



**National Pg 3**  
1,000 Rice farmers receive sustainable agriculture training



**National Pg 4**  
Plan empowers 294,661 women to curb GBV



**National Pg 5**  
1st phase livestock DRIVE vaccination to gobble up 28bn/-



## Ngorongoro crash victim, family flown to Tel Aviv

**By Correspondent Marc Nkwame, Arusha**

Inbar Greidinger-Geisler (30) from the Israeli capital of Tel Aviv who was killed when a safari vehicle rolled over in the Ngorongoro conservation area, has been airlifted back to Israel.

Ambassador Michael Lotem, the Israeli envoy to Kenya and the East African region, said in a telephone interview from Nairobi yesterday, that the body was airlifted along with six other Israeli tourists involved in the rare tourist site accident.

"We appreciate the cooperation received from local authorities and the management of the hospitals that attended to the injured Israelis in Karatu," the envoy stated.

Greidinger-Geisler was with five family members. They were evacuated from the scene of the accident by helicopter and flown to the Karatu district designated hospital run by the Lutheran Church as well as a private medical center run by the Foundation for African Medicine

**“The accident which killed the Israeli tourist occurred near the crater viewpoint as the safari vehicle was driving back towards the Loduare entry gate**

and Education (FAME) also in Karatu.

Inbar, who was married last year to Or Gisler, happens to be the daughter of businessman Israel Greidinger and his wife Naomi, the University of Haifa library director.

She was accompanied by her husband and other family members during the trip, who were slightly injured in the accident.

The group was riding in a Toyota Landcruiser, T-450 APB operated by Wakali Safaris of Arusha, whose director Jonathan Samuel said later that the safari truck with their company's branding had been hired.

"We assisted in the process of evacuating the injured passengers who have been flown back home," he explained, with officials earlier explaining that the Israeli tourists were covered by the Harel Insurance Co.

The insurer moved into action, seeing to it that the family was evacuated by helicopter, to a local hospital for a range of injuries and facilitating an Israeli doctor being flown out to assist with treatment.

Miri Geffen Zilkha, the insurer's head

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# Samia chairs SADC security meeting over Mozambique

The United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR) sad that the facility was originally designed to house 250 people, and it now struggles to accommodate the influx, hence urgently seeking additional funding to cope with the situation



Prime Minister Kassim Majaliwa and Zanzibar Minister of Education and Vocational Training Leila Muhamed Musa (2nd L) inaugurate Makoba Secondary School located in North Unguja during events to mark the 61 years of the Zanzibar Revolution over the weekend. Photo:PMO

**By Guardian Reporter**

TANZANIA is spearheading efforts by the Southern African Development Community (SADC) to help restore peace and stability in Mozambique amidst the ongoing disturbances.

President Samia Suluhu Hassan who also serves as chairperson of the SADC organ on politics, defence and security cooperation, over the weekend led an emergency virtual meeting to see what the organ can do to help alleviate the situation.

Zambia and Malawi, as members of the SADC troika (three member committee), were present at the meeting, to discuss scenarios and inputs towards potential solutions to the crisis in Mozambique.

The leaders issued recommendations on how SADC can assist Mozambique in resolving the current political unrest, top officials said, in the wake of regional consultations the president chaired at the Tunguu State House, Zanzibar.

Ambassador Mahmoud Thabit Kombo, the Foreign Affairs and East African Cooperation minister, Dr. Stergomena Tax, the Defense and National Service minister, attended the regional consultations, assisted by permanent secretaries Ambassador Samwel Shelukindo and Dr Faraji Mnyepe for the two ministries, respectively.

Mozambique has faced political turmoil following the opposition party's rejection of results of the country's general election

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## Emergency communication plan to ease disaster relief

**By Guardian Reporter**

THE Tanzania Communications Regulatory Authority (TCRA) has developed a countrywide plan for communication through electronic networks during emergencies.

Dr. Jabir Bakari, TCRA director general, unveiled this plan at a press conference in Dar es Salaam yesterday, asserting that the national emergency telecommunications plan (NETP) was now being designed.

It is meant to identify responder and stakeholder communications capacity and requirements in all stages of disaster management, including mitigation, preparedness, response and relief, along with recovery and rehabilitation, he said.

**“This requires that service providers provide timely information when disasters strike...**

He described NETP as a strategy to combat challenges resulting from disasters and natural calamities, underlining effectiveness of stakeholder coordination and collaboration during all stages of a disaster.

Describing a disaster as an unforeseen event that causes extensive damage, destruction and human suffering, he said that such events overwhelm existing mitigation capacities.

Disaster responses include installing essential interoperable communications systems to facilitate the work of emergency response personnel, he explained.

NETP is expected to facilitate communications during rescues, he said, pointing at

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## Govt set to assess science, math, ICT teaching ability

ICT integration would make lessons more effective and help students meet their learning objectives efficiently

**By Correspondent Grace Mwakalinga**

TRAINING programmes for secondary school teachers in mathematics, science as well as information and communication technology (ICT) are slated for a comprehensive assessment.

Dr Charles Mahera, the Education, Science and Technology deputy permanent secretary announced this plan when opening a five-day training session for science and mathematics teachers and quality controllers from Simiyu and Mara regions, in Tarime yesterday.

The ministry seeks to assess the outcomes of its training programmes those

fields, with the assessment intended to involve students who will be given questions to evaluate their understanding of the subjects taught, he said.

The Secondary Education Quality Improvement Project (SEQUIP) includes various initiatives, such as continuous teacher training for science, mathematics and ICT educators, he said.

A modality is being developed to assess the impact of training on students' learning, with students asked to gauge how much they've benefited from the training provided

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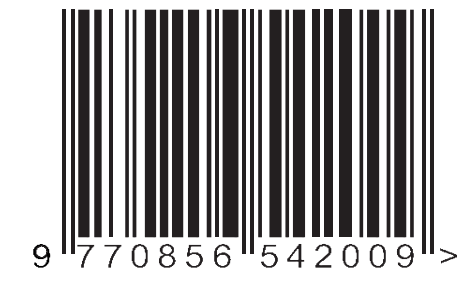
**SPORTS**



**DAVIDS OPTIMISTIC AS SIMBA SECURE HISTORIC AWAY WIN IN CAF CONFEDERATION CUP**  
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**MAN UTD BOSS AMORIM THE 'ONLY GUY UPSET' AFTER SPIRITED DRAW WITH LIVERPOOL**  
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## Samia chairs SADC security meeting over Mozambique

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held last October 9.

Thousands of Mozambicans have fled across the border to Malawi as post-election violence escalates, leaving homes destroyed and lives uprooted. Families seek refuge in makeshift camps, recounting harrowing tales of survival and loss, media outlets indicate.

An internal note handed to the meeting from Eswatini authorities, nearly 1,000 Mozambicans have

crossed the border into the tiny kingdom over the past two months. Many have found shelter at the Malindza Refugee Centre near the border, which is now overwhelmed, officials stated.

The United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR) said that the facility was originally designed to house 250 people, and it now struggles to accommodate the influx, hence urgently seeking additional funding to cope with the situation, they added.

## Govt set to assess science, math, ICT teaching ability

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ed to their teachers, he explained. "The government is investing substantial resources into this training to improve the capacity of secondary school teachers in science, mathematics and ICT, enhancing their teaching methods and fostering students' understanding and interest in these subjects," he elaborated.

The target is to train 40,000 teachers by January 2026, with 29,328 teachers already trained, contributing to improved teaching quality, he said.

"In this phase, 7,940 teachers are expected to benefit from the training, marking a significant step in enhancing the teaching and learning process," he further noted.

SEQUIP coordinator Dr Nicholas Gati reported that 85 per cent of the project's allocated funding has been successfully utilized.

The project aims to ensure quality secondary education for students, particularly girls, and improve ICT integration in education. Increasing female students' engagement in education is also a priority, he stated.

Dr. Huruma Mageni, the director of teaching, highlighted that SEQUIP has trained teachers in modern, interactive teaching methods that foster creativity and improve teaching effectiveness in the three spheres.

Eliud Myovela, a teacher at Tarime secondary school, said that ICT integration would make lessons more effective and help students meet their learning objectives efficiently.

Paulina Makolo, the quality assurance officer with the Bunda district council, was confident that the training would enhance teaching methods and increase student success in these subjects.

## Ngorongoro crash victim, family flown to Tel Aviv

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of health and foreign claims, stated that the firm sent an Israeli doctor to provide prompt and optimal medical care to the insured just as they were being flown back home.

Hamis Dambaya, communications officer for the Ngorongoro Conservation Area Authority

(NCAA) said in a statement after the accident that reckless driving by the tour van driver caused the rare mishap.

The accident which killed the Israeli tourist occurred near the crater viewpoint as the safari vehicle was driving back towards the Lodare entry gate, he stated.

## 99pc of villages connected to electricity-REA director

By Guardian Reporter

THE Rural Energy Agency (REA) has said that by the end of December 2024, 12,301 out of 12,318 villages across the country were connected to electricity, representing 99.9 per cent.

REA Director Of Rural Electrification, Jones Olotu, said this on Monday during a briefing on the status of electricity access in rural areas, ahead of the African Heads of State Energy Summit in Dar es Salaam.

"Work is ongoing in 17 remaining villages, with contractors continuing with the construction of infrastructure, and the villages are expected to be completed by the end of this month," he said.

