to churn our sacred riverbeds upside down and inside out, in search of gold-bearing sand, pebbles and soil.

Our war-drums had, in the past, so frightened even a contingent of the British army, then encamped in the fort of Kumase, that they had been besieged in the fort (afraid to step outside!) Until reinforcements marched in from Lagos! (I'd written).

Was I invited to join the panel talking about the events of the day

on the TV programme? No. At the very worst, my suggestions were put to the panel for discussion? No.

The programme had its own "agenda"! Galamsey was not on it.

Yes, unless you are "in" the "media communities" in Ghana, you can go and bring all the wisdom stolen from Onyame by Kwaku Ananse to Ghana - it won't be communicated to your fellow citizens by your country's media. It is beyond belief, but if you complain, I dare say they would think you are jealous and only want publicity!

Actually, what pains one most is the lack of curiosity and thereby, the lack of concern, about important national issues that our nation faces, without adequate coverage by our media. Unless it is informed by the sterile NPP/NDC contestation.

I have personally drawn the attention of the media again and again, to (for instance) the inexplicable failure of the Ghana police to complete the prosecution of those responsible for the brutal murder, in broad daylight, of a 70-year-old woman accused of being a witch, Madam Ama Hemma, at Tema in 2010. I haven't seen a single editorial regarding that issue in any newspaper. Elsewhere, the matter would even make an excellent TV programme. But not here.

I have also suggested, in many an article, that if the media were to follow up and find out WHO are the people that BAIL galamsey offenders taken to court, we would discover the rich men and women hiding behind the brutes who are destroying our water-bodies and farms, and name and shame them!

But again, no-one in the media has taken up the idea.

Nor do we know those in whose names the numerous excavators and bulldozers, seized by various Task Forces (Operation Vanguard; Operation Halt etc.) are registered!

I have willy-nilly, come to the conclusion that Ghanaian society generally suffers from what might be termed a "short-interest-span syndrome"! It is made up as follows: (a) when we are born, we aspire to grow up quickly and go to school. (Because our envied siblings and their friends who are older than us, go to school!); (b) do well in examinations that are set at the end of each short term of a mere 4 months; (c) pass the end-of-year exam that enables us to be promoted to the next class; (d) pass the entrance examination into a secondary school and repeat the same short-term concerns that we had experienced in earlier years; (f) qualify for entry into a tertiary institution where we "ditto" our life-long concerns regarding successful competition; and (g) finally, obtain jobs and mark time in our posts, until we are promoted periodically and then - possibly reach the top.

So, at every stage of our formative years, we AND OUR FAMILIES are only concerned with OUR PERSONAL SUCCESS. Tweaa - what have society's concerns got to do with us?

Only rare diamonds of humanity shine through this society-created darkness that surrounds us. And these diamonds are often crushed by the social machinery in which they are, only too often, obliged to pass, in order to continue to exist.

'We have done well in women empowerment but the war is not over yet'

By Thomas Lyimo

TANZANIA and Africa as a whole have changed tremendously in the past decades when it comes to genders roles and the whole topic of women empowerment. 'Men at work' signage is becoming rarer at construction sites as days go by and that is a good thing.

Images of cabinet meetings full of men and just a woman or two in secretarial roles are less common. And boardrooms with men in suits and a tea lady sneaking in and out during health breaks are becoming a rarity in our country and continent.

The biggest deal is that African Union Summit, the continental supreme organ comprising heads of state and government from all member states is no longer a 'men's club' as some observers used to call it.

The ceiling glass was broken when Ellen Johnson Sirleaf emerged as the first elected female President of Liberia (the first on the entire continent of Africa) from 2006 to 2018.



The perspectives of both men and women changed due to this momentous happening. Seeing is believing; we saw and believed.

It can now be argued that women empowerment movement in Africa has recorded some success as it is nearly impossible for a woman to rise to the level of president if environment

to support that has not been created. Of course, men owe their success to women who happen to be loyal voters.

Seeing many women at the top of leadership either acting or elected is convincing that environment to enable a fulfillment of their dreams has been created. In whatever consideration the

cry for a place of a woman in a society has been made though a lot still needs to be done.

But who is the real enemy of a woman in our societies? The jury is out. Some strongly argue that the enemy of a woman is a woman. People who believe this say that numerically, in many societies and countries,

women are the majority and you can only fail if they don't support you and vice versa.

But given the time it has taken to give women a chance, some maintain that men are the most needed in the corner for women to succeed. For, it has been proven in different continents and cultures that men

hold onto power for that long by simply not trusting women and that only changed in a trial and error.

In resource ownership, women have made strides though activists maintain that more needs to be done in areas such as land ownership. However, some women possess things that some men can only envy. They have succeeded in this due to opportunities that the government and society offer to both men and women.

Also, long years of struggles have enabled women to acquire positions in government, private sector enterprises and civil society organizations where they are paid or run their own businesses and hence create wealth which enable them to have a voice in the society.

Achievements come with challenges and even for women empowerment the case is the same. Challenges signify the validity of the argument that achieving something is not a thing but retaining what you have achieved.

Poverty which characterizes many Tanzanians has acted as a barrier in the movement of women

empowerment. There are girls whose future are destroyed by unscrupulous men who entice them to sexual intercourse using valueless things such as food and coins which are not even one tenth of their school fees.

Unclear understanding of girls on their value and destiny is what also hinders success in women empowerment movement. Most girls have not been coached enough on how to set goals for their destinies. This gives them a challenge on whether to say yes or no in their course of life. They come to realize later of what they were supposed to do when it is too late.

Women empowerment is something very possible but its success demands hard work as it involves efforts to make the society think in a way that allows women to shape their lives and destinies. Let us not fear to invest in women empowerment as where there is a big risk these is also a big success.

The author is a teacher based in Moshi. He can be reached at lyimo.thomas@yahoo.com

By Gilman Kasiga

SOME fantastic business ideas with the potential to create jobs and spur national growth do not see the light of day due to lack of funding. For, many greenhorn entrepreneurs and startups do not have valuable assets—mostly landed properties—normally demanded by commercial banks as security for loans.

Resource mobilization is key in development of a country for financing projects for both private and public sectors. Credit has always been a bloodline for private sector development which in turn fuels development of a country. Both new and existing businesses need long-term financing which is sometimes referred to as patient capital to fund development projects or launch start-ups into viable products or services.

The common sources of capital in Tanzania are either personal savings or loans from commercial banks. The business community largely depends on loans from commercial banks to grow their businesses. Start-ups depend on developer's own funding through savings. This makes it difficult for start-ups to takeoff. An alternative source of funding is therefore needed to support private sector start-ups as well as growth of existing businesses.

Reliance on commercial banks funding will not make us realize sufficient funding mobilization. Commercial banks in Tanzania do not have adequate balance sheet to fund development projects. Most importantly, they do not have long-term capital required for long-term investments in say, manufacturing and related activities.

Because of the nature of the source of funds which is basically customer deposits, commercial banks are heavily regulated and rightly so, by the Bank of Tanzania (BoT) to the extent that they cannot adequately support large

'Let's use insurance premiums and corporate bonds to finance businesses'



investment tickets and in particular, those of long-term nature. And for the same reasons, start-ups are largely a no go area for commercial banks as they (start-ups) do not have a balance sheet to shore up such deals.

As a result, start-ups in Tanzania mostly rely on project financing, a product rarely understood by our commercial banks or seemingly too risky to fund due the fact that these new businesses do not have a track record since the business idea is likely novel and untested.

We therefore need to establish and develop alternative sources of financing our development. I hereby propose promotion and facilitation

of financing from liquid insurance firms and corporate bonds through private markets otherwise known as private placement.

Projects financing by insurance firms is well established in the USA and now this phenomenon is fast developing in Europe. The insurance industry constitutes pension funds, medical insurance, property insurance and so on.

How does it work? Well, insurance firms just use money they collect as premiums paid by their customers. The advantage here is that because insurance firms have different risk profile hence different regulations compared to those for commercial banks, funding

from them is less tedious and less pricy compared to financing from commercial banks.

Tanzania can apply this approach. We should seek to understand this product, promote it and facilitate its growth. Promotion will bring awareness of the product while facilitation will involve change of some regulations to allow this to happen. It has worked elsewhere and it can work here too.

Tanzania Insurance Regulation Authority (TIIRA) governs insurance business in our country. To allow insurers to fund businesses, let's review and evaluate regulations for insurance firms and es-

tablish what needs to be amended to pave way for funding of businesses from the insurance firms' cash chest.

Insurance in Tanzania is just about 2 per cent of the available potential for its growth. Therefore, there is room for growth as the insurance industry expands both in coverage and products

The other possible solution is corporate bonds which account for less than 3 per cent of bonds market in Tanzania, the rest being government bonds. Now, compare this to USA where corporate bonds are at about 25 per cent of the bonds market. One way to ensure active deployment of corporate

bonds to investment is amendment of regulation to allow corporate bonds deals through private placement thus moving away from the traditional public desk.

But it must be noted that corporate bonds as a mode of financing will require active promotion to create awareness and most importantly, facilitation by change of the regulations. Without these efforts, it might take as longer hence waste more time and business opportunities.

The bonds market in Tanzania is heavily dominated by government bonds which are often oversubscribed in a quantum of more than 100 per cent. This means that there are funds out there looking to be deployed given the right conditions.

Why the private placements approach over public desk? Well, private markets have minimal regulatory requirements and standards compared to the public governed by the Capital Markets Authority. The process through the public market is heavily regulated, takes a long time and hence costly. Most businesses or start-ups would struggle to pass the test of funding through public desk due to the lengthy process and cost associated with it.

This is my appeal to BoT and other regulators such as the ministry of finance and planning to create enabling environment for funding deals through private markets by insurance companies and corporate bonds in general. This sounds new but it might surprise us by unlocking the potential of our private sector and see our national growth leapfrog to unprecedented levels.

Gilman Kasiga is an engineer and Country Manager for General Electric International Tanzania. He is co-author of a book entitled 'Tanzania's Industrialization Journey'. He can be reached on 0786665554

Gender inequality: A question of power in a male-dominated world, declares UN chief

UNITED NATIONS

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has singled out Gender Parity as one of his key priorities in his second term in office, beginning 2023.

Describing it as “a strategic goal of the Organization,” he pointed out some of the “notable advances achieved in the past five years.”

Gender parity, he said last week, has been reached among the UN’s senior leadership two years ahead of the target date; along with parity among heads and deputy heads of peace operations; as well as parity among the 130 Resident Coordinators.

The number of UN entities, with at least 50 percent women staff, has also risen from five to 26.

But, the Secretary-General added, gaps remain. In the field, “progress has been slow, and in some cases, we have gone backwards”.

“Therefore, the next phase of implementing the Gender Parity Strategy will focus on advancing and sustaining progress in the field.”

He pointed out that gender inequality is essentially a question of power.

“Our male-dominated world and male-dominated culture damage both men and women. And to transform power relations, we need equality between men and women in leadership, decision-making and participation at all levels.”

Still, the 193 member states lag far behind in promoting gender parity and gender empowerment.

There have been nine secretaries-generals over the last 77 years—all men.

Trygve Lie of Norway, Dag Hammarskjöld of Sweden, U. Thant of Burma (now Myanmar), Kurt Waldheim of Austria, Javier Perez de Cuellar of Peru, Boutros Boutros-Ghali of Egypt, Kofi Annan of Ghana, Ban Ki-moon of South Korea and, currently, Antonio Guterres of Portugal.

The male-female ratio for the Secretary-General stands at 9 vs zero. And the Presidency of the General Assembly (PGA), the highest policy-making body at the UN, is not far behind either.

The only four women elected as presidents were: Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit of India (1953), Angie Brooks of Liberia (1969), Sheikh Haya Rashed Al-Khalifa of Bahrain (2006) and Maria Fernanda Espinosa Garcés of Ecuador (2018).

The score stands at 73 men and 4 women as PGAs— even as the General Assembly elected another male candidate, as its 77th President, and who serves his one-year term, beginning September 2022.

The 15-member Security Council’s track record is probably worse because it has continued to elect men as UN Secretaries-General, rubber-stamped by the General Assembly, - despite several outstanding women candidates.

Purnima Mane, a former Deputy Executive Director of the UN Population Fund (UNFPA), with the rank of UN Assistant-Secretary-General (ASG), told IPS the UN Secretary General’s recent remarks on gender empowerment in the UN evoke a mixed reaction.

“While one can certainly celebrate the progress made by the UN in this area, one would also regret the lack of it in many areas that have proven resistant to change. As SG Antonio Guterres stated, gender parity has been achieved



While women have come a long way since the adoption of the Beijing Platform for Action nearly 25 years ago, they still lag behind on virtually every Sustainable Development Goal (SDG). Credit: UN Women, India

for the first time in the UN in 2020 and two years ahead of the target date, to boot”.

The SG gave several examples among senior leadership in the Organization, including Resident Coordinators, where gender parity has grown significantly. But he admitted that gaps remain, and mentioned the slow progress in the field.

However, one of the most difficult areas to change has been one over which the member states exercise control, she noted.

“As many have repeatedly said over the last several years is that there has not been a single woman SG in the history of the UN and only 4 women have been presidents of the General Assembly, the UN’s highest policy-making body, as compared to 73 men.”

To date, it has also been difficult to raise the number of women UN ambassadors, which remains regrettably low. And this despite the significant number of resolutions supporting gender empowerment which have been adopted by the GA and key UN committees, said Mane, a former President and CEO of Pathfinder International.

At the current rate of progress, Guterres said, the Secretariat as a whole is forecast to be close to parity in professional staff in 2025 - three years before the deadline.

“But this aggregate figure disguises the fact that in the field, we are unlikely to reach parity at any level by 2028”.

So, the next phase of implementing the Gender Parity Strategy must therefore focus on advancing and sustaining progress in the field.

He said he was also pleased to see positive changes to support gender parity in the wider working environment.

“I welcome the decision of the In-

ternational Civil Service Commission (ICSC) to recommend 16 weeks of parental leave for all parents, and to provide an additional 10 weeks to birth mothers to meet their specific needs.

These recommendations are now under consideration by the General Assembly’s Fifth Committee. “And once again I ask for the support of the members of this group.”

Roopa Dhatt, Executive Director, Women in Global Health (WGH), told IPS: “We applaud the statement by UN Secretary-General António Guterres last week – and the progress made within the UN system towards reaching gender parity in leadership.”

“We agree with the Secretary-General that there remain gaps and areas where progress is still lacking. Women in Global Health remains committed to supporting the UN, particularly in the health sector, to achieve equality and leadership in the UN which will be a game changer not only for women but also for achieving the UN’s mission,” she said.

“We have campaigned for equal leadership for women in global health since we were launched in 2015. Women are 70% health workers but hold only 25% senior leadership roles. So, the issue is not attracting women into the health sector, the issue is addressing the barriers that keep women out of leadership”.

WGH tracks the percentage of women in global governance in health.

“Our data shows that women are seriously underrepresented, especially women from the Global South. It also shows that women have lost ground in health governance since the start of the pandemic”, she declared.

Mane said it is truly regrettable that when it comes to acting on their good intentions and rhetoric on gender em-

powerment, the member states do not seem to indicate a sense of urgency.