He added that Mainland Tanzania has a total of 64,359 hamlets,

of which 33,657, or 52.3 per cent, have been connected to electricity. The remaining 30,702 hamlets are scheduled to receive electricity as part of a five-year plan.

Furthermore, the government through REA has successfully improved the lives of rural residents by creating investment opportunities using electricity services.

Tanzania is set to host the African Heads of State Energy Summit, scheduled for January 27-28, 2025, which will be attended by not less than 1,500 people from various countries.

Among the participants will be African heads of state, energy and finance ministers, ambassadors, international institutions, companies investing in the energy sector, and researchers.

## Majaliwa wants speed, value for money in execution of projects

By Guardian Reporter, Zanzibar

PRIME Minister Kassim Majaliwa has urged managers overseeing government projects to ensure the same are completed as per agreed timeline and standards that reflect value for money.

He made the call yesterday during the opening of Makoba Secondary School in North Unguja, Zanzibar, as part of the 61st anniversary celebrations of the Zanzibar Revolution.

Majaliwa highlighted the government's ongoing financial support for education sector, leading to significant improvements in access to education and the construction of vital infrastructure.

He credited Zanzibar President Dr. Hussein Ali Mwinyi for playing a key role in advancing education sector since the Zanzibar Revolu-

tion. "Under President Dr. Mwinyi's leadership, we continue to see progress in expanding access to education across the country," he said.

The PM also commended ongoing educational reforms, including the introduction of a new curriculum focused on skills development and practical learning to keep up with advances in science and technology.

Education and Vocations Training Minister Lela Mohamed Mussa reiterated President Mwinyi's commitment to the vision of the Revolution's founders, noting substantial improvements in education infrastructure, including the construction of 2,893 primary school classrooms and 1,917 secondary school classrooms. Construction of Makoba Secondary School at the cost 6.1bn/- is fully funded by the government of Zanzibar.



Zanzibar President Dr Hussein Ali Mwinyi receives explanation about construction of investment project being implemented at Bwejuu area from the project manager, Bahaedin Abdelmonem, during the groundbreaking ceremony yesterday. The event was part of the celebrations of the 61st anniversary of the Zanzibar Revolution. Photo: State House

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the recent collapse of a commercial building in Dar es Salaam and flooding in Rufiji, Coast Region and the landslide in Hanang, Manyara Region.

The plan identifies capabilities needed by emergency responders to ensure that communication services are available and interoperable before, during and after an emergency arises, he stated.

"TCRA will be flexible and expedite the issuance of licences for crucial emergency mitigation services. These include temporary licences for scarce frequency spectrum, numbering resources, electronic equipment type approval, installation and maintenance," he elaborated.

## Emergency communication plan to ease disaster relief

The main goal is to restore all telecommunications infrastructure and services affected by disasters within 24 hours, he said, urging that stakeholders conduct training and carry out drills on incident responses.

This will also enable them to identify opportunities to improve their capabilities to respond to such events, he said, pointing out that stakeholders are also required to identify, analyse and mitigate risks to emergency communications.

Risk management includes iden-

tifying critical ICT infrastructure and equipment that is exposed to natural, technological or operational disasters, he said, noting that NETP takes up emergency communications needs of all stakeholders.

These include government agencies, the private sector and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), he said, listing interoperability, interoperability and continuity as primary elements of emergency communications.

This requires that service pro-

viders provide timely information when disasters strike, he emphasised, asserting that the parties should also review, revise and update their disaster processes whenever they change their network topologies.

TCRA would review the NETP schedule every three years in response to local and global technological changes, while considering the outputs of simulations and disaster response experiences, he added.



Industry and Trade Minister Dr. Selemu Jafo (2nd L), listens to APRM Tanzania Public Relations and Communications Manager Badria Atai Masoud during his visit to their booth at the opening of the 11th International Trade Exhibition at Dimani in Unguja yesterday as part of the 61st anniversary of the Zanzibar Revolution. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

MAPUTO

MOZAMBIQUE'S opposition leader Venâncio Mondlane, who has been calling for protests for weeks from exile, has said he will return to the country on Thursday. Mondlane said he would arrive ahead of the swearing-in of a new president next week.

Daniel Chapo of the ruling Frelimo party is due to be sworn next Wednesday after a court confirmed his election victory.

But Mondlane, the runner-up, rejected the outcome, sparking violent protests that have left dozens dead since October.

Mondlane left Mozambique the same month saying he feared for his life, after two of his aides were shot dead.

In a Facebook live address on Sunday, he sent out a defiant message to the authorities saying he "will be in Maputo. They don't need to chase me anymore".

Children shot dead after joining pot-banging protests in Mozambique

## Mozambique opposition leader says to return home from exile

He said he would arrive at 08:05 local time (06:05 GMT) on Thursday at the international airport in Maputo, calling for people to welcome him there.

"If they are killing my brothers... then I will be there. You can do what you want. If you want to murder, murder. If you want to arrest, arrest too. I will be there," he said.

Mondlane maintains that he won the election and has called for more protests until there is "electoral truth".

His supporters have frequently staged violent protests across the country to demand an end to the 49-year-rule of the Frelimo party.

He has previously said he would install himself as president on 15 January - on the presidential inauguration day - despite the court upholding his rival's victory.

The electoral commission initially declared Chapo the winner of the election with 71 per cent of the vote, compared to Mondlane's 20 per cent.

The final official results from the constitutional court two weeks ago gave Chapo 65 per cent and Mondlane 24 per cent.

International election observers have previously said that the vote was flawed, pointing to doctored numbers and other irregularities during the counting process.

Security forces have sought to end the nationwide protests in a violent crackdown that has tested the country's stability.

More than 270 people have been killed, including protesters, children and members of the security forces, according to rights groups.





Director of Laboratory Services at the Geological Survey of Tanzania (GST) Notka Banteze displays architectural work for construction of national minerals laboratory to be erected in Dodoma City. Story on Page 4. Photo: Correspondent Valentine Oforo

## 1,000 rice farmers benefit from sustainable agriculture training

By Correspondent Christina Haule, Morogoro

OVER 1,000 rice farmers across Tanzania have been trained on sustainable production and use of modern agricultural tools through a capacity-building project aimed at improving rice value chain.

The project, launched in 2020 and completed in December 2024, had a budget of \$300,000 (790m/-).

Diomedes Kalisa, Project Coordinator at the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO-Tanzania), said yesterday that the initiative was implemented in collaboration with the Tanzanian government through the Tanzania Agricultural Research Institute (TARI), with funding from the Government of South Korea.

Kalisa highlighted that the project was executed in three countries: Tanzania, Ivory Coast and the Philippines and provided advanced agricultural tools to rice farmers. The tools, stationed at the TARI-Dakawa Research Centre include land preparation machinery, harvesting equipment and threshers. With a total value exceeding \$100,000 (230m/-), these tools were acquired to address challenges faced by farmers in accessing essential equipment.

"Rice is a priority crop for Tanzania, both for food security and as a key economic driver. Neighboring countries depend on Tanzania for rice supplies, making it vital to increase production for both domestic consumption and export," Kalisa stated.

Deusdedit Mbazibwa, TARI official, emphasised the importance of rice in Tanzania's strategic frameworks, including the Agricultural Sector Development Plan (SDPII), the Agriculture Plan 2050, and the National Vision 2025 and 2050. He noted that collaborations with stakeholders like FAO are critical in achieving food self-sufficiency, with Tanzania currently attaining 128 per cent food security.

TARI-Ifakara Project Coordinator Kulwa Furahisha reported the establishment of 10 demonstration

farms to train farmers who were not directly involved in the programme. The project reached 12 farmer groups from various districts, including Ifakara, Ulanga, Malinyi, Mvomero, Iringa, Dakawa and Mbarali.

Furahisha acknowledged the complexity of rice marketing, stressing the need for continued discussions with stakeholders and policymakers to address price fluctuations, particularly during periods of surplus production.

Monica Abineo, a farmer from Kilombero, expressed her gratitude for the training, which included a study tour to South Korea.

"The training covered techniques like soil testing before planting. My production has increased from seven bags to 35 bags per acre. It has ensured food security for my family and allowed me to afford my children's education," she said.

Abineo also noted that the training boosted her confidence in adopting advanced rice farming techniques and encouraging others to increase rice consumption, as it remains relatively low in Tanzania.

Nasibu Omari, Wami Dakawa irrigation scheme farmer called on the government to improve the distribution of agricultural tools to ensure better access for farmers. He credited nursery bed training for helping him increase his yield from 15 bags to 35 bags per acre, resulting in significant profits.

Omari urged fellow farmers to embrace modern farming practices and abandon traditional methods to adapt to climate change and advanced technologies. "Manual planting takes weeks, and broadcasting causes weed problems. Advanced tools improve harvests and allow for timely planting, irrigation scheduling, and proper harvesting. I also recommend using certified seeds rather than household seeds," he advised.

The initiative has demonstrated the transformative power of modern agricultural techniques in boosting productivity and ensuring sustainable rice farming for Tanzanian farmers.

By Correspondent Nebart Msokwa,

Mbeya

## TARI starts planting fruit trees for farmer education in Mbeya

TANZANIA Agricultural Research Institute (TARI) - Uyole in Mbeya Region has launched an initiative to plant fruit trees in various areas, aimed at educating farmers about sustainable farming practices.

The institute's staff began the project two days ago, planting an initial batch of 500 avocado trees. The initiative seeks to boost local economy while also enhancing environmental conservation around the institute.