One cannot say that there is lack of global pressure and support to take the necessary steps. For example, before every election of the UN SG over the last several years, the need to seriously consider a woman candidate has been raised by different UN stakeholders, not just civil society, and with every year, this advocacy has grown substantially, she argued.

Having a woman in the role of the SG was raised to a critical level of discussion at the last election of the SG when there were several female candidates who were being considered but business went on as usual.

“We are fortunate to have a strong SG in Guterres and one who values gender parity and empowerment. With the help of continued and heightened advocacy from all quarters, the strong examples of stellar female leadership especially in relation to the efforts to work on the multiple crises the world is facing (including the COVID pandemic and areas like climate change), and the UN’s repeated calls for gender empowerment, a strong case has already been made for the member States to act on areas that are not progressing in gender empowerment within the UN - by electing a woman in the role of the SG, increasing the proportion of women in the role of the President of the General Assembly and building up the number of women UN ambas

By taking on their own calls for gender empowerment, the member States would thereby show that they are serious about translating the rhetoric of gender empowerment into concrete action, even in areas which have earlier proven difficult to change, she declared.

Meanwhile, A study published in April this year by the WGH network on gender representation in World Health Assemblies (WHA) (from 1948-2021) found that 82.9% of delegations were composed of a majority of men, and no WHA had more than 30% of women Chief Delegates (ranging from 0% to 30%).

At the current rate, some countries may take over 100 years to reach gender parity in their WHA delegations. In January 2022 WGH calculated that only 6% of members of the World Health Organization’s Executive Board were women, down from an all-time high of 32% in 2020 .

WGH’s research in 2020 showed that 85% of national covid-19 task forces had majority male membership. The extraordinary work by women in the pandemic right across the health workforce has not translated into an equal seat at the decision-making table.

WGH has campaigned for senior leadership posts in the UN and other multilaterals in health to have equal representation of women.

To date, eight of the 13 Global Action Plan agencies in health (WHO, International Labour Organization, Global Fund Financing Facility, United Nations Development Programme, Unitaid, Global Fund, Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance and World Bank), the most influential in policy and spending, are headed by men from high income countries.

Only one - UNAIDS - is headed by a woman from a low-income country.

“We commend Dr Tedros, Director General of the World Health Organization, for his efforts when he took up office in 2017 to appoint a majority (60 percent) of women to the senior leadership team”, said Dhatt.

CAPITAL RADIO

RATIBA YA VIPINDI JUMATATU - JUMAPILI

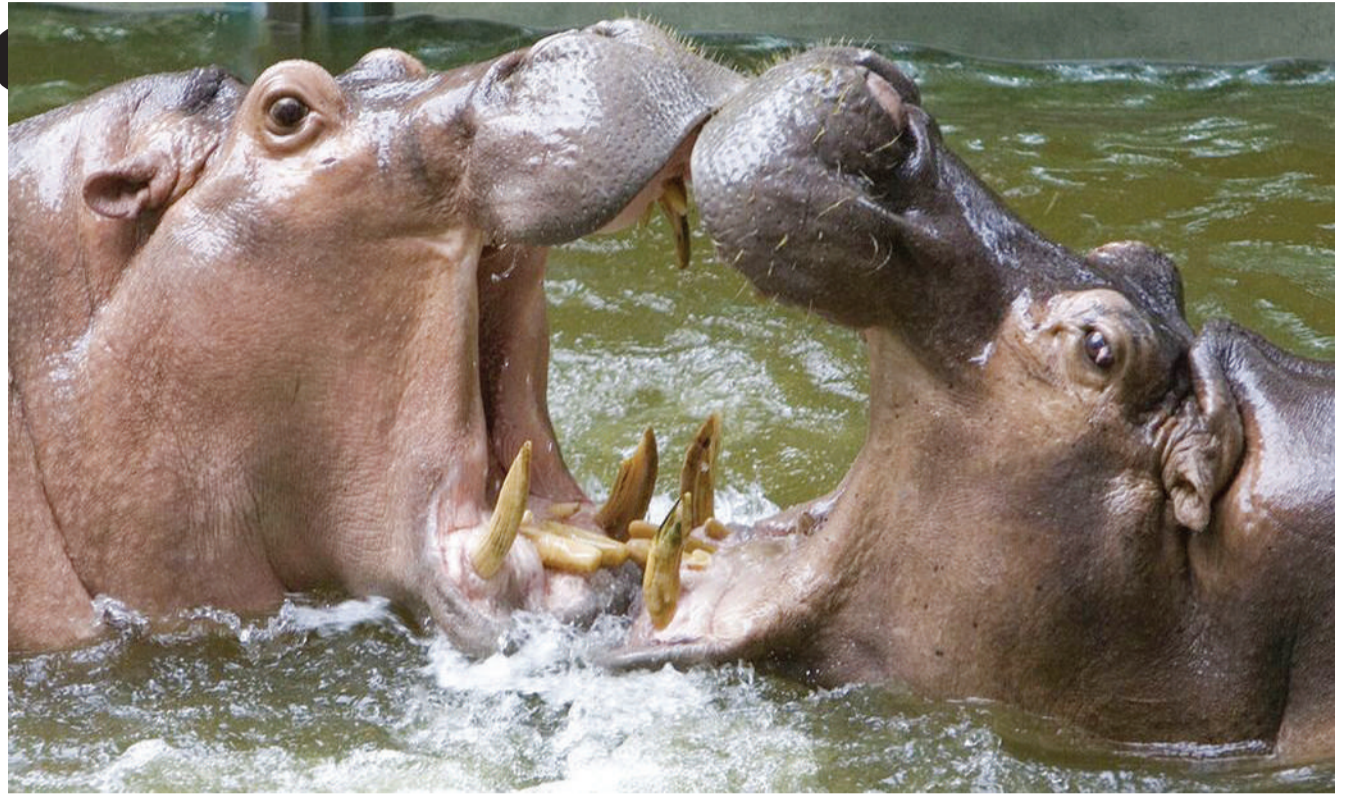
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Tembelea mitandao ya kijamii ya CAPITAL RADIO



CAPITAL RADIO

2-year-old Ugandan boy survives after hippo swallowed him-police



KAMPALA

A TWO-year-old boy mysteriously survived a hippopotamus attack in Uganda after the animal swallowed half his body.

The minor identified as Iga Paul had been playing at his home in Rwenjuba cell, near Lake Edward on December 4 when the hippo grabbed him, the Uganda Police Force said.

It took the bravery of a good Samaritan identified as Chrispas Bagonza to save the victim by stoning the hippo and scaring it. By then the hippo had already swallowed half of the victim's body but spat him out according to the Ugandan police.

The police said this is the first time a hippo has strayed from the lake to attack a young child.

After the incident, the child was treated at a hospital for injuries to his hand and given a rabies shot. He has since made a full recovery.

Police told residents of Katwe Kabatoro Town Council, which is located within Queen Elizabeth National Park on the border between Uganda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, to remain vigilant around hippos.

"Although the hippo was scared back into the lake, all residents near animal sanctuaries and habitats should know that wild animals are very dangerous," Uganda Police said.

"Instinctually, wild animals see humans as a threat and any interaction can cause them to act strangely or aggressively."

Hippos are the second-largest land mammals on Earth, and they have a reputation for being aggressive, can snap a canoe in half with their strong jaws, according to National Geographic.

Hippopotamuses kill an estimated 500 people a year in Africa. The number is shockingly large and outpaces nearly any other animal on earth. In fact, hippos are known as some of the deadliest land animals in the world, with the mosquito being the overall winner for a long time now (currently, it's 725,000 per year).

Half of tropical forestland cleared for agriculture isn't put to use, research shows

By Calvin Odhiamba

AGRICULTURE is the primary driver of tropical deforestation, accounting for 90% or more of forest loss, yet researchers have found that only about half of total land cleared is put into active agricultural production.

The gap between what's cleared and what's used for agriculture shows that "we have to fix agriculture and we have to fix deforestation," according to one of the researchers.

Tropical deforestation is a major contributor to global greenhouse gas emissions and climate change, but the research shows there is no simple fix, as humanity's increasing food needs coincide with the need for conservation.

Agriculture is gradually killing forests, and yet up to half of tropical forestland in Africa, Latin America and Asia cleared for agriculture remains idle, according to research published in the journal *Science*. The literature review, which analyzes a range of pantropical studies of deforestation, estimates that between 6.4 million and 8.8 million hectares (15.8 million and 21.7 million acres) of tropical forests are lost to agriculture annually. For perspective, on the low end, this is the equivalent of more than 8 million soccer fields, or more than three times the size of Rwanda.

This has huge implications. Humanity depends on forests for uncountable resources. Forests are a rich harbor for biodiversity and also a major carbon sink, storing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere that is linked to climate change.

"[Deforestation] releases a lot of carbon that contributes to global warming, which is threatening communities all over the world; it contributes to loss of biodiversity [and] also affects local climate leading to reduction in rainfall," says Martin Persson, an associate professor at Chalmers University of Technology in Sweden and a co-author of the research. He adds that research in Brazil shows large-scale deforestation for soy cultivation results in localized climate effects that reduce soy yields. Furthermore, loss of trees can result in soil degradation and erosion.

According to the *Science* paper, which includes analysis of studies in Africa, Latin America and Asia, 90-99% of forest loss can be attributed to agriculture, either directly through clearing of forests for agricultural expansion or indirectly through loss of forest as a result of agriculture-related activities. Research shows that clearance for pastures accounts for about half of the deforestation, translating to between 1.9 million hectares and 2.7 million hectares (4.7-6.7 million acres) of forest per year.

The research, based on data from 2011 to 2015, also

finds that only about a third to half of all land cleared for agriculture is put into productive use.

"It is not surprising that agriculture is the main driver [of deforestation], what was more surprising was the fact that between one-third and one-half of the land that is being converted is not going into active production," says Toby Gardner, a senior research fellow at Stockholm Environment Institute and co-author of the research.

This huge gap between forestland cleared for agriculture and the acreage actually used for agriculture is the greatest cause for concern, says Patrick Meyfroidt, a co-author of the study and professor of geography at the Catholic University of Louvain in Belgium.

He says that conflicts over land ownership, allocation and use are some of the key reasons cleared land goes unused.

"Some of these lands are land that is cleared and then there is a conflict of tenure; so one farmer decides to clear the land to use it and then another farmer claims the land ... and because of the conflict, nobody uses the land," Meyfroidt says.

He adds that in other cases, farmers clear land only to realize that it is not favorable for the crops they intend to grow and they end up abandoning the land. In still other cases, it is due to lack of capital or markets for cultivated crops.

According to Persson, while the team's findings are significant, lack of a concrete tropical forest-cover mapping system hinders efforts to curb deforestation.

"One problem we point out is that we can't definitely say whether deforestation

is increasing or decreasing in the tropics, and as long as we can't say that, it's also hard to evaluate the measures that have been taken to reduce deforestation," Persson says.

The *Science* research identifies particular crops that pose the greatest risk to forests. Soy and palm oil account for a fifth of forest loss, while other crops, including cocoa, rubber, coffee, rice, maize and cassava, share the remainder. The loss attributed to each crop varies with region.

Meyfroidt says that even when agriculture does not directly result in deforestation, it still is indirectly a cause – for instance, when trees are felled to establish roads into plantations and to build farm structures.

"Agriculture is crucial, and even in places where people depend a lot on forests, they would still depend more on agriculture than from the forests," Meyfroidt says. "But I think in many situations, it is not that there is a hard trade-off to make ... indeed there is a large share of deforestation that is currently not resulting in productive use, so this could be restricted and eliminated. The basic implication is that we have to fix agriculture and we have to fix deforestation."

Although agriculture is vital to human survival, the research shows that it is also a major contributor to deforestation and consequently further risk of climate disasters. If agriculture in its current forms is left unchecked, it could contribute to catastrophic climatic results in the future.

A 2014 NASA-led study shows that tropical forests absorb an estimated 1.4 billion metric tons of carbon dioxide out

of a total 2.5 billion metric tons global absorption. Carbon dioxide is the leading greenhouse gas, accounting for 76% of all global greenhouse gas emissions, according to the United States Environmental Protection Agency. What this means is that the loss of tropical forests directly contributes to climate change and the resultant consequences.

While scientists are gaining greater understanding of the harms of agriculture and destruction of forests, there is no simple solution. Kenya offers an example that shows the complexity of the problem.

In Kenya, the nexus between agriculture and forest conservation is nuanced, and the topic often raises controversy. This was shown in the evictions of more than 50,000 people from the Mau Forest complex in the past decade, ostensibly over forest degradation resulting from human activities. The Mau Forest is an important water tower and was declared a forest reserve in the 1950s.

While available data show an increase in forest cover in Kenya from 3.5 million hectares (8.6 million acres) in 2015 to 3.6 million hectares (8.9 million acres) in 2020, forest encroachment still remains a threat. Kenya's President William Ruto highlighted this in his Oct. 20 speech during the Mashujaa Day (Heroes Day) celebrations, when he reaffirmed his commitment to increase the country's tree cover from the current 12% to more than 30% by 2032.

"The central role forests play in addressing the effects of climate change has become more prominent now than ever, thanks to the unparalleled capacity to absorb, store carbon and regulate climate," the president said.

However, with agriculture accounting for at least 22% of Kenya's economy, it is unlikely that forest conservation may take precedence over agriculture. This means that communities, for instance those in the Mau Forest, may continue to expand into forests for the sake of agriculture.

Timothy Njagi, a researcher at the Tegemeo Institute of Agricultural Policy and Development at Egerton University, says that in the context of Kenya, it boils down to a matter of choice between food and forests.

"It is basically survival – people need food," says Njagi. He refers to the "shamba system" in which farmers were allowed to cultivate crops in degraded forests while tending to the trees. They then moved out once the trees matured. The system, formally known as the Plantation Establishment for Livelihood Improvement Scheme, or PELIS, was first practiced in Kenya in the early 1900s and later abolished and reinstated multiple times. Most recently, it was banned around 2003, as farmers would encroach on the forests, contributing to the degradation the system was meant to solve.

"That is why in Kenya right now you have heard the debate about going back to the shamba system; it is because they are trying to address a food security problem because people don't have enough," Njagi adds, referring to remarks by Kenya's deputy president about reintroducing the system, which have been met by a lot of criticism.

He explains that the hard choice between human food needs and forest conservation may drive the deforestation trends described in the *Science* research. This resonates with the finding that expansion for agriculture is fostered by the ever-increasing domestic and international demand for food, with international demand accounting for just a quarter of the overall.

"With the effects of climate change that we are experiencing right now, we have to see how to balance, and that means that one of the best options would be to try and increase productivity so that you can get more from the available land," Njagi says. He adds that due to land degradation over time, an acre of land, for instance, gradually decreases in productivity, resulting in a burgeoning need for larger tracts of land to maintain expected crop outputs.