Dr. Denis Tippe, TARI - Uyole Director, explained that the fruits from the trees will be used to dem-

onstrate best practices for increasing productivity to local farmers.

"We plan to expand this initiative, continuing to plant fruit trees both at the station and in other areas across the Southern Highlands region," he said.

He added: "Avocados are not just fruit-bearing trees—they also contribute to environmental protection, helping address climate change. We encourage the public to visit and learn from this project."

Daud Mbongo, fruit researcher at

TARI's, said that the institute aims to plant over 500,000 fruit trees across the Southern Highlands.

The trees will serve as demonstration farms, allowing local communities to observe and learn sustainable farming methods.

Mbongo also highlighted the institute's collaboration with various agricultural stakeholders, including researchers and fruit seedling producers, to ensure the success of the project.

"The selection of fruit trees is

based on the climate conditions of each region and the types of fruits that thrive in those environments," Mbongo said adding: "We also ensure that soil health is tested before planting, and we work closely with stakeholders to prepare and plant the trees."

Several fruit researchers and environmental experts involved in the project emphasized that, with proper care, the trees could play a crucial role in restoring degraded environments.



Embassy of Sweden  
Dar es Salaam

## EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY PROPERTY MANAGER

The Embassy is responsible for representing and promoting Swedish interests in Tanzania and has approximately 40 employees. The overall tasks of the Embassy include supporting business and trade, development cooperation as well as consular and visa services.

We would like to invite applications from suitably qualified candidates for the position of Property Manager. The job holder will report to the Head of Chancery.

### Main responsibilities:

- Oversee the daily operations of the embassy's properties, ensuring all facilities are functioning optimally.
- Coordinate with the Embassy and Swedish National Property Board for maintenance, repairs, and renovations.
- Manage property budgets, expense tracking, and financial reporting.
- Ensure compliance with local laws and regulations pertaining to property management and embassy operations.
- Serve as the primary point of contact for tenants, addressing concerns and facilitating a positive living and working environment.
- Implement and maintain security protocols to safeguard the properties and their occupants.
- Conduct regular inspections and audits to uphold property standards and embassy expectations.
- Liaise with service providers to maintain supply of services.
- Other tasks decided by the Head of Chancery.

### Qualifications, Skills and Experience:

- A minimum of 5 years' experience in property management, preferably within a diplomatic context.
- Must have advanced mechanical skills and knowledge of plumbing, electricity and other building systems.
- Degree in engineering or equivalent merits.
- Strong organizational and leadership skills, with the ability to manage multiple tasks simultaneously.
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills, with excellent proficiency in both English and Kiswahili.
- Must be able to drive and possess a license class C.
- The candidate must be able to demonstrate great time management, organization and prioritization abilities.
- A commitment to providing exceptional service and upholding the embassy's reputation.

The Embassy of Sweden in Dar es Salaam offers a competitive salary package, comprehensive benefits, and the opportunity to work in a dynamic and culturally diverse environment.

If you are interested in this exciting career opportunity, send your current CV (max. 5 pages) and one page cover letter merged into one file to **Prospect Africa**. Write "Property Manager" in the e-mail subject line. Do not send copies of certificates, letters of recommendation etc. Applications should not be sent directly to the Embassy.

**Closing date for receipt of applications: 21st January 2025**

Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted for interview. If you do not hear from us within 4 weeks of the closing date, please, assume your application was unsuccessful.

Send your application to [recruitment@prospect-africa.net](mailto:recruitment@prospect-africa.net)



## PROVISION OF INFORMATION FOR SUPPLY OF SERVICES TO M&P EXPLORATION PRODUCTION TANZANIA LIMITED (Ref. No. MP/06012025/TM/001)

1. M&P Exploration Production Tanzania Ltd. (MPEP), an upstream producer of natural gas from the Mnazi Bay gas field in Mtwara region hereby invites potential suppliers to express their interest and provide information for the supply of the following services:

### Provision of well intervention Services through Slickline

The work shall include but shall not be limited to:

- Bottom-hole memory pressure & temperature surveys with electronic quartz gauges and downhole shut-in tools, including MPLT where applicable.
- Gas-lift valve installations and replacements.
- Tubing drifting, top sediment checks, and bailer runs for sediment samples.
- Well plugging and unplugging operations.
- Setting and retrieving back pressure valves (Cameron Type H and wireline deployed - AVA).
- Sleeve opening/closing for zone changes, well killing, and related operations.
- Flow control interventions.
- Running, setting, and retrieving downhole safety valves.
- Fishing operations for Slickline tools or other downhole equipment.
- Memory Production Logging deployment using Slickline.
- Investigating tubing leaks.
- Completion assistance for tubing testing, control line installation, and related tasks.
- Well stimulation assistance.
- Investigations of well anomalies.
- Tubular punching (mechanical or chemical) and tubular cutting operations.
- Conducting caliper runs.
- Retrievable downhole safety valve installations and replacements.
- Pressure testing of facilities and equipment up to 10,000 psi.
- Redressing standing valves and plugs (Ava, Baker, Camco, Halliburton, Weatherford, Cameron, Vetco, Schlumberger, Petroline).
- Slickline-conveyed memory Radial Cutting Torch and Perforating Torch services.
- Other standard Slickline/wireline operations during well completions, clean-up, testing, and on producing/injecting wells.
- Certification, pressure, and function testing of equipment as required.
- Maintenance, repair, and proper use of the contractor's

equipment to ensure trouble-free operations.

- Provision of additional equipment, materials, and services as requested by MPEP.
- Provision of daily reports, including:
  - ✓ Detailed chronology of operations.
  - ✓ Composition and full measurements of wireline tool strings used.
  - ✓ Time breakdown.
  - ✓ Safety issues and near-miss reports (if applicable).
  - ✓ Detailed analysis of tools pulled out of the hole.
  - ✓ Records of all measured parameters.
  - ✓ Inventory of tools at the worksite.
  - ✓ Post-analysis of equipment failures or service non-compliance.
  - ✓ Maintenance and repair actions performed, along with spare parts consumption.
- 2. This call for Request for Information (RFI) marks an open, transparent, and objective tender process. The detailed scope of work will be issued to qualified bidders upon demand.
- 3. Potential suppliers must submit information to demonstrate their capability and competency. This must include but is not limited to the following:
  - a) Proof of experience preferably in the oil and gas industry and technical capability in providing well intervention services through Slickline.
  - b) Proof of financial capability, including the latest audited financial statements for the past three years and the current annual return.
  - c) Evidence of the ability to collaborate with local expertise in compliance with Local Content Regulations, 2017.
  - d) Proof of registration with local authorities in Tanzania or the country of origin, including:
    - ✓ Certificate of registration with BRELA.
    - ✓ Tax Authority certificates for TIN and VAT.
    - ✓ Valid business license.
    - ✓ Proof of registration with ERB (if applicable).
    - ✓ Regulatory licences and permits (if applicable).
    - ✓ Tax clearance certificates.
- 4. All correspondence regarding this inquiry shall be made in writing and communicated by e-mail to [procurement@tanzaniamp.co.tz](mailto:procurement@tanzaniamp.co.tz) not later than **26th January, 2025**.

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## Plan empowers 294,661 women to curb gender-based violence

By Polycarp Machira, Dodoma

AT LEAST 294,661 women and young people have been empowered through 'Mwanamke Imara' project to curb gender-based violence, strengthening their participation in leadership and governance as well as increasing their access to justice.

The three-year project which is funded by the USAID aims at addressing violence and structural discrimination against women and young people in Mbeya, Njombe and Kilimanjaro regions.

The project, which was set to end in December last year, was implemented by a consortium of Tanzania Women Lawyers' Association (TAWLA), Women in Law and Development in Africa WILDAF, Tanzania Network of Legal Aid Providers - TANLAP and Kilimanjaro Women Information Exchange Community - KWIECO.

Speaking during a review meeting, the project manager, Mary Richard, said through a number of interventions they managed to empower women and young people to overcome stumbling blocks in social, economic, political development as well as cultural life.

She mentioned a number of factors that contributed to violence against women and girls in the country including ineffective systems of accessing justice, limited access to resources and economic instability at the family level.

Other factors were outdated social norms, non-involvement of women and young people in decision-making processes, and low levels of awareness among women and young people on their rights and how to counter violence.

TAWLA's executive director Tike Mwambipile, who is a leader of the 'Mwanamke Imara' project, said they have increased women and girls' access to justice on issues based on inheritance, land and

property rights, as well as on gender-based violence.

Moreover, she said, women and young people's participation in leadership, decision-making structures and governance also increased.

The project has strengthened women and youth economic groups with enhanced access to information and control over resources by financing the women groups to undertake economic projects.

USAID project management specialist, Adam Lingson said they injected \$4million in the project for active participation of women and youths in roundtable discussion as well as to increase women's access to resources, education, information and decision making.

Opening the review meeting, Director of Gender Department in the Ministry of Community Development, Gender, Women and Special groups, Badru Rwegarulira expressed government's commitment to addressing gender based violence and other challenges facing women and youths.



**The project has strengthened women and youth economic groups with enhanced access to information and control over resources by financing the women groups to undertake economic projects**



Minister of State in the President's (Office Planning and Investment) Prof. Kitila Mkumbo (R) exchanges greetings with one of investors in Manyara Region David Mulokozi during his visit to the region yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Jaliwason Jasson

## Driver killed after head-on collision

By Correspondent Thobias Mwanakatwe, Singida

CATHIBERT Likaliko (58), a resident of Coast Region, has died instantly when the vehicle he was driving collided head-on with a bus belonging to Frester company in Singida.