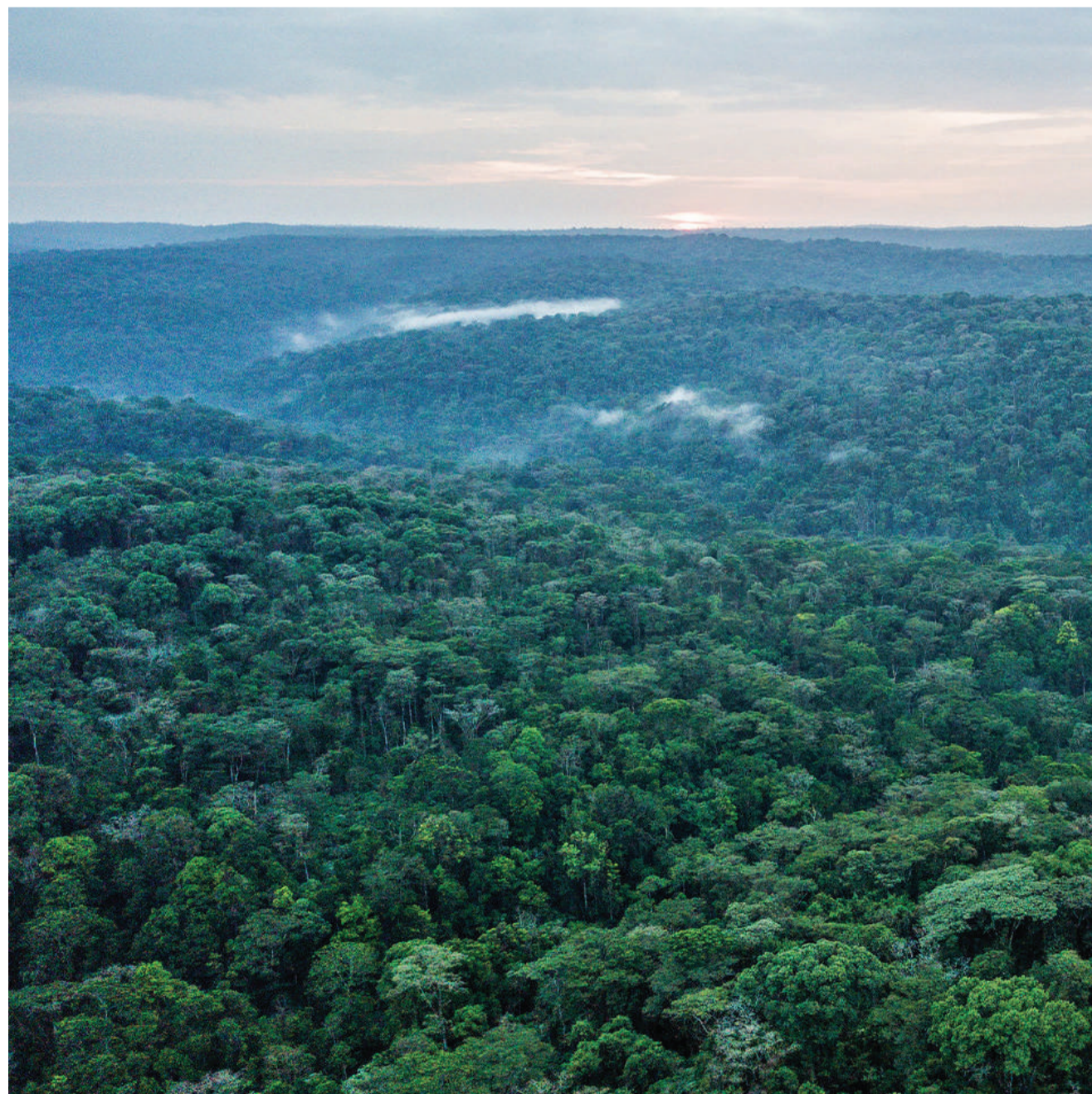
Njagi recommends efforts to regenerate Indigenous forests to counter deforestation as well as the adoption of agroforestry, which is defined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture as "the intentional integration of trees and shrubs into crop and animal farming systems to create environmental, economic and social benefits."

Persson says that despite the appearance of a grim trend, not all hope is lost.

"It might be easier to reduce the deforestation than you otherwise would have thought because if a lot of the deforestation, a large share that is driven by agriculture, is for no good use, it is not necessarily a clear trade-off between deforestation and feeding a growing population – we can do both," he says.

He adds that improved forest-monitoring systems can be used in formulating appropriate policies with accurate data, recommending concerted efforts by local and national governments, especially in implementing zoning plans to ensure forests are not lost extensively to agriculture.

In addition, agricultural corporations driving deforestation through dealing in forest risk commodities have a responsibility to counter excessive forest loss, Persson says.





Thursday 22 December 2022

Exim Bank offers monthly prizes to winners of 'Chanja Kijanja, Kimasta Zaidi' campaign

By Guardian Reporter

EXIM Bank Tanzania has offered prizes including cash and smartphone (Iphone 14 Pro) to weekly and monthly winners of its 'Chanja Kijanja, Kimasta Zaidi' campaign which aims to entice its MasterCard holders to use their card instead of cash for payment of goods and services at merchant's Point of Sales (POS).

The campaign that was launched early this month will see winners among the bank's customers who increasingly use the bank's Mastercards for transactions stand in a position to win various prizes including cash, Smartphones and all expenses paid trips to Dubai, Turkey and South Africa with their beloved ones.

Speaking at a short ceremony to hand over the prizes to the monthly winner of the campaign, Emanuel Lutambi a resident of Iringa region, the bank's Alterna-

tive Services and Customers Service officer Gregory Malembeka said so far more than 100 winners have won cash prizes amounting to 100,000/- each through a number of weekly and monthly draws of the campaign.

"As it is known that we are approaching the end of the year, a season that involves a number of purchases due to Christmas and New Year celebrations. We are calling upon our customers to use their card instead of cash for payment of goods and services at merchant's Point of Sales (POS) or ecommerce sites so that they can be in a position to win as there are still many prizes to be offered to the winners," he said.

Speaking of the grand prize for the winners of the campaign, Malembeka said the winners will be rewarded with a five (5) day vacation trip to South Africa, Turkey and Dubai together with their beloved ones.



Exim Bank Iringa Branch Manager Michael Richard (2nd L) along with other officers of the bank Aziza Msangi (L) and Emanuel Bayo (R) handing over a gift of an iPhone 14 Pro smart phone to Emanuel Lutambi, a resident of the region, after emerging as the winner of the month's draw of the bank 'Chanja Kijanja, Kimasta Zaidi' Campaign " which aims to entice its MasterCard holders to use their card instead of cash for payment of goods and services at merchant's Point of Sales (POS) or ecommerce sites.

Manufacturers given quality standards certification should ensure goods safety

By Guardian Reporter, Mwanza

PRODUCERS whose goods had received licences and quality standard certificates by Tanzania Bureau Standard (TBS) have been advised to abide by standards and embrace patriotism in making sure the goods they produce for home consumption are both safe and of high quality.

Patrick Kurangwa, Mwanza Regional Administrative Secretary gave the advice Tuesday this week at a function for issuing licences and quality standards

certificates to producers in the Lake Zone whose goods were certified to adhere with quality standards.

Kurangwa, who at the event was representing Regional Commissioner Adam Malima, said the government, through the Bureau will make sure that guidelines and other vital directives regarding goods' quality and safety are available at all times as well as to ensure su-standard goods are removed from the market.

"Hence it is the responsibility for all of us to make sure all goods produced

in factories adhere to quality standard production that will not mar the goods' qualities," he said.

He added: "In implementing this, the government continues to educate all sectoral stakeholders with the aim of the protection of the health of consumers as well as the environment in Mwanza Region, the Lake Zone and other areas of the country."

Speaking on behalf of TBS Managing Director Dr Yusuf Mgenya, Lake Zone TBS manager, Joseph Mwaipaja said licences and certificates for quality

standards using the "TBS" label issued to producers were divided into three groups. He said these include those of big manufacturers, middle and small entrepreneurs involving various kinds of goods including foodstuffs, cosmetics, building equipment, mechanical tools and packaging.

He said the licences and certificates will help in the acceptance of the goods in the market and enhance public trust in regard to their qualities and would also be competitive to enter East African market without further certification.

Ethiopia's largest bank resumes financial operations in Tigray

ADDIS ABABA

ETHIOPIA'S largest bank, the Commercial Bank of Ethiopia, announced Monday that it had resumed financial operations in some towns in the troubled Tigray region after a shutdown of more than a year.

"Following the recent peace agreement, the branches we have in the towns of Shire, Alamata and Korem have started receiving money sent from abroad and locally. And they have also received money on deposit," the bank said in a statement.

The bank said it was "continuing its efforts to expand (its) services and gradually resume operations in all branches.

The government and rebels signed an agreement in Pretoria on November 2 that included a cessation of hostilities, the withdrawal and disarmament of tiger forces, the restoration of federal authority in Tigray and the reopening of access to the region, which is in a catastrophic humanitarian situation.

On December 7, tiger authorities confirmed that Mekele, the capital of Tigray region, had been reconnected to the national power grid after more than a year of being cut off due to the war in the northern region of Ethiopia.

The northernmost region of Ethiopia, home to six million people, has been virtually cut off from the world since the start of a conflict between the federal government led by Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed and the regional authorities of the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF).

It had been deprived of many basic services (electricity, telecommunications, banks, fuel, etc.) for more than a year.

The fighting began in November 2020, when Abiy Ahmed sent the federal army to arrest the region's leaders, who had been challenging his authority for months and whom he accused of attacking federal military bases.

In a question-and-answer session with MPs on November 15, the Prime Minister said the authorities had begun to restore telecommunications and electricity to some areas affected by the conflict.

The provisions of the agreement - which does not explicitly mention the restoration of electricity and telecommunications - are being implemented gradually.

Journalists are not allowed to enter parts of northern Ethiopia, including Tigray.

According to the UN, the two years of war have left more than 13.6 million people dependent on humanitarian aid in northern Ethiopia (5.4 million in Tigray, 7 million in Amhara and 1.2 million in Afar).

On the military front, the fighting has stopped. The rebels said they had "disengaged" 65 per cent of their fighters from the front lines and "started collecting (their) heavy weapons and gathering them in one place.

However, the rebels are upset about the continued presence of the Eritrean army and security forces and militias from the Ethiopian region of Amhara, which have supported the federal army in the conflict.

The outcome of this conflict, which was largely fought behind closed doors, is unknown. The International Crisis Group and the NGO Amnesty International described it as "one of the deadliest in the world.

The war has also displaced more than two million Ethiopians and plunged hundreds of thousands of people into near-starvation conditions, according to the UN.

On the humanitarian front, operations have increased in northern Ethiopia since the Pretoria agreement, but the aid delivered remains far below what is needed.



HaloPesa Deputy Managing Director Magesa Wandwi speaks to journalists yesterday during the official launch of HaloPesa "Shinda Tena promotional campaign" specific for HaloPesa customers which will run for 3 months, whereby 120 of our customers will win Cash prizes daily, and 12 customers will win a smart Television weekly and 3 customers will win a brand new Bajaj every month for simply transacting as much as they can. Looking on is HaloPesa Marketing Officer Roxana Kadio.

HaloPesa launches new drive to entice customers

By Guardian Reporter

HALOTEL being the best mobile money service providers through HaloPesa continues to motivate their customers through bringing creative products and services and yesterday launched 'Shinda Tena na Halopesa' campaign.

Magesa Wandwi, HaloPesa deputy managing director said this in Dar es Salaam when speaking to the journalists during the official launch of the promotional

campaign"

He said that HaloPesa being a company that is growing steadily, it has continued to provide financial services to their customers and they keep on coming with different products that reach from urban areas to rural areas in Tanzania.

"HaloPesa is always delighted to be in this industry and space of digital financial services provision whereas we make it possible for Tanzanians and specifically our customers to make various

transactions including Sending money from HaloPesa to HaloPesa, HaloPesa to other networks and banks, bill payments, savings, and merchant payments," he said.

According to Wandwi, more than 2.5million HaloPesa active customers have continued enjoying the teleco's affordable and quality services all the time.

He stated that the promotional campaign is specific for HaloPesa customers and will run for 3 months, whereby 120 of our customers will

win Cash prizes daily, and 12 customers will win a smart Television weekly and 3 customers will win a brand new Bajaj every month for simply transacting as much as they can. And every citizen in Tanzania that will become a HaloPesa customer will be able to get this promotion by doing any of HaloPesa transactions.

The 'Shinda Tena na Halopesa' promotion campaign whereby it is objectively meant to spice for more and more usage of HaloPesa

services and encourage those that have not started using mobile money services to be motivated and rewarded as they use our good services and eventually widen up the financial included population in Tanzania.

HaloPesa is delighted to launch this camping to its new customers today and will continue to think of much more great ways of innovating the mobile money world for the comfort ability and betterment of our customers.

African countries trained to manage public debt using new Commonwealth system

By Special Correspondent

SENIOR officials from Eastern and Southern Africa have received hands-on training to manage their public debt using the Commonwealth's new debt management system.

The Commonwealth Secretariat facilitated the training in Mozambique from 12 to 16 December in partnership with the Macroeconomic and Financial Management Institute for Eastern and Southern Africa to equip 25 officials from eight countries in recording, analysing and reporting debt data using the new debt management system, Commonwealth Meridian.

Officials from ministries of finance and central banks benefited from a five-day programme for transitioning to Commonwealth Meridian and learned how to use the web-based software to monitor compliance with debt strategies, mitigate operational risks and uphold data integrity.

Debt officials from Eswatini, Kenya, Lesotho, Namibia and Tanzania - which recently migrated to Commonwealth Meridian - also spoke about the benefits of using the new software and ways to mitigate the post-transition challenges.

Opening the training, Domingos Lambo, Permanent Secretary of Mozambique's Ministry Of Economy and Finance, said the workshop comes at a time when the world is grappling with multiple challenges, adding: "These developments have heightened public debts in many developing countries."

He continued: "The knowledge and skills you gain from this training will help you maintain comprehensive, accurate and timely public debt databases in your countries, as this is a prerequisite for efficient debt management operations."

Speaking after the training, Mac Banda, Adviser at the Secretariat's Debt Manage-



ment Unit, said: "The risks of unsustainable debt become a real challenge as income streams disappear due to the ongoing economic slowdown and frequent climate-related disasters. This hampers the government's ability to finance basic services such as health and much-needed programmes to achieve development objectives."

Mac Banda added: "This training is the latest in a series of initiatives by the Secretariat to assist member countries with prudent public debt management. It will go a long way in helping countries manage their debt using Commonwealth

Meridian, which in turn will help them alleviate debt burdens and lead to better standards of living."

Financial stability

During the training, officials also commended the Secretariat for assisting its member countries in managing their debt portfolios, which, they said, contributed to financial stability.

"Using Commonwealth Meridian has been a great experience," said Lilhe Dlamini, Senior Finance Officer at Eswatini's Ministry of Finance. "The aggregate function is such a powerful new tool in Meridian that gives us the ability to gener-

ate custom reports suited for our periodic reporting."

From Kenya, which has been using the Secretariat's debt management system for more than three decades, Senior Debt Management Officer Salim Mwabundu said Meridian has made his work easier by offering ready-made templates for the recording of financial instruments.

In Mozambique, where the Secretariat's debt management system has been used as an integral part of macro-economic management and is used for budgeting and debt analysis, among other things,

Antonio M. Gravata, Debt

Africa seeks mutual partnership rather than big brother influence, experts say after US-Africa summit

NAIROBI

AFRICAN experts hope that commitments made by the United States at the US-Africa Leaders Summit held last week lead to concrete actions and not empty promises.