The accident occurred on Saturday around 5pm at the intersection of Singida-Mwanza highway, near

the Sabasasaba area.

Singida Regional Police Commander Amon Kakwale confirmed the incident yesterday, saying that Likaliko was driving Toyota Canter, transporting goods for export, when it collided with a bus operating between Moshi in Kilimanjaro Region and Geita.

Kakwale added that according to ongoing investigation Likaliko was transporting vehicles to foreign countries, well known as IT busi-

ness.

Asha Kanpuni, Lead Nurse at Singida Regional Referral hospital, confirmed that the hospital's emergency department responded immediately to the scene and retrieved the body.

She also mentioned that there were no other reported injuries from either the bus or the other vehicle involved in the crash. Doctors later confirmed that Likaliko died from severe head injuries.

Motorcycle riders in the Sabasasaba area raised concerns over the area, saying it has become a blackspot for accidents due to drivers disregarding traffic regulations and road signs.

Elia Timothy, a local rider, explained that drivers often ignore traffic lights, leading to frequent accidents. The riders called for continuous police presence at the area to monitor reckless driving and prevent further accidents.

## GST ready to construct modern mineral laboratory in Dodoma

By Correspondent Valentine Oforo, Dodoma

THE Geological Survey of Tanzania (GST) is set to construct a state-of-the-art national mineral laboratory in Dodoma City.

The envisaged project which is set to commence next month at Kizota area is part of three major laboratory facilities that GST plans to construct in the current fiscal year.

The other two laboratories will be installed in Geita, and Mbeya regions.

In an exclusive interview here yesterday, the Director of Laboratory Services at GST Notka Banteze said GST decided to erect the facility in Dodoma to serve as the national referral laboratory for receiving mineral samples from across the country.

He stated that apart from office rooms and conference halls, the envisaged two-storey lab will comprise two major sections, including chemical and petrology, mineralogy and mineral processing.

"The major facility will also include a number of mini-labs, including mineral processing lab, geotechnical lab, geochemical lab, petrology and environmental lab in order to roll out wide services to the mining stakeholders in the country," he said.

Apart from serving local mineral stakeholders, he noted that the facility will be constructed in high standards to cater for mining stakeholders from different countries in Africa.

"Tanzania through GST has been accredited by Southern African Development Community Accreditation Service (SADCAS) as the reliable source for mineral sampling, the status which has been attracting a number of stakeholders from different countries to bring in their mineral for sampling," he said.

Banteze informed that as of December last year, GST had received mineral samples from Uganda, Kenya and Sudan.

"Last year we received an official request from the Uganda-based geological survey entity, seeking to establish formal cooperation with

GST, this is due to our excellence in the sector."

"We're also moving to expand availability of services in all zones by constructing laboratories and offices in Tanga (Muheza), Lindi (Ruungwa) and Mpanda in Katavi," he said.

He said the other labs to be erected in Mbeya and Geita regions will be installed with the latest high-tech facilities in order to give a opportunity to the small and medium and artisanal miners to professionally test their mineral samples.

The Geological Survey of Tanzania is the government agency responsible for acquisition and storage of geoscientific data and information used in mineral resources and other sectors of the economy.

GST is active in promoting mineral exploration and mining in Tanzania. Its core activities range from geological mapping, mineral exploration, evaluation and processing, and research work on geological processes and mineral systems and geo-hazards.

GST's vision is to evolve as a centre of excellence providing national geo-scientific data and information for use in the evaluation and sustainable utilization of natural resources.



**We're also moving to expand availability of services in all zones by constructing laboratories and offices in Tanga (Muheza), Lindi (Ruungwa) and Mpanda in Katavi**



Headmaster of Mufumbu Secondary School in Singida District Amani Songaraeli explains something to Singida Urban MP Mussa Sima (in black suit) after visiting construction of classrooms and dormitories for Form Five pupils at the school yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Thobias Mwanakatwe

By Guardian Correspondent, Kahama

AUTHORITIES in Kahama District, Shinyanga Region have issued a stern warning to parents and guardians who marry off school pupils, particularly those eligible for secondary school.

Legal action will also be taken against individuals hiding children with disabilities of school-going age, thereby denying them their right to education.

Kahama District Commissioner Mboni Mhita emphasised the government's zero-tolerance stance during an interview at her office yesterday.

She reaffirmed the administration's commitment to ensuring that all students who passed their primary school exams in Msalala, Ushetu, and Kahama municipalities attend secondary schools. Mhita announced the launch

## DC warns parents, guardians who marry off school pupils in Kahama

of a special operation aimed at identifying and addressing barriers preventing students from who are supposed to join secondary schools.

"Any parent or guardian who marries off children will face legal measures. The government has already created a conducive learning environment to support such students," she said.

While major progress has been made in Ushetu District Council to combat such practices like child marriage and academic sabotage, Mhita noted that the issues remain prevalent in Msalala District Council and Kahama Municipal Council, largely due to the influence of

small-scale mining activities.

"In Ngogwa and Zongomela wards in Kahama Municipality, we prevented several attempts to marry off young girls. These attempts were stopped through our ongoing operation. Let me make it clear: parents and guardians obstructing their children's education will face imprisonment," Mhita said.

Regarding preschool and grade one enrollment, Mhita confirmed that the process is underway and urged parents to ensure children with disabilities are not denied access to education.

"The government has established schools with boarding facilities for children with disabilities

to ensure inclusivity and support their educational aspirations," she said.

Richard Godfrey, a resident of Segese Ward, highlighted the challenge posed by mining areas, where some students cohabit, leading to early pregnancy.

He called on the government to intensify efforts to curb such behaviours.

Hotesea Method of Nyihogo Ward, linked child marriage to poverty, noting that some parents marry off their children in exchange for wealth, such as livestock.

He urged for stricter enforcement of the law to deter such harmful practices.



# TIC urged to enable local investors grow

By Guardian Correspondent, Babati

MINISTER of State in the President's Office for Planning and Investment, Prof. Kitila Mkumbo, has challenged Tanzania Investment Centre (TIC) to help local investors grow.

He also instructed the Tanzania Bureau of Standards (TBS) and the Fair Competition Commission (FCC) to take decisive action against counterfeit products, which harm local businesses.

Mkumbo threw the challenge here yesterday following his visit to a company owned by a local investor.

"TIC should give special attention to local investors, ensuring their needs are met and that they are adequately supported in growing their businesses," Mkumbo said.

The minister noted that local investors' operations benefit from reliable power supplied by the Julius Nyerere Hydropower Project (JNHPP) and water services from the Babati Urban Water Supply and Sanitation Authority (BAWASA).

Addressing the issue of counterfeit goods—raised by one of the local investors—the minister emphasized that the government takes the matter very seriously.

He called on TBS and FCC to clamp down on counterfeit products, stressing that their prevalence undermines the economy and hinders tax collection.

The minister also commended investors for innovative approach in improving business systems

and stressed the importance of providing job opportunities, particularly for young people, in line with the government's broader economic goals.

In response to Mulokozi's concerns regarding changes in tax laws, Mkumbo assured the businessman that a regulatory body will be established to handle investment-related issues.

He further stated that amendments to the tax laws will begin in February.



**The minister noted that local investors' operations benefit from reliable power supplied by the Julius Nyerere Hydropower Project (JNHPP) and water services from the Babati Urban Water Supply and Sanitation Authority (BAWASA)**

# Agriculture stakeholders urged to prioritise gender equality in skills

By Guardian Correspondent,

Morogoro

AGRICULTURE stakeholders in the country have been urged to prioritize gender equality when providing various trainings to ensure that women are fully engaged and educated in agricultural practices, given their significant presence in food production.

Morogoro Regional Administrative Secretary, Dr. Musa Ally Musa, made the call yesterday during the opening of a training for rice farmers from Iringa District in Iringa Region as well as Ulanga and Malinyi in Morogoro.

The training which aimed at enhancing their capacity to use modern technologies in rice farming and focused on the value chain was funded by FAO with support from Republic of Korea.

Dr. Musa emphasised the importance of delivering gender-sensitive trainings, noting that half of Tanzania's population is female, and women are often the ones working the land more than men but are less represented in training sessions.

Additionally, Dr. Musa asked Tanzania Agricultural Research Institute (TARI), in collaboration with FAO-Tanzania, to ensure that in addition to providing education on the use of better rice farming tools to improve production, they also oversee securing of reliable markets for these crops.

He pointed out that many farmers' primary concern is the lack of access to markets. When they are provided with agricultural knowledge, they should also be taught about market access, which will help boost production while ensuring guaranteed markets.

"If market access is not clearly addressed, showing the paths to reach markets, efforts in rice production could decline. Many farmers will lack markets and be left with excess rice, potentially undermining the Ministry's efforts to ensure rice farming growth in the country," he stated.

Earlier, Dr. Sophia Kashenge, Director of Technology Transfer and Relations at TARI, encouraged youth to recognize that agriculture is a growing sector, adding that the current growth rate of 4.2 percent is still small. She emphasized that agriculture should grow by 10 percent by 2030 to contribute to increased production and food security.