Forty-nine out of the 55-member-state African Union and members of civil society and the private sector were invited to attend the summit, where the United States sought to reshape its partnership with Africa in the face of the continent's deepening ties and diversified engagement with other countries.

This was the first US-Africa summit eight years after former U.S. President Barack Obama hosted one. During President Donald Trump's leadership, no summit at this level was held.

The Washington, D.C. summit was the first large gathering of African leaders under U.S. President Joe Biden. It also happened months after the United States released its revamped policy toward Africa in August.

Beyond discussions to catalyze investment in critical sectors, including health, infrastructure, energy, agribusiness and digital, Biden also hosted a small group of African leaders at the White House for a discussion on upcoming presidential elections in their countries in 2023 and U.S. support for free, fair, and credible polls in Africa.

Even though African countries need support to fill the deficit caused by various challenges, including the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, African experts argue that Africa wants no "big brother influence."

They said the United States has failed to realize that African leaders know their countries' needs best and do not need lecturing on their internal affairs.

Cavince Adhere, a Kenya-based international relations scholar, told Xinhua that human rights, U.S. national security interests and the promotion of democracy do not appeal to



A local employee works inside the Coca-Cola bottling plant in Sebeta town of Oromia regional state, Ethiopia, on May 31, 2022.

African countries. Africa, instead, is interested in a mutual partnership where the continent is an equal player on the international scene.

"Improving governance on the continent shouldn't be based on views and feelings of external partners like the United States. Rather, it is a function of the internal desire for African countries to modernize their governance frameworks to deliver development for the people," Adhere said.

Many of those promises made by the United States echo past pledges by Washington to strengthen its partnerships with the African continent, according

to Adhere.

"Two factors are likely to hamper the delivery of the promises. First is the reliance on the Western private sector that has often looked at Africa as a risky place to invest," he said.

"Secondly, the insistence of the United States to use its own value judgment and system in designing cooperation agreements with African countries. Africans want to be treated as equal partners and wouldn't wish to be seen in Western perspectives," he added.

Eric Ndushabandi, a director at the Rwanda-based Institute of Research and Dialogue for Peace, said

the summit was an attempt to restore the confidence of African leaders in the United States.

However, as the African continent is in a difficult position especially following the wrath of the COVID-19 pandemic and prolonged drought, African experts have also expressed concerns over geopolitics and U.S. demands as the United States embarks on a charm offensive to lure Africa.

"American aid is always accompanied by conditions that clearly interfere in the internal affairs of the country ... when this does not work, America proceeds to threaten officials with

sanctions," according to Jean Emmanuel Pondi, professor of political science and international relations at the University of Yaounde I in Cameroon.

African experts also argued that while the summit seeks to enhance the partnership between the United States and Africa across mutually agreed areas, the United States should also view the continent's cooperation with other partners with an open mind.

"All partners are welcome based on their utilitarian value. Africa wants to engage with the United States on its own terms and not those set by the United States," Adhere said.

Youth of African diaspora consider climate solutions at US summit

WASHINGTON

A GROUP of young Black Americans and their peers from African countries on Tuesday highlighted their common anxieties over climate change, shared as members of the global African diaspora.

They were gathered at the African and Diaspora Young Leaders Forum in Washington, held on the sidelines of the Biden administration's US-Africa Leaders Summit, in which some 50 leaders from the continent are participating this week.

Michael Regan, the first Black American head of the US Environmental Protection Agency, called on the people in attendance to throw themselves into humanity's fight against a warming world.

"Young people have always been at the forefront of movements to change, and the environmental movement is absolutely no exception," he said.

"Your generation is leading the charge and fighting to secure a healthier, more just tomorrow."

For activist Wafa May Elamin, society must "allow young people to really take charge" to tackle the "massive" climate challenges ahead.

Elamin, a 30-year-old Sudanese-American, said she had been waiting for such an event for "a really long time" -- the most recent iteration of this summit was organized eight years ago, during Barack Obama's presidency.

Other attendees of Tuesday's meeting, which was organized by the National Museum of African American History and Culture, included Vice President Kamala Harris, the first Black, South Asian and female US vice president, and Ghanaian President Nana Akufo-Addo.

Speaking at the convention, actress and activist Sabrina Elba -- a United Nations goodwill ambassador for the International Fund for Agricultural Development -- said the environmental conservation of the immense African continent is especially close to the hearts of people whose ancestors came from Africa.

Elba recalled how her mother, who immigrated from Somalia to Canada, instilled in her a remembrance of their ancestral home: "As early as I can remember, she would say 'give back, give back, give back, give back to the continent, so we can go back.'"

It was this relationship to Africa that inspired Elba -- whose husband, the British actor Idris Elba, also spoke Tuesday -- to get involved with the UN.

"It only took one visit back home to see a drought or famine or people really being affected by an issue that they have very little output towards," she said.

For her, the priority is to support the people living in areas in need of preservation.

But according to Elamin, funding for the fight against climate change is not distributed fairly.

Regan acknowledged the unequal realities of working for a better planet.

"Countries should be required, in some way, shape or fashion, to ensure certain resources absolutely reach those who have been disproportionately impacted," the EPA director said.

Jamaji Nwanaji-Enwerem, a doctor and assistant public health professor of environmental health at Emory University in Atlanta, was among those in attendance.

US Vice President Kamala Harris speaks during the African and Diaspora Young Leaders Forum at the National Museum of African American History and Culture during the US-Africa Leaders Summit in Washington, DC on December 13, 2022

US Vice President Kamala Harris speaks during the African and Diaspora Young Leaders Forum at the National Museum of African American History and Culture during the US-Africa Leaders Summit in Washington, DC on December 13, 2022 © SAUL LOEB / AFP

As the attendees discussed such possible solutions, Regan announced the United States would allocate \$4 million for Peace Corps volunteers to work on projects combatting climate change in 24 Sub-Saharan African countries.

"Are we doing enough? No. Should we be doing more? Yes, but in a democracy, it's slow," he said.

World Bank approves \$311 million to increase grid-connected renewable energy capacity in West Africa

WASHINGTON, DC

EXISTING and prospective electricity customers in Chad, Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Togo will benefit from the new Regional Emergency Solar Power Intervention Project (RESPITE) approved today for a total amount of \$311 million in International Development Association (IDA) financing.

The new project includes a \$20 million grant to help facilitate future regional power trade and strengthen the institutional and technical capacities of the West Africa Power Pool (WAPP) to undertake its regional mandate.

The main objective of the RESPITE is to rapidly increase grid-connected renewable energy capacity and strengthen regional integration in the participating countries.

It will finance the installation and operation of approximately 106 megawatts of solar photovoltaic with battery energy and storage systems, 41 megawatts expansion of hydroelectric capacity, and will support electricity distribution and transmission interventions across the four countries.

West Africa has one of the lowest electrification rates coupled with some of the highest electricity costs in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Furthermore, rising oil prices have increased the liabilities of electricity utilities and countries are staring at an acute power supply crisis that threatens to upend their economic growth. "Solutions supported by the new project are manifold and have substantial benefits for the countries and the region. Among others, it will provide fiscal space for countries to address food crisis resulting from the war in Ukraine,



initiate development of competitively tendered grid-connected clean energy to alleviate current power supply crisis, positively address climate change by helping countries to move away from expensive and polluting fuels, and help synchronize the WAPP network to enhance regional integration in the energy sector," said Rhonda Jordan-Antoine, World Bank Task Team Leader of the project.

In addition to improving the reliability of electricity supply in each of the beneficiary countries, the project has developed a regional approach to enhance the potential of power trade in West Africa. "RESPITE pro-

vides benefits that spill over country boundaries and complements existing regional integration efforts in the energy sector involving all member states of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)", says Boutheina Guermazi, World Bank Director for Regional Integration for Sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East and Northern Africa.

"It provides economies of scale, increases potential for regional trade through investments in transmission and generation infrastructure to integrate the markets physically, and develops regional public good by facilitating knowledge sharing and capacity

building."

The new project is part of the World Bank Group's response to the energy crisis in West Africa to accelerate - on an emergency basis - the deployment of more renewable energy in the region. The project will encourage leading international private developers to enter smaller and more fragile economies and to also demonstrate the viability of competitively tendered grid connected solar and battery storage in participating countries.

IDA is the World Bank's fund for the poorest. Established in 1960, it provides grants and low to zero-interest loans for projects

and programs that boost economic growth, reduce poverty, and improve poor people's lives. IDA is one of the largest sources of assistance for the world's 76 poorest countries, 39 of which are in Africa. IDA resources help effect positive change in the lives of the 1.6 billion people living in the countries that are eligible for its assistance. Since its inception, IDA has supported development work in 113 countries. Annual commitments are constantly on the rise and have averaged \$21 billion over the past three years, with about 61% going to Africa.

Erolink firm wins hearts and minds with quality services

By Special Correspondent

By Guardian Reporter
A DAR ES SALAAM-based human resource consultant – Erolink Limited continues to win the hearts and minds of reputable firms by offering professional and effective services to clients as well as outsourcing the best talents in and outside Tanzania that suit business needs.

Maximillian Tumaini, Erolink Limited general manager said in an interview that the firm is strategically meant to ensure clients get professional and selective services, and takes pride in outsourcing the best talents locally and internationally that meet business needs.

"Boasting of 19 years of presence in the market, Erolink Limited remains one of the leading human resources consultancy and contact centre outsourcing specialists (BPO) in Tanzania. It offers professional and selective services to our clients and employees, and take pride in outsourcing the best talents and premium stars locally and internationally to

suit your business needs," said Tumaini.

Tumaini is leading a motivated team of between 500 and 1,000 employees qualified in various disciplines to meet the company's varied team of clients.

As a result of the competence of staff and management, Erolink has become a leading exclusive Human Resource Consultant, and contact center operator in multi-professional areas to various local and foreign organizations.

"We continually strive to conduct our business in a professional and ethical manner with open and honest communication, to ensure world-class service delivery. The aim is to be the best, dynamic and innovative customer experience and process management company and hence create significant value for our customers, employees, partners, shareholders, and the communities we operate in," he said.

The company's team of staff is experienced in the upgrading and automation of business processes and learns quickly



to understand and handle the unique aspects of each client's business processes such that Erolink provides an immediate positive contribution to the development of its client's system and services, he added.

As a result, Tumaini said, the leading consultancy company will help clients to lower operational costs; boost productivity through increased focus on strategy and key competencies while allowing them to access niche skills and resources hence increasing flexibility to meet changing business and commercial conditions.

In the provision of human resource services, Tumaini said: "We ensure that required and adequate production capacity is available by aligning human resources activities with the overall goals of the client's company. Ranging from a full recruitment process, in accordance with International Standard Recruitment Process (ISRP), we add value to activities and provide the best skills to companies in various sectors (Telecom, Energy, Entertainment, Construction, banking, public sector, NGOs."

Under Human Resources Services,

the company categorizes the following: Payroll Management: Payroll Management guarantees to save time by reducing the hours spent producing payroll information and preparing payroll registers, and quarterly, and year-to-date payroll reports. Reduced cost-to-company costs, among others.

"Human Capital Planning is also our area of focus with the human capital management review process which provides a systematic assessment of an organization's structure. Staff Outsourcing & Outsourcing benefits: This will assist your organization in time management needs, allowing you to conduct your core business in a selective and productive work environment," he added while stressing that through its recruitment services, Erolink has enabled to provide clients with committed and highly skilled job applicants for positions to be filled.

Its inbound customer service provides modern Omni channel technologies, people, processes, and infrastructures that build value across every customer interaction, on all channels. "Erolink is leading the way in combining human efforts with technology to deliver customer delight in all interactions and on all channels. KPI's Deliverance among others include; Service Level Agreement, Answer Rate, Average Handling Time," he added.

In outbound contact center service(s), EROLINK delivers Customer Acquisition (Tele-sales). As a leading Contact Centre Services provider, Erolink specializes in maximizing the sales potential of service calls by focusing on and prioritizing customer needs. Collections. "We help organizations in diminishing revenue loss while maintaining high compliance standards and compelling customer experience across platforms. Retention also enables companies to retain their customers and earn customer loyalty," the general manager stressed.

As a result of the best services, EROLINK's list of customers includes Coca-Cola Kwanza, MultiChoice, Tanzania Cigarettes Plc, Tanesco, Exim Bank, Mantrac, and National Bank Commerce Limited. "Our qualified team of personnel supports us in providing state-of-the-art services to our clients," he noted.

WORLD

Ukrainian President Zelensky to visit US

KYIV/WASHINGTON

UKRAINIAN President Volodymyr Zelensky was expected to visit the United States yesterday, during which he will meet with US President Joe Biden and then address a joint session of Congress, a senior US official said Tuesday.

Zelensky's trip was so carefully arranged that even though reported by multiple US media outlets earlier on Tuesday, it was said to still have the potential of failing to materialize at the last minute due to heightened security concerns - until the senior administration official formally made the announcement at a briefing with reporters.

During what will be his first overseas trip since the conflict between Ukraine and Russia broke out in late February, the Ukrainian leader will have "an extended sit-down" with Biden at the White House, a meeting with key members of the US national security team and Cabinet-level officials, and then the opportunity to meet with reporters at a press conference, according to the official.

Coinciding with the occasion of Zelensky's visit, Biden is expected to approve a new tranche of security assistance for Ukraine worth nearly \$2 billion on Wednesday, the official said.

Included in that package is a Patriot surface-to-air missile battery, an advanced US weapon system that the media have speculated for quite some time the Biden administration is prepared to send to Ukraine.

The official added that the United States will train Ukrainian soldiers on how to use the Patriot battery "in a third country," which "will take some time."

Russia has warned that the US delivery of the Patriot to Ukraine will come with "conse-

quences."

Zelensky will also head to Capitol Hill to deliver a speech at a joint session of Congress on Wednesday evening, the official said.

Hours prior to the briefing, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi in a letter encouraged members of her chamber to be present for a "very special" session drawing an end to the 117th Congress, stopping short of providing specifics. It now appears that she was referring to the event hosting Zelensky as a guest speaker. On Tuesday morning, the House Appropriations Committee released the "Additional Ukraine Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2023" that will provide Ukraine with \$45 billion in emergency assistance.

The administration official expected the aid money to pass with bipartisan support. It is contained in a \$1.7 trillion omnibus spending bill to fund the federal government through fiscal year 2023.

That \$45 billion sum represents the biggest infusion of Washington's aid to Kyiv, surpassing even the White House's request made to Congress last month asking for a \$37 billion appropriation aimed at helping Ukraine in the ongoing conflict, which entered its 300th day Wednesday.

Visit to frontline city

Meanwhile, Zelensky visited the frontline city of Bakhmut in Ukraine's eastern Donetsk region, the presidential press service reported.

During his working visit, Zelensky met with personnel of a mechanized brigade involved in the confrontation with Russian forces on the approaches to the city.

Zelensky listened to the commander's report on the operational situation on the frontline and thanked the Ukrainian military



This combination of file pictures created on July 21, 2021 shows Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky (left) in Riga, Latvia, on Oct 16, 2019; and US President Joe Biden speaking on June 4, 2021, at the Rehoboth Beach, Delaware, Convention Center. AFP

for their courage, resilience and strength demonstrated during the fighting. The Ukrainian president also awarded troops from the mechanized, motorized infantry, mountain assault, tank, artillery and airmobile units with state awards. In recent weeks, Bakhmut has been the epicenter of the fighting between Ukrainian and Russian troops.

IMF's support for Ukraine

Separately, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) has approved a new program for Ukraine to support its macroeconomic and financial stability and catalyze donor financing, the National Bank of Ukraine said Tuesday.

The four-month Program Monitoring with Board Involvement does not directly provide financial assistance, but creates instruments for transitioning to a new, long-term Upper-Credit Tranche program of the IMF, the bank said in a statement.

The program is aimed at mobilizing state budget revenues, strengthening the financial sector, and improving management transparency and effectiveness for state-owned enterprises.

"Ukraine hopes that the approval of the program will provide our partners with confidence and optimal conditions to ensure sufficiently rhythmic financial inflows

amid high needs of the balance of payments and the state budget," Andriy Pyshnyy, the bank's governor, was quoted as saying in the statement.

Reduce grain planting areas by 22 percent

In another development, Ukraine will reduce the grain planting areas by 22 percent next year to 8.7 million hectares, the UBN media outlet reported Monday, citing a recent forecast by an industry body.

At the same time, the planting areas for oil crops will increase by 32 percent to 9.7 million hectares in 2023, said the forecast by the Ukrainian Agribusiness Club.

According to the club, the decrease in the grain planting areas will result in the reduction of Ukraine's gross grain output to 34 million tons next year, 37 percent less than in 2022.

Ukraine's grain and oilseeds exports are expected to stand at 35 million tons in 2023, the forecast said.

In 2021, Ukraine harvested a record yield of grain, legumes and oilseeds, totaling more than 106 million tons.

In the 2021-2022 marketing year, between July 1, 2021, and June 30, 2022, the Eastern European country exported 85 million tons of cereals and oilseeds.

Xinhua

Hazardous storm system hits US ahead of winter holidays

A HUGE swath of the United States will face heavy snow, below-freezing temperatures, and dangerous wind chills this week, likely leading to flight delays and impassable roadways during one of the busiest travel periods of the year.

The National Weather Service forecasts potentially hazardous weather conditions into the middle of the week, extending from the Northwest and Great Plains regions of the country to the central and southern Appalachian area.

"With such a large and powerful storm system... it is imperative that travelers check the latest forecast before venturing out," the Service said in a short range forecast posted on its website on Tuesday.

A surge of Arctic air crossing the country behind a cold front is expected to create blizzard conditions in parts of the Plains and Great Lakes region, while a flash freeze could occur from the mid-South to the East Coast, according to the Service.

Residents of the affected areas fretted on social media about travel disruptions, the prospect of getting trapped in their houses, and the plight of their neighbors without homes.

"It is unconscionable that we have people living without shelter in Chicago winters at all, much less during a blizzard at Christmas," posted Twitter user @laurie_merrell on Tuesday morning.

Heavy snow is also likely across the northern Rocky Mountains and the Pacific Northwest, with the greatest snowfall expected in the higher terrain of the Cascade Mountains, northern Idaho, northwest Montana, and western Wyoming, the National Weather Service said.

US winter storms have shifted northward and increased in frequency and intensity over the past 70 years, according to the US Global Change Research Program.

Snowstorms are expected to dump higher volumes of snow as a result of climate change, according to the Environmental Defense Fund, because the planet evaporates more water into the atmosphere as it warms, leading to more overall precipitation.

Agencies

Putin says all special op's participants are heroes

MOSCOW



ALL the participants of Russia's special military operation are heroes who are on the cutting edge of solving the most difficult and dangerous tasks, Russian President Vladimir Putin said at a state awards ceremony at the Kremlin on Tuesday.

"Our servicemen and soldiers, deployed in the special military operation zone, are undoubtedly on the cutting edge of solving the most difficult, responsible and dangerous tasks. I sincerely believe that they are all heroes," the head of state said.

He noted that the servicemen risked their lives every second. "The vast majority of citizens of our country think about that. And I think about it all the time," the president stressed.

Putin said that the current times were difficult and unusual, although, according to him, the country's history witnessed "no continuous holidays". "Every country, even every person, if there is development, goes forward, overcomes some difficulties along the way.

Otherwise there is no progress. But today they (the times - TASS) are indeed accompanied by special difficulties," the president said.

Putin wished the participants in the special military operation success and stressed that today's ceremony was symbolic. He noted that not all those worthy of the award could attend the ceremony.

"The guys who have passed away are no longer with us..." he continued, mentioning, in particular, first head of the Donetsk People's Republic Alexander Zakharchenko (1976-2018), as well as those who died helping others. "We never forget about them," the head of state stressed.

When addressing the participants in the ceremony, Putin mentioned mothers with many children, teachers, artists and other awardees. "All this is Russia. This is the might, the reliability of our country. And we get even stronger when our citizens work more effectively," the president concluded.

Agencies

Belt and Road News Network Second Council meeting held in Beijing

THE Belt and Road News Network (BRNN) Second Council Meeting was held on Dec. 19 in Beijing. Representatives of 38 council members of the BRNN from 23 countries took part in the meeting online or offline.

Li Shulei, member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee and head of the Publicity Department of the CPC Central Committee, delivered a speech at the meeting via video link.

The BRNN was established at the initiative of Chinese President Xi Jinping, Li pointed out, stressing that the media has a strong influence on public opinion and plays an important role in enhancing people-to-people bonds.

In order to create a new chapter of high-quality Belt and Road cooperation, media outlets of various countries should stick to solidarity and cooperation and make new contributions to carrying

forward the Silk Road spirit, prioritize development and make new accomplishments in telling stories of the Silk Road, and carry out heart-to-heart exchanges so as to make new progress in deepening the Silk Road friendship.

As the BRNN council chair, People's Daily delivered a report on the work of the first BRNN council at the meeting. Representatives of the council members of the BRNN expressed their opinions and made suggestions on how to give better play to the BRNN and better promote cultural and people-to-people exchanges and people-to-people connectivity.

The meeting also announced the winners of the first Silk Road Global News Awards. A total of 19 works won five types of awards, including the In-depth Reporting Award, Commentary Award, Press Photo Award, Press Video Award, and the Short Video Award on the



Photo shows the venue for the Belt and Road News Network (BRNN) Second Council Meeting in Beijing.

fight against COVID-19.

"Kazakhstan Belt and Road Initiative: The Road to Somewhere," a news report written by Chris Wright from the U.K., won the In-depth Reporting Award; a work titled "Fighting BRI is Fighting Africa," submitted by Mubarak Mugabo from Uganda, won the Commentary Award; an entry titled "My parents are

ornithologists," which was created by Svetlana Tarasova from Russia, won the Press Photo Award; and Mushahid Hussain Syed, head of Pakistan's Friends of Silk Road club and chairman of the Pakistan-China Institute, was granted the Special Contribution Award.

The BRNN held its first council meeting on April 23,

2019. Carrying forward the Silk Road spirit, the BRNN has strengthened communication and cooperation with various parties and made active efforts to spread stories of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), promoting understanding and public support for cooperation under the framework of the BRI.

People's Daily

China protects biodiversity with determination

ON the vast land of China, the beauty of biodiversity can be found everywhere. The northward migration of wild Asian elephants in southwest China's Yunnan province, the frequent appearances of the Yangtze finless porpoises, the presence of marbled cats (*Pardofelis marmorata*) in the Gaoligong Mountain National Nature Reserve in Yunnan, and the spectacular view of thousands of Tibetan antelopes galloping on the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau, etc, show that China's remarkable progress in biodiversity conservation.

This year marks the 30th anniversary of the adoption of the Convention on Biological Diversity. As one of the earliest parties to sign and ratify the Convention, China has always been taking various measures to protect biodiversity.

China attaches great importance to biodiversity protection. It has elevated biodiversity conservation to a national strategy, taken a series of measures to protect biodiversity, and constantly improved the systems, mechanisms, and policies concerning biodiversity protection.

In 2011, the China National Committee for

Biodiversity Conservation (CNCBC) was unveiled to coordinate biodiversity protection efforts nationwide and provided guidance for China's Action on United Nations Decade on Biodiversity. China also released and implemented a national action plan as well as 22 protection strategies and action plans at the local level.

Over the past nearly 10 years, China has promulgated and revised more than 20 laws and regulations related to biodiversity conservation, including the Forestry Law and the Grassland Law. In 2021, China released the Opinions on Further Strengthening Biodiversity Conservation and made it a programmatic plan in the country's biodiversity conservation work.

A document released by the Supreme People's Court, China's top court, showed that since 2013, courts at various levels across the country have handled 182,000 biodiversity cases involving rare and endangered animals and plants, including Chinese sturgeon, Tibetan antelopes, *Taxus chinensis*, and

other representative and endemic species in China, as well as pangolins, great white sharks, coral, and other globally rare and endangered species, offering a law-based biodiversity conservation approach with Chinese characteristics.

China has introduced ecological red lines, which have demarcated over 30 percent of its land area as protected, covering all ecological areas, areas which are ecologically vulnerable, and key biodiversity distribution areas. A total of 90 percent of the country's terrestrial ecosystem types and 74 percent of key state-protected wild flora and fauna species have been placed under effective protection measures. The country has established 749 observation plots and completed an assessment of higher plants, vertebrates, and macrofungi species.

In October 2021, the first part of the 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (COP15) was held in Kunming, the capital of Yunnan province.

"Over the past year, China has made new headway in mainstreaming biodiversity conservation. The country launched the first batch of national parks, which cover nearly 30 percent of the key terrestrial wildlife species found in China. The country also inaugurated and opened the China National Botanical Garden in Beijing and the South China National Botanical Garden in Guangzhou, kicking off the construction of the national botanical garden system," said Cui Shuhong, director-general of the Department of Nature and Ecology Conservation at the Ministry of Ecology and Environment.

In recent years, China has carried out cooperation on biodiversity conservation with many countries, and the cooperation has yielded fruitful results.

The China-Laos transboundary biodiversity reserve, with an area of 200,000 hectares, effectively protects rare and endangered species such as Asian elephants and their habitats. The Sino-Africa Joint Research Center under the Chinese Academy

of Sciences has cultivated more than 200 postgraduate students from Africa on biodiversity conservation and utilization, building a talent pool for African countries.

In terms of foreign investment and cooperation, the Chinese government has always adhered to a green development philosophy. Relevant departments have jointly issued and implemented policy documents, including the Opinions on the Joint Implementation of Green Development in the Belt and Road Initiative, which set clear-cut requirements for environmental protection in the implementation of relevant projects.

In building the Mombasa-Nairobi Standard Gauge Railway (SGR) in Kenya, Chinese builders set up passages, bridges, and culverts for large wild animals to freely and safely pass under the railway. During the construction of Ghana's new container terminal, Chinese builders established a sea turtle hatchery and released baby turtles into the ocean. These projects have not only promoted local economic development but also protected biodiversity.

People's Daily

Taliban-led Afghanistan blocks women's access to universities

KABUL/UNITED NATIONS

AFGHANISTAN'S Taliban-run higher education ministry on Tuesday suspended access to universities by female students until further notice, drawing strong condemnation from the United States, Britain and the United Nations.

A letter, confirmed by a spokesperson for the higher education ministry, instructed Afghan public and private universities to suspend access to female students immediately, in accordance with a Cabinet decision.

The announcement by the Taliban administration, which has not been internationally recognized, came as the United Nations Security Council met in New York on Afghanistan.

Foreign governments, including the United States, have said that a change in policies on women's education is needed before it can consider formally recognising the Taliban-run administration, which is also subject to heavy sanctions.

"The Taliban cannot expect to be a legitimate member of the international community until they respect the rights of all Afghans, especially the human rights and fundamental freedom of women and girls," US Deputy UN Ambassador Robert Wood told the council, describing the move as "absolutely indefensible."

In Washington, State Department spokesperson Ned Price said the United States will look to see what more it can do to hold the Taliban to account.

Britain's UN Ambassador Barbara Woodard said the suspension was "another egregious curtailment of



In this file photo taken on Oct 13, 2022, Afghan female students take an entrance exam at Kabul University in Kabul. AFP

women's rights and a deep and profound disappointment for every single female student."

"It is also another step by the Taliban away from a self-reliant and prosperous Afghanistan," she told the council.

In March, the Taliban drew criticism from many foreign governments and some Afghans for making a U-turn on signals all girls' high schools would be opened.

Alarmed by the news

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres was alarmed by reports that the Afghan Taliban have banned women and girls from attending universities, said his spokesman on Tuesday.

"The secretary-general is deeply alarmed by news reports that the Taliban have suspended

access to universities to women and girls. The secretary-general reiterates that the denial of education not only violates the equal rights of women and girls, but will have a devastating impact on the country's future," said Stéphane Dujarric, the chief spokesman for UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, in a statement.

Dujarric said the move was "clearly another broken promise from the Taliban".

"It's another very troubling move and it's difficult to imagine how the country can develop, deal with all of the challenges that it has, without active participation of women and the education of women," he said.

Meanwhile, UN special envoy for Afghanistan Roza Otunbayeva said in a statement that the decision was "devastating."

"I am very saddened by the news that was widely reported this morning that the Taliban Minister of Higher Education has banned women from attending universities. This is detrimental for women but also for Afghanistan more widely," said Otunbayeva.

"I briefed the (Security) Council this morning on a number of human rights concerns that we have expressed to the Taliban de facto authorities. Ever since the Taliban banned girls' secondary education in March of this year the council has been unanimous in condemning this decision. So many young women lost the whole academic year and now another harsh decision has been taken to ban university education," she said.

"I regret that the Taliban do not seem to think about the future of Afghanistan and how women can contribute to the economy, education, and culture," she added.

Shortly before the announcement from Kabul, Otunbayeva told the Security Council that the closure of high schools had "undermined" the Taliban administration's relationship with the international community and was "extremely unpopular among Afghans and even within the Taliban leadership."

"As long as girls remain excluded from school and the de facto authorities continue to disregard other stated concerns of the international community, we remain at something of an impasse," she said.

The decision came as many university students were sitting end-of-term exams. One mother of a university student, who asked not to be named for security reasons, said her daughter called her in tears when she heard of the letter, fearing she could no longer continue her medical studies in Kabul.

"The pain that not only I... and (other) mothers have in our heart, could not be described. We are all feeling this pain, they are worried for the future of their children," she said.

Otunbayeva said the United Nations is seeking further information and clarifications about this decision.

Agencies

Foreign media remain silent about Ukraine's shelling of Donetsk civilians – Putin

MOSCOW

FOREIGN media and human rights organizations remain silent about Ukraine's shelling attacks targeting civilians in Donetsk, Russian President Vladimir Putin said during talks with the acting head of the Donetsk People's Republic (DPR), Denis Pushilin, on Tuesday.

"I call attention to the fact that not a single foreign media outlet or human rights organization has broken the silence on this issue," Putin said, commenting on intensified shelling attacks on Donetsk.

In turn, Pushilin said the situation has been like that since 2014.

"Let's face the truth: Donbass was seeking to resolve the conflict peacefully, and so did Russia, who, as a guarantor nation was doing everything within its power and even more. If only we could foretell back then - based on what we saw during negotiations - that Europe and the West cannot be trusted," Pushilin said, adding that he was shocked by former German chancellor Angela Merkel's recent confessions.