She noted that Tanzania's population continues to grow rapidly, and if not managed properly, this increase could outpace food production, potentially leading to conflict, as those with hunger cannot tolerate it.

She explained that Tanzania's population is growing at a rate of 3.2 per cent, a significant increase compared to Africa's 2.0 per cent and the world's 1.0 per cent, which shows that Tanzania has a high fertility rate. All strategies must focus on promoting agriculture to ensure food security.

However, Dr. Kashenge affirmed that food production in Tanzania is in good shape, with food needs at 16 million tons and production at 20 million tons, resulting in a surplus of 4 million tons.

Speaking on behalf of FAO, Dr. Diomedes Kalisa said the goal of the training was to ensure Tanzanian farmers are competitive in production. He noted that Tanzania currently ranks first in East Africa and third in Africa, after Nigeria, for rice production.

He added that the training also aimed to explore policy matters between countries and how the same could enhance rice farming alongside learning from enabling policies from countries like the Philippines and Republic of Korea to increase production and develop rice value chain.



**If market access is not clearly addressed, showing the paths to reach markets, efforts in rice production could decline. Many farmers will lack markets and be left with excess rice, potentially undermining the Ministry's efforts to ensure rice farming growth in the country**



Journalists attend a workshop for preparation of the African Heads of State Energy Summit scheduled to take place in the country later this month. Photo: Correspondent Jumanne Juma

By Guardian Reporter, Zanzibar

# Zanzibar First VP stresses access to education for all

ZANZIBAR First Vice President Othman Masoud Othman has said that infrastructure development is a clear indication that schools being built aim to expand educational opportunities and ensure no young person in Zanzibar misses the right to education.

Othman made the statement at Maungani in Magharib B District of Unguja after laying foundation stone for construction of Maungani Secondary School.

The initiative is part of celebrations marking the 61st anniversary of Zanzibar Revolution as the government addresses the shortage of classrooms in various parts of Zanzibar.

He emphasised that the

initiative not only provides a solid foundation for Zanzibar's youth in gaining education but also prepares them to contribute to the region's development.

Othman added that this development will enable young people to better compete in the current global changes, and that building schools like Maungani is part of the government's efforts to address educational challenges and promote Zanzibar's progress.

He also pointed out that Zanzibar has seen a significant increase in

population, with the 2022 census indicating a 3.7 percent annual population growth. This has led to a greater demand for educational opportunities, particularly for classroom space.

The construction of schools like Maungani reflects the government's recognition of the growing population and the need for additional classrooms, seen as a solution to the classroom shortage.

Minister for Education and Vocational Training, Leila Mohammed Mussa, explained

that the construction is part of the government's broader educational reform effort, emphasizing that investing in education is critical for any nation's development.

The ministry's Permanent Secretary, Khamis Abdalla Said, shared technical details about the school's design, stating that Maungani School will accommodate 1,710 students at a time, with an average of 45 students per classroom, and will help improve the country's education standards.



Tanzania Agricultural Research Institute Director (Uyole Centre in Mbeya) Dr. Denis Tippe plants an avocado seedling at the centre's farm on Saturday during the launch of planting of 500 avocado seedlings for the purpose of educating the public. Photo: Correspondent Nebart Msokwa

By Guardian Reporter, Zanzibar

# Investment in quality infrastructure crucial for economic growth - govt

ZANZIBAR Minister for Tourism and Antiquities, Mudrki Ramadhan Soraga, has said quality road infrastructure is one of the key economic growth for residents and the nation at large.

He made the remarks during the inauguration of Bubwini Mafufu-Kiongwe road in the North Unguja Region.

Soraga explained that robust infrastructure has greatly benefited many citizens, particularly those living near roads, providing them with business opportunities that enhance their income.

He emphasised that Zanzibar's global popularity for tourism

underscores the importance of modern, quality roads for the sector's growth.

The minister explained that Zanzibar government has made a deliberate decision to develop sustainable road infrastructure to improve the economy of its people and increase the number of tourists visiting the islands.

He added that citizens must understand that development is not tied to political rivalry but benefits everyone.

Soraga stressed that for Zanzibar's development vision to succeed, citizens must unite and collaborate with their government.

"Realistically, we must say that the government has decided to bring development to all, but this cannot be achieved unless citizens work together with the government," he said.

He also stated that building good roads is a significant opportunity and a matter of national pride, saying that citizens must take

responsibility for maintaining the roads to ensure their longevity.

Dr. Habiba Hassan Omar, Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Construction, Communications, and Transport, explained that the 4.3-kilometer road project cost \$2,485,353.65 and has now been completed.

She noted that the government is committed to building both main and internal roads to ease transportation for people in both Unguja and Pemba.



## JKI to examine heart health of busy employees at work

By Correspondent Joseph Mwendapole

THE Jakaya Kikwete Cardiac Institute (JKCI) has introduced a programme of examining heart health of its employees when at work.

This was said in Dar es Salaam yesterday by Marketing Manager of JKCI Irene Mbonde when speaking about the new service.

She said they decided to introduce the service after finding out that some employees are unable to go for their own heart health check-up due to busy schedule of their daily responsibilities.

"We have found out that many people exercise without knowing their health and some get stressed while at work; others fall and get various problems like stroke. That's why we started this programme," she said. "Many people do not come for tests because they have many responsibilities. So, if we follow them, we will make it easier for them to test their heart health while they continue with their work so

that those who are found to have problems can start treatment early before the condition advances," she said.

She said that the programme will help reduce the cost of treatment because of early detection of heart conditions hence early treatment at a low cost.

The service will be rolled out to companies, public and private institutions that need the same for their employees.

At the same time, JKCI has invited health professionals in the country to attend international conference on heart diseases expected to be held this week.

JKCI statement said yesterday that at the meeting, various topics, including treatment of heart failure using modern cath lab equipment and how to avoid such diseases will be presented.

It said other topics to be covered are cardiac diseases in children, critical care after cardiac surgery, advanced cardiac screening, major cardiovascular surgery and artificial intelligence technology in cardiac surgery.



Members of the same family who face charges of possessing 41.49 grams of cannabis, Shabani Adam (head of family-L) and his son Mussa Adam (R) leave the Kisutu Resident Magistrate's Court in Dar es Salaam yesterday after attending the hearing of the case. Photo: Correspondent Imani Nathaniel

## EWURA for adoption of clean energy to tackle deforestation in rural areas

By Correspondent Shaban Njia, Kahama

WESTERN Zone Manager for Energy and Water Utilities Regulatory Authority (EWURA), Walter Christopher, has expressed concern over the continued high use of unclean energy in rural areas compared to urban centres. He urged citizens to lead the way in adopting clean energy solutions.

Christopher made the remarks recently in Kahama District, Shinyanga Region, while opening a training session for stakeholders in clean energy. He emphasized that everyone has a responsibility to promote the use of clean energy to curb indiscriminate tree cutting.

He explained that deforestation contributes to climate change, increased temperatures and the emission of harmful gases. He called for comprehensive awareness campaigns to reach rural communities effectively.

Christopher noted that the current national agenda focuses on transitioning from dirty to clean energy, emphasizing that stakeholders should seize

opportunities to deliver clean energy solutions in rural areas. The effort would help the government implement its clean energy plans.

He highlighted that while some members of parliament have distributed free gas stoves and cylinders to residents, many users revert to dirty energy when the gas runs out due to a lack of knowledge about where to refill their cylinders. He stressed the need to educate communities about clean energy use and provide information on accessible refill points.

One of the stakeholders Deus Masasi called on the government to improve rural road infrastructure to facilitate delivery of clean energy services, citing poor roads as a major barrier.

He pledged to continue reaching rural communities and raising awareness about the importance of clean energy to support government's efforts in combating unclean energy use.

Another stakeholder, Mwajuma Abdallah, appealed to clean energy stakeholders to establish refill stations in rural areas to alleviate the challenges residents face when refilling their gas cylinders.

## Hire local youth in construction projects, TANROADS advised

By Guardian Correspondent, Same

MINISTER for Works, Abdallah Ulega, has called on the Tanzania National Roads Agency (TANROADS) to facilitate engagement of local youth in various ongoing road construction projects across the country.

He emphasised that this would provide employment opportunities, enhance skills, and boost the economy for Tanzanians.

Speaking to residents at Ndungu Ward in Same District, Kilimanjaro Region at the weekend during a ceremony to hand over of the Ndungu-Mkomazi 36km tarmac road project to the contractor, China Communication Construction Company (CCCC), Minister Ulega stated that the road's construction will resolve longstanding transportation challenges and strengthen agriculture, tourism and trade sectors.

"The government has allocated 59bn/- for this road project to economically uplift citizens. Increase the production of rice, ginger and bananas and enhance trade between Same and Tanga as well as Coast and Dar es Salaam regions," minister Ulega said.

He further urged TANROADS to supervise the project diligently and ensure the road is constructed around the clock to the intended quality standards.

"President Samia Suluhu Hassan sent me to Same to deliver this road so you can produce ginger and rice

in abundance, as she knows you are hardworking people," Ulega said.

He noted that economic activities in Same and Korogwe districts in Kilimanjaro and Tanga districts respectively are expected to thrive and called on regional and district commissioners to encourage local youth to seize opportunities arising from the construction project.

Kilimanjaro Regional Commissioner Nurdin Babu, highlighted that the road, which traverses densely populated areas, would simplify lives and unlock numerous economic opportunities for the residents of Same District.