"They said they were not planning to honor any commitments, that they signed documents only to win time, [and] rearm Ukraine," Putin said.



Let's face the truth: Donbass was seeking to resolve the conflict peacefully, and so did Russia, who, as a guarantor nation was doing everything

Agencies

Iran says ready to conclude final draft in Vienna nuke deal

TEHRAN / GENEVA

THE Iranian foreign minister said on Tuesday that Iran was ready to conclude the Vienna talks on the revival of a 2015 nuclear deal on the basis of the final draft produced after months of negotiations.

Hossein Amir-Abdollahian (pictured) made the remarks in a two-hour meeting with the EU's foreign policy chief Josep Borrell on the sidelines of a regional conference in Amman, capital of Jordan, according to a statement published on the Iranian Foreign Ministry's website.

Amir-Abdollahian urged other parties to the nuclear deal to adopt "constrictive and realistic approaches" and refrain from politicizing the issue.

For his part, Borrell agreed that the revival of the nuclear deal and negotiations to this end are separate from other issues on the agenda.

The meeting was also attended by Iran's chief nuclear negotiator Ali Bagheri Kani and EU coordinator for the nuclear talks Enrique Mora.

Meanwhile, EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell on Tuesday condemned Iran's support for Russia in its war in Ukraine and the ongoing repression of opposition in the country, but said the EU would continue to work with Iran on restoring the 2015 Iran nuclear deal.

"Necessary meeting with Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein



Amirabdollahian in Jordan amidst deteriorating Iran-EU relations," Borrell tweeted ahead of a regional conference being hosted by Jordan.

"Stressed need to immediately stop military support to Russia and internal repression in Iran. Agreed we must keep communication open and restore JCPOA on basis of Vienna negotiations."

Separately, a group of United Nations (UN) human rights experts said Tuesday in a joint statement that US sanctions against Iran are contributing to environmental harm and preventing people from fully enjoying their right to health and life in the country.

"It is no surprise that Tehran is one of the world's most polluted cities. US sanctions force people to prolong the use of older vehicles that burn fuel less efficiently, while making it impossible for Iran to obtain equipment and technology to re-

duce vehicle emissions," the experts said.

Air pollution is causing higher levels of respiratory and other diseases, they said, leading to 4,000 premature deaths per year in Tehran and 40,000 premature deaths annually across Iran.

The experts added that the sanctions have caused foreign energy companies to abandon projects to build large solar power plants in Iran.

The sanctions also prevent Iranian scientists from engaging in joint environmental research projects abroad, and prevent Iranians from accessing online databases and courses about environmental issues and sustainability, they added.

The UN General Assembly recognized the human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment in a resolution it passed in July 2022, and the United States voted in favor of this resolution.

The UN experts that issued Tuesday's joint statement include Alena Douhan, UN Special Rapporteur on the negative impact of the unilateral coercive measures on the enjoyment of human rights, and Ian Fry, UN Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights in the context of climate change.

Iran signed the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) with world powers in July 2015, agreeing to curb its nuclear program in return for the removal of the sanctions on the country. The United States, however, pulled out of the deal in May 2018 and reimposed its unilateral sanctions on Iran, prompting the latter to drop some of its nuclear commitments under the deal.

The talks on the JCPOA's revival began in April 2021 in Vienna. No breakthrough was achieved after the latest round of talks in early August.

Agencies

Billions needed for COP15 nature deal but funds miniscule

LONDON

CLIMATE conscious investors have channeled billions of dollars into clean energy but investment flows into protecting and better managing the world's ecosystems remain minute by comparison.

This could change after negotiators at the UN nature summit in Montreal secured long-awaited formal support on Monday for a Global Biodiversity Framework to protect nature. But plans have yet to be fleshed out on how to channel the huge amounts of capital from private and public sector sources that scientists say are necessary for conservation.

A growing crowd of investors aiming to manage their money with environmental, social and governance (ESG) considerations in mind are looking to the deal for indications of the future shape of new financial instruments and rules to protect forests, marshes, waters, and everything in between.

Some managers have already pressed ahead. Around 74.3 billion euros (\$78.8 billion) are already invested in funds aimed at protecting ecologically sound environments on land, air and water, according to data from Morningstar.

Morningstar lists 175 funds that run investment strategies that are intended to invest in companies, or securities, that are involved in industries that positively impact the environment. It groups these funds together under a theme it calls healthy ecosystems.

The five largest equity healthy ecosystem funds are managed by Pictet, BNP Paribas Asset Management and Amundi and account for 21.6 billion euros, or nearly a third of the entire group.

These funds are largely concentrated in the industrials and utilities sectors: six out of 10 largest funds are overweight the benchmark weighting of industrials in the MSCI ACWI Index (USD) while half of the funds are overweight utilities.

Biodiversity funds

Investment strategies targeting biodiversity specifically are an even more nascent product. Just 907.6 million euros are invested in Morningstar's top 10 equity funds with biodiversity in their name.

Limited data collection and reporting and the difficulty of measuring a company's impact on biodiversity are all seen as major barriers for investment to money managers.

"We know the global economy and every company in it is negatively impacting biodiversity," said Tom Atkinson, portfolio manager at AXA Investment Managers, which has a 117 million euro Article 9 biodiversity impact fund.

"At the moment we can only assess the negative impact (on biodiversity) of the companies in our portfolio, this is why more biodiversity funds don't exist and why regulation is arguably dragging."

Like the broader healthy ecosystems group of funds, biodiversity-named funds are largely concentrated in industrials like agricultural equipment manufacturer Deere & Co and US water technology provider Xylem with 30 percent of individual holdings from a universe of 60 stocks directed to this sector.

Consumer comes a close second however, with 27 percent of holdings invested in companies like Nestle, L'Oreal and Darling Ingredients, a company that turns edible by-products and food waste into sustainable products and renewable energy.

Three of the six largest biodiversity-named funds assessed by Reuters are overweight industrials versus the MSCI ACWI Index (USD).

With a global biodiversity framework in place and efforts well underway to create a nature reporting framework for companies – the Taskforce on Nature-Related Financial Disclosures – as well as a new tool to measure positive impact on biodiversity due early 2023, managers like Atkinson are predicting investment flows will increase next year.

Agencies

"THE prices of durian in Kunming this year have been lowered, indeed," said Deng Xiaotian from a trade company in Kunming, southwest China's Yunnan province, after unloading the last box of Monthong durians and stocktaking.

Many citizens in Kunming have found the drop in durian prices in summer this year, and the lowest price was less than 40 yuan (\$5.74) per kilogram. In mid-December, Monthong durians are sold at around 58 yuan per kilogram in supermarkets in the city, about 10 yuan cheaper from a year ago.

Deng attributed the lowered prices to the expanded durian production in Thailand and the China-Laos Railway. He said fruits were imported from Thailand via sea routes and highways in the past. After the opening of the China-Laos Railway, Thai durians are shipped to Vientiane, Laos first and then enter China via the railway, he introduced, adding that cross-border railway cold-chain transportation has provided Chinese fruit dealers with a brand-new channel.

China-Laos Railway embraces prosperous development

"Trains carry lots of cargos and run fast, and they won't be affected by weathers and come with less risks. Therefore, railway lowers our cost," Deng told People's Daily, according to him, his company imported over 50 cold-chain containers of durians from Thailand via the China-Laos Railway this year, which totaled more than 1,000 tons.

Over the past year since the railway was put into service, it has witnessed prosperous passenger and cargo businesses. As of Dec. 2, the railway had transported 11.2 million tons of cargos and carried 8.5 million passengers. Besides, 3,000 cross-border trips had been made, transporting cargo worth over 13 billion

yuan. Facilitated logistics led to investment. A 360,000-cubic-meter cold-chain warehouse is currently under construction at the Gallops International Land Port in Jinning district, Kunming, and is expected to be put into use the next year.

"Cold-chain transportation of farm produce will be a major development direction of the China-Laos Railway. Especially after the Mohan railway port for inspection and quarantine was put into use on Nov. 30, imported fruits can be shipped to China all the way via railway, which has significantly improved the efficiency of customs clearance and transportation," said Wang Wen-

bin, assistant general manager of Tengjin Logistics, which runs the Gallops International Land Port. He called the China-Laos Railway an important channel linking China's huge market with the Southeast Asian market.

"Fruits from Southeast Asia are getting into the Chinese market through the China-Laos Railway, enriching the choices of Chinese consumers. In the same time, Chinese vegetables and Yunnan province's farm produce are also exported. The railway benefits farmers and consumers both at home and abroad," Wang noted.

He said the Gallops International Land Port has shipped and received a total of 2,868 twenty-foot equivalent units (TEUs)

since the opening of the railway, including 454 cold-chain TEUs from and to Laos, Thailand, and Cambodia.

Apart from fruits, the China-Laos Railway also transports many other types of commodities. It is benefiting more and more enterprises.

Logistics firm Shanghai Rencheng started shipping cargos along the China-Laos Railway since the railway was just put into operation.

"We took the railway as a backup option, but it has become a 'major force' assisting our transportation. The head office established a branch in Kunming, whose export volume now accounts for nearly half of the com-

pany's total, and our sales volume has exceeded the pre-pandemic level," said Yang Jie, head of the company's Kunming branch.

Shanghai Rencheng exports textile products to Southeast Asian countries and regions. Before the railway was put into use, it exported products mainly through road exports.

"Thanks to the China-Laos Railway that features fast customs clearance, fast speed, and integrated online-offline services, the transportation cost of our company has been reduced by at least 30 percent," Yang told People's Daily.

So far, 25 Chinese provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities have launched freight services on the China-Laos Railway, which goes to Laos, Thailand, Myanmar, Malaysia and other countries and regions. The cargos being transported have also expanded from fertilizers and daily commodities at the beginning to more than 1,200 types, such as electronics, photovoltaic products and fruits.

People's Daily

Fresh outlook could help Dennis Kibu and Simba

By Correspondent Michael Mwebe

IT is clear Simba Sports Club need to move some players on if they are to strengthen the squad and several fringe players have been linked with a move away from Msimbazi in the December-January transfer window.

Dennis Kibu is one player in particular who has been linked with a transfer in this current window. He has become the subject of strong interest from a number of clubs, and there's a chance he could be moved out on a loan deal.

NBC Premier League clubs such as Geita Gold and Dodoma Jiji have been linked with the striker, and it's easy to see why. Kibu is a massive talent and he has a really promising future. He showed glimpses throughout his career at Simba where you think, 'Wow, he could be special'.

But then there's been a time where he's been underwhelming and you thought, 'This isn't good enough, he is not Simba material'.

However, the essential point here right now is that he is still raw for a club like Simba.

Last season proves that. Overall, you can say his first season with Simba was relatively successful. He scored 10 goals and assisted four in 29 appearances in all competitions. But how he dropped off at the latter end of the season and showed a lack of consistency, just proves that he is still raw.

A look at the statistics this season Kibu has played just 427 minutes of league football, leaving him well behind the likes of Moses Phiri, Pape Sakho, and John Bocco in terms of playing time.

Now, he's a young player so this is totally expected, but at the same time, this is the reason why Simba could allow him to leave on loan. He has scored one league goal for his side this season and has made a single assist.

He has since lost his place in the national team and he will be keen to start football matches in a bid to be involved at the 2023 AFCON qualifiers next year.

Nonetheless, there can be no doubt Kibu has the talent to succeed at the highest level. You



Dennis Kibu

only have to look at his best moments for Simba to see what he can produce on the football pitch.

Last season he underlined what he can do in a Simba shirt. Working under four different coaches in his one and half year period has not helped his cause. He has been deployed on the flanks and rarely as a centre forward.

The consistent change of coaches at a club is not good for any player and Kibu was being asked to do different things under different coaches. At the moment he needs to play regular first team football at a club that would play him in his favoured position.

No, that would be near impos-

sible to offer at a club like Simba. And if you are Kibu looking at all the attackers being linked with Simba, that isn't going to fill you with confidence, and it is hard to blame either party for being unsure here.

There is still an opportunity for Kibu at Simba and a loan move could be the catalyst for a positive change in his career at Msimbazi. Going on loan could be a move that sees Kibu shine and if he enjoys his spell in a club like Geita Gold, he could come back as a new player for Simba next season. John Bocco will be another year older and will likely have left the club by the end of next season.

Geita Gold could be a great loan move for him. They pro-

vide a great pressure-free for him to shine in. They are not in danger of relegation and are actually pushing for top four finish and Kibu will be aiming to score the goals to take them to that respective finish.

However, financially it is a difficult deal to happen. The player may need to accept a wage cut to allow the proposed deal to go through. Simba will also need to cover some of Kibu's wages because a club like Geita is likely to be far away from matching his wages.

For Simba, they will hope he improves on loan and it frees up a bit of space to go and get someone else, essentially making this a win-win situation for all parties.



Dumange traditional dance group entertains when the chairman of the CCM women's wing (UWT), Mary Chatanda, arrived in Korogwe, Tanga on Tuesday. PHOTO: CORRESPONDENT SABATO KASIKA

We have not restrained Mwakinyo bout, says ZNC

By Correspondent Nassir Nchimbi

ZANZIBAR National Sports Council (ZNC) has clarified not to have prevented boxer Hassan Mwakinyo from fighting in the islands, but there are procedures that his promoter has been required to adhere to.

Recently, there was confusion about the fight pitting Mwakinyo against American Peter Dobson set to be held in the islands, stating that the Tanga-based pugilist has been blocked despite his contribution to ensure boxing is played again in Zanzibar.

The executive secretary of ZNC, Said Marine, has said that it is not true that they have stopped the fight, but it started to be announced by the promoter before some procedures were completed.

Marine said the fight will take place but there are issues that are to be fixed.

Mwakinyo will fight Dobson in a 10-round super welterweight fight for the WBC International championship, a fight that was controversially said to be banned from being held in Zanzibar.

Although the promoter of the fight, Shomari Kimbau, has a letter of permission to continue with the fight

which was signed by Abubakar Lunda and stamped with ZNC, Marine said there are still procedures to be followed.

The letter explained that ZNC gives preliminary approval to the company Golden Boy African Promotion to proceed with the important steps of the fight while wanting to push the fight back for at least two weeks from December 30 which was originally planned to be held to give the council the opportunity to complete several issues.

The letter explained that the success of the fight will help Zanzibar to start its boxing journey well and that in the event there are boxers from the islands who will also have the opportunity to fight.

"Lunda is the registrar, he will have to do that on his part. We have not yet given permission, but I repeat again, ZNC has not prevented the Mwakinyo's fight from being held here. It will take place but there are things that we have to put right, including finding a temporary leadership that will manage it," said Marine.

However, Kimbau has said that they have moved it to January 12 where it will be fought at the Mao tse Tung stadium, in the islands and being preceded by 12 other bouts.

TPLB admits difficult in solving Simba and Yanga issues

By Correspondent Nassir Nchimbi

MANY football fans in the country prefer blaming the Football Federation (TFF) and sometimes the Tanzania Premier League Board (TPLB) when there is confusion about decisions regarding Simba SC and Young Africans SC (Yanga).

There are those who believe that the old clubs are being favoured or feared when they stumble on disciplinary and many other issues.

However, the League Board has revealed the truth and admits difficult when they want to take a decision against those clubs for being under massive pressure.

The Chief Executive of TPLB, Almas Kasongo, has given a special interview with The Guardian where he has also opened up about many things they face in running various leagues in the country.

"The board is the manager of the Premier League, I mean all the participating teams, but in the review of the punishment for the club, we have been having difficult times when we have cases involving Simba and Yanga," says Kasongo and added;

"These teams are a headache, even reviewing the law when we find out they have made mistakes, we look more precisely so that when making a decision, there will be no discussions that will

make us appear we are not doing justice.

"For example, the recent issue concerning Clatous Chama and Stephan Aziz Ki is completely illegal and it is in the regulations sent to all clubs, but still their big and foreign players have made the fans come to us claiming that we are making mistakes."

Kasongo says the teams are not the first to be punished because they had already done that to Dodoma Jiji's player Hussein Masalanga, who was fined and banned for three matches after refusing to handshake with Geita Gold FC players during the Premier League game.

THE CONTROVERSY OF MAY 8

"Since I started getting involved in soccer, the event of May 8, when the match involving Simba and Yanga was postponed, is one that shook me the most. I will not forget and I have already written in my memory book. It was an event that was too big for me," says Kasongo.

"I thank the Government through the Prime Minister Kassim Majaliwa who intervened and gave clarification in the Parliament, a statement that reduced the intensity that was going on from the two sides.

"I can't explain the problem that happened, but what I can say is that the incident will not be



Almas Kasongo

erased from my football life. As a football leader, I was faced with a period that I did not even expect. I am thankful that it passed and ended safely, let the rest of my life continue," he says.

The match, after failing to be played on May 8, was postponed and played on July 3, last year and Yanga won 1-0.

LEAGUE SCHEDULE CHALLENGES

"Within two seasons in a row, there have been big changes in terms of the schedule. Although we cannot satisfy everyone, but now we continue to improve and there have been few changes," he says.

"The schedule is the league, so if we make a mistake in the sched-

ule, we have made a mistake in the competition and it is still difficult for us. But we have made a big step forward. The issue of change will continue to exist when we see it is necessary but our main goal is to benefit the club and the interests of the sponsors who are the biggest stakeholders.

"According to the contract we entered into with the sponsors, in the 240 matches of the league, every game must be broadcast 'live', so we cannot show all the matches of the same round on the same day and that is why the schedule sometimes must be rearranged," he said.

"Each team needs to get the right to be shown as well and the broadcaster wants to get his right, so that's the big reason. Even if you look at other big developed countries, they also have their own special channels to show football."

He says that the trustees and sponsors who entered into contracts with them also have the right to plan the schedule because they have invested heavily, so it does not mean that it is something that has only been brought up as it is planned.

"Within five years, there has been a huge investment in Tanzanian football. There are people who have invested in showing 'live' matches, and major sponsors have helped to reduce some of the challenges facing our clubs

participating in the league," he says.

"We have reduced the challenges of the teams arriving at the venue the day before the game or the team being unable to pay for the hotels when they play away. That is due to the investment that forces us sometimes to make changes in the schedule accordingly."

UEFA ARE INVOLVED

"There are lessons we got on how to prepare these league schedules. In January we had a course from UEFA officials, and there was a program called 'League Development Program'. We learn how to make a proper schedule that will be friendly to all stakeholders, including clubs and fans," says Kasongo.

"The issue of schedule is a process. If you look at where we started until where we have reached there are big changes in terms of the schedule. We believe that we will make everything right this time around. The issue of schedule will be settled and we will have reached the expectations of the fans.

"We are in the process of improving the challenges we receive from stakeholders, clubs and football fans."

BANNING OF FOOTBALL GROUNDS

"It is true that we are closing some stadiums. The problem is

that this is happening in the middle of the league, but we cannot stop banning unsuitable pitches for fear of words," he says.

"The challenge of our pitches is natural grass and most of them lack maintenance. So the owners and users of the pitches should take care of them so that when the inspectors arrive, they will see that the pitch is still suitable for use and many of the pitches are managed by people who do not have maintenance skills," he says.

Kasongo says that the stadium is the number two criterion for the club's license and TPLB are obliged to close the stadiums that do not meet the set criteria.

"We have been strict because we believe that the quality of the stadiums will lead to fair competition and we also remove the risk of injury to the players as well as the safety of the fans," he says.

FIFA INVESTING IN THE CHAMPIONSHIP

"We continue to look for sponsors in women's football, the Championship and the First League after FIFA Plus poured money for their development," said the TPLB CEO.

"The ongoing development process is under the President of the Tanzania Football Federation (TFF), Wallace Karia, who has promised to finish his leadership having helped us to ensure that the board manages itself."

Federation slams 'hateful' racist abuse of French footballers

PARIS

SEVERAL members of the France team that lost to Argentina in the World Cup final were subjected to "hateful" racist abuse on social media, the French Football Federation (FFF) said on Tuesday, adding it intended to file a legal complaint.

The abuse aimed at Kingsley Coman and Aurelien Tchouameni, who missed their penalties in the penalty shootout, echoed that received by three England players following the Euro 2020 final loss to Italy last year.

French football chiefs issued a strongly worded statement on Tuesday castigating the abusers, who took to social media after a pulsating final which saw France come back from 2-0 and 3-2 down to take it to a penalty shootout.

The team gained much credit with the majority of French people during the tournament and around 50,000 greeted them in Place de la Concorde on Monday on their return from Qatar.

"At the end of the World Cup final several players from the French team were subjected to racist and unacceptably hateful remarks on social media," the FFF tweeted on the France football team Twitter account.

"The FFF condemns them and will lodge a complaint against the authors of those remarks."

Coman -- whose introduction in the second-half by coach Didier Deschamps sparked a French revival -- has already had his club German champions Bayern Munich leap to his defence.

"FC Bayern strongly condemn the racist comments made towards Kingsley Coman," they tweeted on Monday.

"The FC Bayern family is behind you, King. Racism has no place in sport or our society."

Politicians were quick to condemn the abuse with the opposition Socialist Party urging the FFF to lodge a complaint.

Isabelle Rome, minister for equality and diversity, described the abuse as "unacceptable".

"I condemn these remarks with the utmost vigour," she tweeted.

This is not the first time the French team has been targeted. Kylian Mbappe -- who scored a hat-trick in Sunday's match -- was abused after he missed a penalty in the shootout loss to Switzerland in the last 16 Euro 2020 clash.

Following the Euro 2020 final, English players Jadon Sancho, Bukayo Saka and Marcus Rashford who are all black, received a torrent of online abuse after failing to score their penalties as England failed to win their first trophy since the 1966 World Cup.

British police made several arrests following that and one man was jailed for 10 weeks.

AFP

'We can dream again': The song that marked Argentina's WC campaign

BUENOS AIRES

"MUCHACHOS, we can dream again..." the hit song that accompanied Argentina on their conquest of the 2022 World Cup has found deep resonance in a country desperate for a feel-good moment.

"Muchachos", which translates as "guys," was Number 1 on Spotify in Argentina Tuesday with more than half-a-million plays, and was heard on repeat in central Buenos Aires where huge crowds of fans gathered to welcome the victorious team.

The catchy tune, which alludes to deceased Argentine superstar Diego Maradona looking down from heaven on modern-day hero Lionel Messi, had also reverberated through the stadiums of Qatar -- belted out by supporters with patriotic fervor.

The song by fusion rock, ska and salsa band La Mosca Tse-Tse first came out in 2003, and originally contained the lyrics: "Muchachos, tonight I'm going to get drunk."

It was later adapted, and adopted, by football club fans -- among them 30-year-old teacher Fernando Romero.

Romero this year rewrote the lyrics and dedicated them to the Albiceleste national team. His version soon went viral.

"What is happening is so crazy, so great that it makes you dizzy," Romero told Argentine media during the World Cup campaign.

"It started at home one day when I was cooking, I started to get emotional on my own, just thinking about it, I wrote it on my phone, and it stuck."

The new lyrics start "I was born in Argentina, the land of Diego and Lionel, of the boys of the Falklands whom I will never forget."

It laments all the finals the team has lost and sings of a famous victory over Brazil in the 2021 Copa America that allowed Argentina to dream of a third World Cup -- which the team went on to claim in Qatar.

- 'An explosion of feelings' -

"The song is huge!" said 19-year-old Nicolas Arias, among the throngs celebrating in the capital.

"It describes my country well, my people. It has an emotional side, it is creative, it is an explosion of feelings. It is complete, awesome!" raved the youngster.

AFP

Martinez: From fan at the 2018 World Cup to savior in Qatar

By Henry Bushnell

Argentina's World Cup life flashed before its collective eyes in the 123rd minute of the eternal game. This was before King Leo's coronation and after most of the madness. In stoppage time of extra time of the World Cup final for all time, France's Randal Kolo Muani had escaped from a drained defense and, 8,000 miles away, from Buenos Aires to Córdoba to Rosario, Argentine tears readied themselves beneath hope and faith.

They'd been flowing for three decades, uncontrollably after successive soccer heartbreaks. Emiliano Martinez was one of the millions who'd cried then. He was, throughout the last decade, a journeyman backup goalkeeper scrounging together a career in the lower leagues of England. Four years later, after thoughts of retirement, he traveled with his brother to the 2018 World Cup as a fan. He was, and still is, in his own words, "Just a regular guy."

But here at the Lusail Stadium on Sunday, with Kolo Muani racing onto a bouncing ball, and with Lionel Messi's last World Cup chance suddenly imperiled, the 30-year-old Martinez crept out of his goal mouth, chopped his feet and spread his wings.

He became an Argentine legend with a sprawling save, and then with his penalty-shootout heroics. With shenanigans and classic s***housery, he slithered into the minds of nervous French players,

then repelled one penalty and saw another flash wide of the post. He punched the air in celebration. He shimmed, mischievously, to celebrate mind-games won and a World Cup trophy within reach.

And then he collapsed to the grass, to a stage he never even imagined he'd grace. He dabbed at tears as he scanned a delirious crowd for his family, and as he processed his critical role in Argentina's first World Cup title in 36 years.

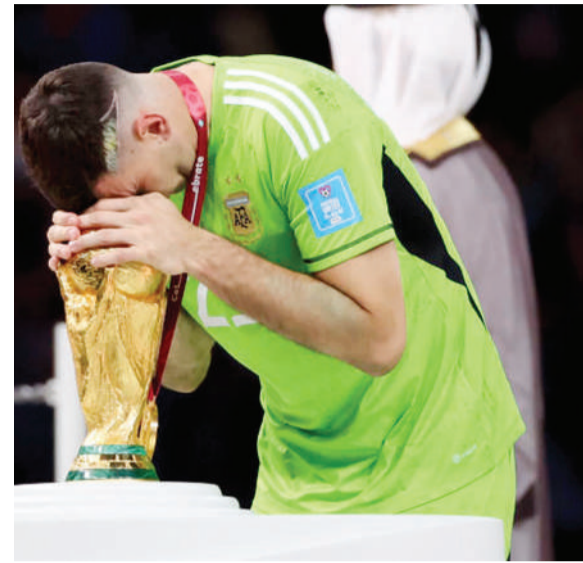
"This," Martinez said in a postgame interview, through a translator, "is beyond my dreams."

The need to support his family

Argentina's latest flamboyant hero grew up in Mar del Plata, a port city on Argentina's Atlantic coast where, as Martinez said this weekend, "You're not born with a silver spoon in your mouth."

He was raised, instead, in a house without doors and toilets. Dinners sometimes consisted of white rice. His dad, Alberto, worked long hours as a truck driver delivering fish throughout the region. His mom, Susana, cleaned apartments, trying to provide for the young family. She'd drop off Emi and his brother, Alejandro, at the bus stop around 6:30 or 7 a.m. Or, at times, Emi would walk to school alone.

He then ventured alone into the soccer world. He left home at age 12 for Buenos Aires, to join Independiente, one of Argentina's Cinco Grandes, its Big Five clubs. He lived out of a hotel with youth teammates. His parents, hesitant to spend hard-earned pesos on gas,



Argentina goalkeeper Emiliano Martinez kissing the World Cup during the trophy ceremony following the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 Final match between Argentina and France at Lusail Stadium on Dec. 18, 2022, in Lusail City, Qatar. (Agencies)

could only visit him twice a month.

All of which is why he eventually left Argentina, like so many ambitious teens unfortunately must. At age 17, Arsenal invited him to England for a trial, then offered him a youth contract. His mom and brother cried and begged him: "Please don't go." But he'd also seen his dad crying, late at night, under the stress of unpaid and unpayable bills.

He remembered the evenings when his parents didn't eat so that he and Alejandro could.

He knew the Arsenal contract would change his life and theirs, even if the language would be foreign and the journey arduous.

"I left when I was very young, before I got the chance to play for Independiente, because I needed to support my family financially," he'd later explain.

So he said goodbye, and promised his mom after settling in London: "I don't want to

come back to my country with nothing. I want to make a career here."

What he soon learned, though, was that contracts did not guarantee opportunity. From his 2010 arrival through 2019, he made just six Premier League appearances at Arsenal. The club shipped him out on "emergency loans" to Oxford United, Sheffield Wednesday and Rotherham. His English debut ended in a 3-0 defeat in the fourth division.

He hopped from those clubs to Wolverhampton Wanderers, where he suffered an injury and subsequently lost his starting spot. He went to Getafe in Spain, where he barely played, and there, at age 25, he pondered giving up. "I was that low," he recently told The Athletic. He pushed on, and went to Reading United on loan in 2019.

And all the while, of course, he'd slipped far out of the national team picture. He watched the 2014 World Cup final at an asado, a barbecue,

with friends back home in Argentina. He went with his brother in 2018 to Russia, where Argentina's goalkeeping was calamitous.

"That's why I can and do relate to fans," he'd later say here in Qatar, "because I'm just another Argentine."

Martinez's big break arrived, finally, in 2020, at age 27, when Arsenal lost a goalkeeper to injury and called on him as games resumed amid the COVID-19 pandemic. He started and won the FA Cup final that year, a trophy which brought him to a different type of tears.

His exploits there earned him a transfer to Aston Villa, his current club -- and the platform he needed to impress Argentina.

"It wasn't until I was 26 or 27 that Argentina saw me the way I deserved or wanted to be seen," he said this past weekend.

In fact, ahead of last year's Copa America, 34-year-old River Plate keeper Franco Armani remained Argentina's No. 1. Then Armani caught COVID. Martinez stepped in for his national team debut in a June 2021 World Cup qualifier. And he never looked back.

He sustained Argentina's breakthrough Copa America run with three saves in a semifinal shootout against Colombia. He shut out Brazil in the final, and he'd later realize that it was the first time, in his 28 years of consciousness, that he'd seen his nation, in unison, erupt into celebration. But it was nothing compared to Sunday.

Martinez came to Qatar as La Albiceleste's undisputed starter. He

spared a few moments upon arrival to reflect, he said, on "the hard work needed to get here." Then he toggled back into character, into the free-spirited smack-talker who has won over English hearts at Aston Villa. He first popped up in a quarterfinal shootout, pushing away two Dutch penalties. Then he repeated the feat in a frantic final.

He made the stunning save on Kolo Muani at the end of extra time, then one-upped himself in the shootout. In the tensest of moments, with Messi's legacy essentially in the palms of his -- Martinez's -- hands, he danced side to side on his goal line, flapping his arms. He nearly clawed away Kylian Mbappé's opening attempt. Then he smothered Kingsley Coman's.