Anne Kilango Malecela, Member of Parliament for Same East said that residents are overwhelmed with joy as the road's construction addresses one of their most significant challenges.

She added: "72 per cent of Tanzania's ginger production comes from Same. This road will ease transportation and market access for the residents."

TANROADS Chief Executive, Mohamed Besta explained that the 36km Ndungu-Mkomazi road is part of the 100.5km Same-Kisiwani-Mkomazi strategic road, which connects Tanga and Kilimanjaro regions.

Of this, 96.5km lies in Kilimanjaro, and 4km in Tanga. Its completion is expected to boost agriculture, fishing, trade, and tourism sectors in Mkomazi National Park and the Pare Mountains.

# First phase of five-year livestock vaccination to gobble up 28bn/-

By Guardian Reporter

THE government has allocated 28.1bn/- for the first phase of a five-year livestock vaccination programme set to begin this year.

To make it a success, authorities in Pangani District, Tanga Region, have launched an awareness campaign aimed at educating

residents, especially livestock keepers, on the significance of the initiative.

The campaign, which commenced at Langoni, Ubungu and Tungama villages, seeks to emphasize the importance of vaccination for both animals and the broader livestock sector.

The initiative is collaboration

between the Pangani District Council, local livestock keepers unions and experts, with a focus on diseases such as Newcastle, rinderpest and pneumonia. It will target cattle, goats and chickens.

Speaking here yesterday, Dr. Ashatu Kijaji, Minister for Livestock and Fisheries, underscored the programme's potential to

improve public health, facilitate access to international markets, and contribute to the national economy.

The first phase, which includes vaccination and livestock identification, marks a crucial step towards long-term success of the initiative which is funded through government grants.



Mtwara regional commissioner Col Patrick Sawala (R) hands over various items to children with special needs, including those from Upendo Rehabilitation Centre located at Magomeni in the region on Saturday. The assistance was provided by various stakeholders in collaboration with Mtwara regional government. Photo: Correspondent Hamisi Nasri

By Guardian Correspondent, Shinyanga

AMBULANCE drivers in Shinyanga Region have been warned against speeding when not transporting patients.

Shinyanga Regional Administrative Secretary Salum Hamduni, issued the warning during a ceremony where four ambulances, a vaccination vehicle and 10 motorcycles were handed over to the region's district medical officers.

Hamduni stated that many emergency vehicle drivers have been driving at high speed even when no patients are aboard, which he described as a violation of traffic laws and regulations.

"These ambulances are for emergency use; so, if there are

## Ambulance drivers warned against speeding without patients on board

no patients or trips to pick up patients, drivers must drive slowly and follow all road safety rules," he said.

He emphasized that adhering to the rules would help avoid road accidents, protect other road users and ensure that emergency vehicles remain in good condition to serve patients for longer.

Hamduni warned that drivers deliberately damaging ambulances by ignoring traffic laws would face consequences.

The ambulances will be distributed to Msalala, Ushetu,

Kishap, and Shinyanga councils while the vaccination vehicle will remain at the Regional Medical Officer's office.

Regarding the motorcycles, one will be given to Kahama Municipality, one to Shinyanga Municipality and Msalala, Shinyanga DC, Kishapu, and Ushetu districts will get two each. The motorcycles will be used for vaccination outreach.

Hamduni also cautioned district medical officers to ensure that the motorcycles are used as intended and not for other purposes.

Acting Regional Medical Officer for Shinyanga, Faustine Mlyutu, explained that the vehicles were provided by the Ministry of Health and the President's Office (Regional Administration and Local Government) and would greatly improve healthcare service delivery in the region.

Dr. Nuru Yunge, District Medical Officer for Shinyanga, highlighted that the ambulance and motorcycles would significantly improve healthcare delivery, given the high demand for ambulances in the district.



## Govt bans meetings, food vending to curb cholera outbreak in Bunda

By Guardian Reporter, Mwanza

HEAVY rains in Mara Region have led to a cholera outbreak at Mekomariro Village, Bunda District, prompting immediate government action to contain its spread.

Salum Mtelela, Bunda District Administrative Secretary and Chairman of District Health Committee confirmed here yesterday that poor sanitation and reliance on unsafe water sources such as ponds are the primary causes of the outbreak. Many households lack proper toilets, exacerbating the situation.

In an emergency meeting, the committee resolved that local and district leaders must ensure residents construct and use appropriate toilets by January 10, 2025. Additional measures include a ban on non-essential gatherings at Mekomariro Village and suspension of food services at funerals, markets, and food stalls starting January 4, 2025.

"The committee has also tasked water authority with improving water services in the area, inspecting water sources and treating them as needed," Mtelela stated.

He emphasized the ongoing need for public education on hygiene and environmental cleanliness to prevent further spread of the disease.

"Residents must maintain proper hygiene in their surroundings and food handling practices to safeguard their health," Mtelela said.

Tanzania has been grappling with a significant cholera outbreak since September 2023, affecting 18 regions. As of April 2024, over 2,500

cases and 46 deaths have been reported, making it one of the country's most severe outbreaks in decades.

Simiyu, Shinyanga and Mwanza are among the hardest-hit regions. While the Ministry of Health's interventions have led seven regions to declare an end to the outbreak, 12 regions continue to face active cases.

In April 2024, the United States, through USAID, partnered with Tanzania to combat the outbreak, supporting efforts to control the disease and mitigate its impact on affected communities.

The World Health Organization (WHO) has underscored the critical role of community engagement in controlling cholera. Public education campaigns promoting hygiene, access to clean water and improved sanitation have proven essential in saving lives.



**Residents must maintain proper hygiene in their surroundings and food handling practices to safeguard their health**

## M23 group takes over key town in DR Congo

KIGALI

REBEL forces backed by Rwanda have captured the town of Masisi in the east of the Democratic Republic of Congo, according to various reports.

This is the second town seized by M23 group in as many days in the mineral-rich North Kivu province.

The group has taken control of vast swathes of eastern DR Congo since 2021, forcing hundreds of thousands of people to flee their homes.

Angola has been attempting to mediate talks between President Félix Tshisekedi and his Rwandan counterpart, Paul Kagame. But these broke down last month.

"It is with dismay that we learn of the capture of Masisi centre by the M23," Alexis Bahunga, a member of North Kivu provincial assembly, told the AFP news agency.

He said this "plunges the territory into a serious humanitarian crisis" and urged the government to strengthen the capacity of the army in the region.

One resident told AFP that the M23 had held a meeting of the town's inhabitants, saying they had "come to liberate the country".

The Congolese authorities have not yet commented on the loss of the town.

Masisi, which has a population of about 40,000, is the capital of the territory of the same name.

It is about 80km (50 miles) north of the North Kivu provincial capital Goma, which the M23

briefly occupied in 2012.

On Friday, the M23 captured the nearby town of Katala.

Last year, there were fears that the M23 would once again march on Goma, a city of about two million people.

However, there was then a lull in fighting until early December when fighting resumed.

In July, Rwanda did not deny a UN report saying it had about 4,000 soldiers fighting alongside the M23 in DR Congo.

It accused the Congolese government of not doing enough to tackle decades of conflict in the east of the country. Rwanda has previously said the authorities in DR Congo were working with some of those responsible for the 1994 Rwandan genocide against ethnic Tutsis and moderate Hutus.

The M23, formed as an offshoot of another rebel group, began operating in 2012 ostensibly to protect the Tutsi population in the east of DR Congo which had long complained of persecution and discrimination.

However, Rwanda's critics accuse it of using the M23 to loot eastern DR Congo's minerals such as gold, cobalt and tantalum, which are used to make mobile phones and batteries for electric cars.

Last month, DR Congo said it was suing Apple over the use of such "blood minerals", prompting the tech giant to say it had stopped getting supplies from both countries.



Senior assistant commissioner of Prisons Service (Agriculture, Livestock, and Environmental Conservation, Daimu Mmolosho (4th R), along with others, stand ready for a tree planting exercise at Msalato Ward in Dodoma Region yesterday. A total of 1,500 trees were planted. Photo: Correspondent Peter Mkwavila

## RC orders surveillance cameras on buses to control child abuse

By Guardian Correspondent, Njombe

NJOMBE Regional Commissioner Anthony Mtaka has directed private primary schools in the region to install surveillance cameras on school buses to curb child abuse.

RC Mtaka issued the directive over at weekend during a meeting involving regional security committee, stakeholders and various government leaders held at Njombe Municipal Council hall.

Mtaka noted that there have been incidents of abuse on school buses, which parents often discover only

after their children have been harmed.

"These are the cases where you are told that the first child is picked up at 5am, and they are with the driver and conductor. The last child is returned home at 6pm and they are also with the driver and conductor. Some children have been victims of serious buses on school buses," Mtaka said.

He emphasized that he does not expect school owners to complain about the costs of installing cameras as the measure will help ensure safety of children.

"When a child complains, we will check the footage captured by the cameras. My instruction Regionla Education Officer (Nelasi Mulungu) is to write a letter to all private schools in Njombe Region with school bus services instructing them to install cameras to assure parents that their children are safe," he said.

He added that with the advent of technology, there is no excuse not to use cameras to eliminate the blame game between parents and schools.

Additionally, Mtaka called on re-

ligious leaders to play a key role in addressing the rise in abuse cases, urging them to help change the people's mindset.