As Aurélien Tchouameni stepped up next, Martinez grabbed the ball and naughtily rolled it to the side of the penalty box, forcing Tchouameni to break stride and rhythm to retrieve it. Tchouameni then missed. Martinez gloated.

Later, after claiming the golden glove award as the tournament's top goalkeeper, he turned it into a prop for a lewd gesture, with hundreds of millions of people watching.

Later still, he appeared to mock Mbappé in the locker room.

He had won a World Cup for his people; for Messi, and the country they both left as teens. He had become one of the World Cup's, and Argentina's, most improbable heroes.

(Agencies)

African, Arab or Amazigh? Morocco's identity crisis

LONDON

IT IS fair to say that the World Cup in Qatar this year has been defined by controversy like no other tournament before.

From the controversial decision to grant Qatar the event despite its poor human rights record to the very last moment when the Emir of Qatar put an Arab cloak on the shoulders of the Argentinian football legend, Lionel Messi, as he was about to lift the trophy on Sunday.

But there is one controversy that attracted little or no attention outside North Africa. It started with the simple question: how do you describe the Moroccan team, the Atlas Lions, which stunned the whole world by its sterling performance -- defying the odds to beat heavyweights such as Spain and Portugal? The "first Arab" or "African" team to reach the semi-final?

Culturally many Moroccans see themselves more as Arabs than Africans -- and some sub-Saharan Africans in Morocco complain that racist attitudes are never far from the surface.

But comments by Moroccan winger Sofiane Boufal after their World Cup victory over Spain brought the de-

bate about the country's continental identity to the fore. He thanked "all Moroccans all over the world for their support, to all Arab people, and to all Muslim people. This win belongs to you."

After a social media backlash, he took to Instagram to apologise for not mentioning the African continent's backing of the team -- expressed at one stage by Nigeria's President Muhammadu Buhari when he said Morocco had "made the entire continent proud with their grit and dexterity". Chastened, Boufal posted: "I also dedicate the victory to you of course. We are proud to represent all our brothers on the continent. TOGETHER."

The furore reflects recent efforts by the monarch to encourage closer ties with the rest of the African continent. "Africa is my home, and I am coming back home," King Mohammed VI said in 2017 as Morocco was re-admitted to the Africa Union after a 30-year absence in a row over the disputed territory of Western Sahara. This rapprochement has allowed business links to flourish, especially with West Africa.

But Morocco is also a member of the Arab League -- so officially belongs to both cultural spheres.

While the adjective "African" to describe Morocco is a geographical fact, the use of "Arab" has also alienated many Moroccans who do not identify as such.

Morocco has a substantial population of Berbers, or Amazigh as they prefer to be called -- some estimates put it at nearly 40% of the country's population of more than 34 million. One major Amazigh language -- Tamazight -- is now recognised as an official language alongside Arabic.

But this was a controversy long time in the making. Immediately after Qatar was awarded the right to host the 2022 World Cup, its media framed the event as a "Victory for Islam and pan-Arabism", as head-

line put it back in 2010.

As the tournament got under way, the vocabulary of pan-Arabism and Islamism crept back to the front. In the conflict over the ban on alcohol or the use of the OneLove armband of the LGBTQ, advocates of Islamism and pan-Arabism came to the defence of Qatar, Islam and traditional values against "the imperialist West".

But the initial framing of the event by the Qatari media as an "Islamic or Arab Conquest", which had gone largely unnoticed, provoked an angry reaction when it became part of the language of running commentary on the games.

So, when the Atlas Lions made history by becoming the first men's

team from Africa and the Middle East to qualify for the World Cup semi-final, it was hailed as a victory for the Muslim and Arab nations.

After other teams from the region -- Tunisia, Saudi Arabia and Qatar -- were disqualified early in the race, it was only natural that football lovers in neighbouring countries would rally behind Morocco.

But some vocal groups sought to portray the Moroccan success as something much larger, more ideological and political. Consequently, the Moroccan team was assigned the role of the standard-bearer of Islam and pan-Arabism.

This argument was strengthened when some of the Moroccan team's players celebrat-

ed their successes by unfurling a Palestinian flag on the pitch.

This kind of rhetoric outraged many in North Africa, but particularly among Moroccans who do not subscribe to these ideologies and their worldviews.

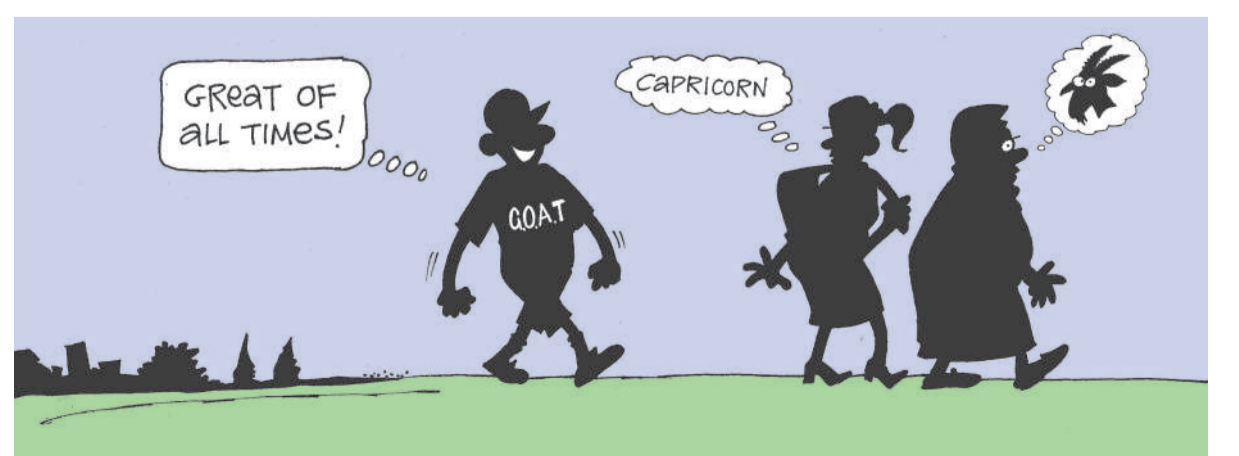
'Culture war'

In an hour-long tirade, one dissident Moroccan YouTuber blasted those who sought to politicise the game and turn it into a global culture war.

Brother Rachid also reminded his 385,000 subscribers that half of the Moroccan team, including their coach, were in fact born and bred in Europe, the children of Moroccan migrants who learned the game and became professional footballers in Europe.

BBC

Gwiji by David Chikoko



SPORT

Martinez: From fan at the 2018 World Cup to savior in Qatar

PAGE 19

5 NIRVANA
EATV THURSDAY
TO NIGHT @ 9:00
NIRVANA

NIRVANA is hip and edgy. It explores the latest trends in fashion, art, style and recreational activities. NIRVANA speaks to the trend makers, shapers and observers. It's a one stop shop for everything trendy.

11:00 DADAZ LIVE
12:00 WEEKEND MOVIE (r)
13:30 Kall za Wana
14:00 Bongo Hits
14:30 Ujenzi (r)
15:00 Funguka
15:30 Ubongo Kids (r)
16:00 Zote Kuntu
16:30 #HSHITAG
17:00 SSELECT
17:55 Kurasa
18:00 eNewz
18:30 Bongo Hits
19:00 EATV SAA 1
20:00 DADAZ (r)
21:00 NIRVANA
21:30 TOP 10
22:00 Zote Kuntu
23:00 Kurasa (r)
23:05 EATV SAA 1

eastafrica RADIO
88.1FM DAR ES SALAAM

06:00 Supa Breakfast
10:00 MAMAMIA
12:00 Kipenga Xtra
13:00 Planet Bongo
16:00 EA Drive
20:00 Kipenga
21:00 The Cruise

Singida Big Stars nearing deal for Ghanaian winger

By Correspondent Michael Mwebe

SINGIDA Big Stars are reportedly set to offer Ghanaian winger Enock Atta Agyei a chance to return to the NBC Premier League.

Singida Big Stars head coach Hans van der Pluijm is said to have given his blessing to the move.

The 23-year-old is already in Tanzania for final contract negotiation which if all goes well he returns to Tanzania for a second spell.

He started his career at Windy former Division One League Zone Two side Professionals, before moving to Ghana Premier League team Medeama SC.

He then joined Azam in the mid-season of 2016/2017.

Agyei's first spell in Tanzania football saw the best and worst of the player during three years at Azam.

The former Ghana U20 player left Azam in July 2019 to join Guinean champions Horoya.

At Horoya, he won the Guinean league title in 2021 where he played a significant role. He also helped Horoya to reach the semi-finals of the CAF Confederation Cup in the 2019/2020 campaign where he made eight appearances.

Early this year, Agyei left Horoya AC after terminating his contract due to the club's failure to pay him for four months.

In August, Al Ahly Benghazi announced they had signed the winger on a free transfer.

However, they did not finalize the deal and he has remained without a club for the past ten months until Singida Big Stars came calling for his services.

Agyei - a right-footed winger who cuts in from the left flank - joins the likes of Deus Kaseke, Kelvin Sabato, Nicolas Gyan, and James Msuva on the Singida Big Stars forward line.

Singida Big Stars are busy strengthening their roster after an impressive start to the season where they are in fourth position, seven more points than fifth placed Mtibwa Sugar.

It's understood the technical bench are keen to strengthen the team's forward line.

Apart from Agyei, they have already agreed a deal to sign left wing-back Nickson Kibabage from Mtibwa Sugar, with an announcement of the transfer expected during the Christmas period.

The ambitious Singida-based side are also among clubs said to be eyeing developments on the future of Shaban Chilunda and Ibrahim Ajib who are out of favour at Azam, according to multiple reports.

Young Tanzanian female football players to join Spanish clubs

Fountain Gate Academy of Dodoma, now becomes the first country in the region to pioneer young female footballers for Spanish soccer clubs.

The three girl soccer players from Fountain gate are Mary Aaron, Ritticia Nabobosa and Zawadi Athuman.

The girls were among the 28 young footballers recruited by Spanish soccer agents during the recently held East African Youth Soccer Tournament.

Known as Chipkizi Cup, the event, whose 13th edition was once more held in Arusha, attracted 302 teams from all over the continent.

In total, the Fountain Gate Academy produced five young promising players, the three girls and two boys.

The Fountain Gate boys who made into the Spanish

agents list are Omar Selemani and Jaffary Mwanyemba.

Speaking during the games, the Director of Fountain Gate Academy, Japhet Makau, said the girls were members of the Under-15 girls, which are currently the national champions in the category.

According to Makau, the Fountain Gate Under-15 girls are the team which is going to represent Tanzania in the Council for East and Central Africa Football Associations (CECAFA) games.

The CECAFA games for secondary schools will be taking place from January 15, next year.

Director Makau advises the Tanzania Football Federation (TFF) that the Chipkizi Cup is the perfect forum to promote and boost soccer in the country.

"We take very positively the selection of five young players from Fountain Gate to go to Spain, because it is our dream to have young people benefit from talents and secure employment from sporting activities abroad," he said.

During the Chipkizi Cup 2022, the Fountain Gate emerged winners of Under-7 boys' category, Under-15 girls and Under-20 girls categories.

Alfred Itaeli, the Director of Future Stars Academy (FSA), which organizes the East African Youth Soccer Tourney, admits that there are many agents from various clubs, including Spain that came to identify potential young footballers.

"For the first time we managed to get qualified girls soccer players, they were recruited from Foun-

tain Gate Academy," he added.

He added that there will be talks between international soccer agents and local football academies to hatch a way forward in transforming their future into profitable sports engagements.

Among the recruits were six players from Azam FC, five from Fountain Gate of Dodoma, four players from Eclat FC from DR Congo, three players from Future Stars Academy of Arusha, three players from Saint Soccer of Kenya, two players from Amarigo of Uganda and two players from JKU of Zanzibar.

Others are two players from the PE Academy from Zimbabwe and one player from the 'Idea Sports Club' of Arusha.

King Mohammed VI awards Atlas Lions with Wissams at Royal reception

RABAT

KING Mohammed VI received on Tuesday the Moroccan national football team in the Royal palace in Rabat, in recognition of their achievements in the Qatar World Cup.

Accompanied by Crown Prince Moulay El Hassan and Prince Moulay Rachid, the monarch offered Royal wissams (medals) to the players of the national team, as well as to the squad's head coach Walid Regragui for his efforts in training and successfully leading the Atlas Lions throughout the global event.

The King decorated both the President of the Moroccan Federation of Football Faouzi Lekjaa and Walid Regragui with a second class Order of the Throne Wissam (Commander).

In addition, the monarch decorated the players including Ghanem Saiss, Yassine Bounou, Achraf Hakimi, Noussair Mazraoui, Sofyan Amrabat, and Nayef Aguerd with third class Order of the Throne Wissams (Officer).

The players also include Hakim Ziyech, Azzedine Ounahi, Abdelrazak Hamdallah, Anas Zaroury, Abdelhamid Sabiri, Mounir El Kajoui, Ilias Chair, Zakaria Aboukhlal, Selim Amallah, Abdessamad Ezzalzouli, Sofiane Boufal.

Also decorated with the same Wissam were Jawad El Yamiq, Youssef En-Nesyri, Achraf Dari, Walid Chedira, Ahmed Reda Tagnaouti, Bilal El Khannous, Badr Banoun, Yahya Attiyat-Allah, and Yahya Jabrane.

King Mohammed VI, Moulay El Hassan, and Moulay Rachid then posed with the national team and their mothers for a souvenir picture. Mothers of the Moroccan players were also present at the royal reception as the King insisted on including them in the event.

The players and technical staff also presented gifts and souvenirs to the King, as thanks for his support during their run at the global tournament.

The Atlas Lions arrived at the Rabat-Sale international airport earlier today, where they were met with a huge crowd of eager fans lined up across the streets, welcoming the



King Mohammed VI alongside Morocco's national football team players and their families. (Agencies)

Moroccan squad following their fairytale World Cup run.

Armed with Morocco's flags, the national team and their head coach Walid Regragui toured across the cities of Sale and Rabat in an open bus as fans from all walks of life cheered

for them.

The royal family has been an outspoken supporter of the Atlas Lions throughout the World Cup, including King Mohammed VI who joined street celebrations after Morocco's shock win against Spain in the round

of 16.

The national team has achieved historic milestones at the global tournament in Qatar, causing euphoria across the country, Africa, and the Arab World. Morocco became the first African and Arab nation to reach the World Cup's semi-finals.

In addition, the North African team emerged as the tournament's underdogs and defied all odds, after predictions and statistics suggested that the team would not make it past the group stage.

However, the Atlas Lions achieved the unexpected as they defeated and sent home some of the tournament favorites, including Belgium, Spain, and Portugal.

Support for the Atlas Lions extended far past Morocco or Africa, with all neutrals rallying behind the team in the competition's advanced stages.

(Agencies)



Young Africans (Yanga) midfielder Stephane Azizi Ki (C) controls the ball surrounded by Coastal Union players during their NBC Premier League match held at Uhuru Stadium in Dar es Salaam on Tuesday. Yanga won 3-0. PHOTO: CORRESPONDENT JUMANNE JUMA

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