"We must raise our voices in places of worship; Njombe community must change. We have deviated and as religious leaders you must remind people of Njombe that murder and gender-based violence are not acceptable. Let us speak up and make our voices heard," he said.

He stated that to eliminate the issues, the community must work together and continuously educate the public through the media.



A chicken vendor at Dondwe Chanika area in the outskirts of Dar es Salaam city carries chickens to the vending stall at the weekend. Photo: Correspondent Jumanne Juma

## China's development good opportunity for Africa, says former Nigeria president

By Olatunji Salu, Abuja

CHINA'S transformation over recent decades is "a source of inspiration and opportunity for Nigeria and Africa," former Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo has said, emphasizing the potential for strategic collaboration to accelerate mutual growth and development.

In a recent interview, Obasanjo expressed great admiration for China's development while reflecting on his recent visit to the country in October 2024.

"China changes every time you

go there," he said, underscoring the country's "capacity for innovation and adaptation," which he believes Nigeria can learn from.

"If it has been done in China, it can be done elsewhere," the former president said.

Obasanjo said there are many lessons Nigeria can take from China's development, highlighting China's unique role in fostering global peace, shared prosperity, strategic partnerships, and poverty alleviation.

He added that these achievements demonstrate China's ability to transform its society and

its potential to contribute to global development.

China has lifted 800 million people out of poverty, "a feat unparalleled in world history," he said, lauding Beijing for its willingness to share its experience and help other developing nations "learn how to fish," which he sees as essential for empowering nations to create their own wealth.

As Africa's most populous nation and leading economy, Nigeria has much to gain from a deeper partnership with China, Obasanjo said, noting the elevation of China-Nigeria ties to a comprehensive

strategic partnership in September 2024 will help promote trust and mutually beneficial outcomes.

He said the China-proposed initiatives like the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) offer immense opportunity for Africa to boost intra-African trade and infrastructure development.

With over 150 nations and over 30 international organizations involved, the BRI aims to enhance global connectivity and trade, he said, noting that improved communication and transportation networks are critical for developing the African

continent.

While responding to concerns about China's expanding global influence, Obasanjo said that China's engagement with Africa is based on strategic cooperation, not exploitation.

"Strategic relationships mean mutual benefit, economically, diplomatically, and technologically," he said, calling on Nigeria to harness its agricultural and mineral resources to drive industrialization and value addition as part of this partnership. "Fair trade, not aid, is the way forward," Obasanjo stressed.

The former president emphasized the importance of leadership in promoting unity, harmony, and shared prosperity. He underlined the need for equity, justice, and inclusivity at all levels of governance, warning that a world without these principles would be "dangerous for everyone."

Looking ahead, Obasanjo expressed hope that Nigeria and China, by strengthening their partnerships and embracing fair trade, could jointly create a more secure, equitable, and prosperous world.



## Monopoly explains lack of filling points for CNG fuel

**D**ISQUIET is starting to be audible on the discrepancy between the much awaited fuel use shift to compressed natural gas (CNG) and converting filling stations for the purpose. The effort seems to be directed at building new facilities rather than making an effort to convert existing fuel station chambers to offer alternative fuel. The matter is not being discussed much but it is unlikely to be complicated, for short of some special additional apparel, the two substances just rhyme anatomically.

The relatively noticeable motorists (said to be around 5,000) who have rectified their engines to using gas find it difficult to obtain services. Earlier there were short queues as there were just a few hundred and with thousands already shifting to gas, the problem is increasingly noticeable. It is one of those problems that should not have been there in the first place, as we have had more than five years to prepare for a fuel use shift.

One writer profiling the situation was at least visible for one thing, that his outlook reflected the majority's comprehension of the situation. He saw the shortage of fueling points as natural (as new technological need) and the monopoly agency building gas use fuel stations as the frontline stakeholder in sorting out the situation. Many would see things differently, as the tone with that effort is construction of gas use fuel stations, directly.

As fuelling by natural gas is projected to be the future in 10 years or more, this trajectory implies

that a public agency builds new fuel stations and the private sector petrol and diesel stations move towards closure. There seems to be an underlying interest in reaching that kind of situation, as there is no appeal whatsoever to the private sector to convert petrol and diesel stations or portions of them for gas use. It is as if this sort of conversion is not possible, while car engines are converted to the use of natural gas; anatomically the same mechanism ought to apply.

Talk on the issue is enthralled in the usual public sector agenda framing of issues, saying that the situation here is comparable to Nigeria and other African nations, where Tanzania increasingly embraces CNG for its environmental benefits and affordability. But it faces considerable setbacks as filling stations are not anywhere near enough, and it is not apparent that conventional stations are being primed to convert to natural gas at least in part. It appears to be a non-crisis but willed shortages.

While not seeking the private sector to create more gas fueling points, and remains at a snail's pace in building CNG fuel stations, the idea appears to push for a large subsidy to build such stations. The reason is simply that each major parastatal organisation wants the government to plan strategic projects and obtain funds for the major parastatal to implement such plans. The best example is Air Tanzania, SGR and TRC, BRT and expectations that the government would finance a new fleet of buses at least in part, thus CNG shift begets subsidy to TPDC.

## Technical skills capacity not the same thing as leadership

**T**RADITIONALLY, social studies make a keen difference between professional capacity, where one carries out tasks that are assigned within an organisation, and leadership, where a person makes moral choices, often with contending technical explanations or justifications. This is one among the sort of questions that come up when one hears that the Tanzania Public Service College (TPSC) has conducted special training to impart executive officials at the Institute of Rural Development Planning (IRDP) with professional leadership skills. Is it valid?

The answer will for many people be yes, for the reason that leaders or higher officials in an organisation are generally picked for their skills, and other issues resolved by habit, moulded by an office after one has taken over. It was for instance said that the leadership training took three consecutive days, appearing to be a fairly long time to the casual viewer who filed the report. It reminds one of a radio clip where an individual questions the idea of a purchasing course, perhaps the same as procurement, lasting three years. Just what does one learn to buy (no difference with purchasing, procuring) for three years, which the questioner finds odd. It is all in feelings.

These are contrasting perspectives in society showing what we seem to all know or think we know, and what one or other group of professionals seeks to do in this situation either to achieve set goals or at least to earn recognition of work done in a certain direction. As the sort of officials being trained are in the first instance trained to officiate courses and other positions in a degree level institution, the leadership skills that could be of relevance seem to be related to procedure and the law, largely.

The IRDP rector viewed the received training as key to propel

professionalism among the varsity's leaders, by taking up a number of key areas targeting to improve daily performance. One of these areas was stated as leadership management and another was working relations with other institutions. Yet in all these areas there are precise job description for individuals and mission statements, periodic goals for institutions. More is to an extent gleaned into when integrity, discipline, communication at work places and protocol are raised, mostly learned by habit.

Issues like emotional intelligence that needs to be embraced by leaders and staff of any institution is perhaps a bit specialized, but not a far cry from what we routinely meet at workplaces. In the first place each person has specific character, while each employee has a job to keep. So while at a commercial enterprise the customer is king since effort is needed to ensure that such person comes back so that the service provision has a chance to be sustainable, at work an employee is not king. Actually the opposite is true, so that institutional objectives can be realized.

One feature of leadership orientation since the early days of independence is the tug of war between 'colonial' attitudes and presumed popular outlooks that leadership ought to have. When the latter values are emphasized enough, laxity is the rule and hardly anyone can point at wrongdoing. When a dispensary is built in an incompetent way, it often needs the prime minister in person to visit, inspect and say so, or if a road is substandard, it needs the minister to go there and order it to be redone. There is fear among executives on enduring hatreds if one says anything bad about what another official is doing, which paralyzes proper leadership. For decades the anti-corruption bureau used to lay traps on officials, never once investigating real bribes...

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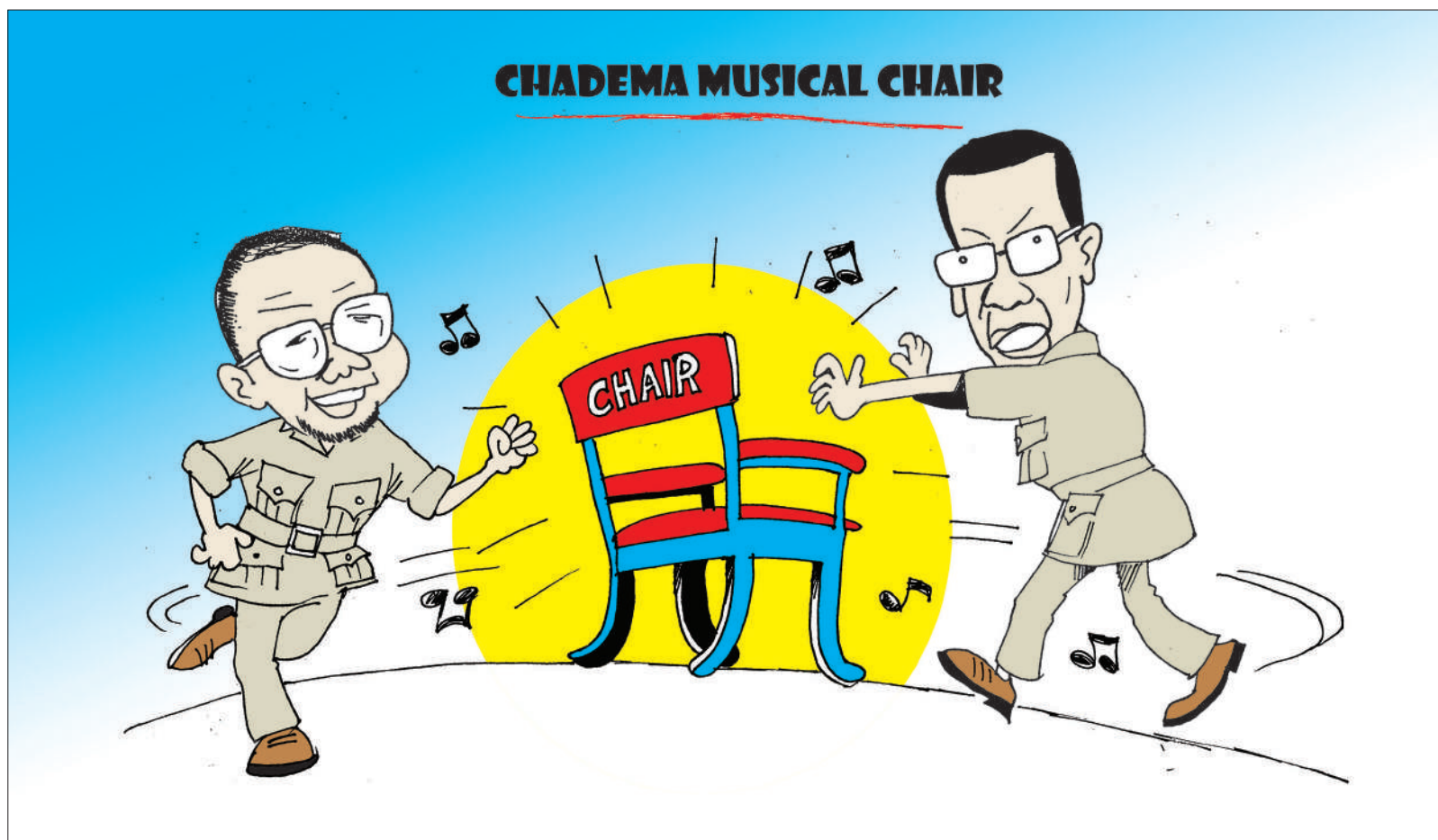
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By Special Correspondent

**L**IBERIA, a nation proud of its democratic strides, is once again grappling with a constitutional crisis that threatens the very fabric of its governance and social cohesion.

The dispute within the House of Representatives, coupled with the recent violent dispersal of peaceful protesters, underscores a troubling disregard for the rule of law and the principles of democracy enshrined in the Liberian Constitution.

At the heart of the crisis is a divided House of Representatives, split into two factions: the "Majority Block," which has elected Representative Richard Koon as Speaker, and the "Minority Block," led by the legitimately elected Speaker, J. Fonati Koffa.

The majority block's refusal to attend sessions under Speaker Koon and its decision to hold parallel sessions presided over by Koon flagrantly violate Articles 33 and 49 of the Constitution.

The supreme court has already ruled that any action or sitting by members of the Legislature contrary to these constitutional provisions is ultra vires, beyond the powers granted by law, and, therefore, null and void. Yet, the defiance persists, creating a dangerous precedent that undermines the authority of the Judiciary and the rule of law.

This situation is more than a political impasse; it is a constitutional crisis with far-reaching implications. When lawmakers, the very individuals entrusted to uphold the Constitution, flout its provisions, public trust in the institutions meant to safeguard Liberia's democracy erodes.

Against this backdrop of political turmoil, concerned citizens exercised their constitutional right to peaceful assembly on December 17, 2024. Their protest, a call for lawmakers to respect the rule of law, was a necessary and timely reminder that power resides with the people and that governance must align with constitutional principles. However, the response of the Liberian National Police was deeply troubling. The decision to disperse the protest using tear gas, force, and arrests—under the pretext of accommodating the President's visit to sign a book of condolence for the late Vice President, was a gross overreach.

The police cited the President's visit as the justification for dispersing the protesters, using tear gas and force. This decision suggests that the President's safety and movement were prioritized

## A nation in crisis: The rule of law vs political chaos

over the citizens' right to peaceful assembly. While protecting the President is legitimate, the aggressive suppression of the protest undermined the credibility of this rationale, leading to public outcry.

A president is not compelled to personally attend any location if the risks outweigh the benefits, especially when tensions are high. Other arrangements, such as signing the book of condolence at an alternative location or rescheduling, could have been explored to prevent the clash.

The decision to proceed despite the protest reflects either a disregard for the volatile situation or a deliberate act, which critics could interpret as an attempt to confront or overshadow the protest.

While the loss of a statesperson warrants respect, it cannot be used as a justification to suppress constitutionally protected rights. The violent suppression of peaceful protest is not only a violation of fundamental human rights but also an affront to the memory of the late Vice President, whose legacy should inspire unity, not division. Liberia stands at a crossroads. The ongoing legislative crisis and the police's heavy-handed actions highlight systemic challenges that demand immediate attention.

The right to peaceful assembly is sacrosanct. The Government must investigate the police's actions during the December 17 protest, hold those responsible accountable, and ensure such abuses do not recur. Both the legislature and the executive must demonstrate a commitment to the rule of law and constitutional governance. This includes fostering dialogue, upholding judicial decisions, and prioritizing the people's interests over political ambitions.

Liberia's history is a testament to the resilience of its people and institutions. However, resilience alone is not enough. Leaders at all levels must rise above partisan divides and act in the national interest. The current crisis is a test of Liberia's democracy. It is a moment for reflection, courage, and decisive action to reaffirm the principles that bind the nation together. The rule of law must prevail, and the voices of the people must be heard, for Liberia's democracy to endure

and thrive.

It is difficult to comprehend conclusively whether the President was forced or compelled to attend the location of the protest on December 17, 2024. However, the circumstances surrounding his visit to the Capitol Building, where the protest was taking place, raise valid questions about timing, intent, and the resulting escalation of tensions.

The president's visit to the Capitol Building was reportedly to sign the book of condolence for the late Vice President, a solemn and necessary act of national leadership. However, this event coincided with a highly publicized and ongoing protest at the same location, known to have been planned weeks in advance. The timing raises questions about whether the President could have rescheduled or relocated this symbolic act to avoid escalating tensions.

Some protesters accuse the President of aligning with the so-called majority block, which has unconstitutionally elected Richard Koon as Speaker. This perception, whether accurate or not, complicates the President's presence near the protest, as it could be interpreted as a show of support for one faction over the other.

The book of condolence for the late Vice President is an important ceremonial gesture, but it was not an urgent or time-sensitive matter that required immediate attention at the protest site. By proceeding with his visit despite the ongoing protest, the President effectively prioritized his symbolic act over the citizens' constitutional right to peaceful assembly.

The president had an opportunity to show leadership by engaging with the protesters or addressing their concerns. Instead, his decision to proceed with a ceremonial event sent a message that their grievances were secondary to his agenda.

Given the accusations that the President is aligned with the majority block in the Legislative crisis, his actions appeared to dismiss or undermine the concerns of citizens protesting in defense of constitutional governance. This perception, whether accurate or not, further alienates citizens and erodes trust in President Bokai's leadership.

Article 17 of the Liberian Constitution guarantees the right to peaceful assembly. The forceful dispersal of the protest to accommodate the President's visit constitutes a breach of this fundamental right. The use of tear gas, physical force, and arrests inflicted harm on citizens exercising their rights.

This not only endangered their physical well-being but also created an atmosphere of fear and intimidation, discouraging future expressions of dissent. In a democracy, the government is expected to prioritize the interests and rights of its citizens, even when those citizens are critical of its actions. By failing to do so, the President weakened public confidence in the administration's commitment to democratic values.

While the president may not have been forced or compelled to go to the Capitol Building, his decision to proceed amid a volatile protest was, at best, a lapse in judgment and, at worst, a calculated political move. Regardless of intent, the visit and its aftermath have fueled public perception of bias and insensitivity toward the citizens' grievances. Leadership in such moments requires sensitivity, tact, and a commitment to de-escalation, qualities that appear to have been lacking in this instance.

THE PRESIDENT'S ACTIONS during the December 17, 2024, protest at the Capitol Building, particularly his decision to proceed with signing the book of condolence at the same site, strongly suggest that his interests may have been prioritized over the rights and welfare of the citizens. The President's decision to proceed with his visit to the Capitol Building during the protest placed his personal and symbolic interests above the rights and welfare of the citizens.

This decision escalated tensions and undermined public trust in his leadership. Leaders must demonstrate a balance between asserting authority and respecting the rights of the people they serve. In this case, the President's actions leaned heavily toward the former, at the expense of constitutional rights and public welfare. This incident serves as a stark reminder of the need for greater sensitivity, accountability, and prioritization of citizens' rights in governance.



# Concern as financial strain on parents, teachers threatens access to education

By Adonis Byemelwa

**A**FTER the festive season of Christmas and New Year's celebrations, many parents find themselves grappling with financial challenges. January, often referred to as a "crunch month," brings with it the burden of paying school fees, a daunting task for many families.

In major cities like Dar es Salaam, Mwanza, and Arusha, the situation tends to be even direr, with some families resorting to loans or borrowing from community savings groups (Vikoba) just to ensure their children return to school on time.

It is clear that while parents stretched their budgets to cover the festivities, paying for school fees often becomes a major challenge. "We end up spending every last penny celebrating Christmas, without thinking about the looming costs of sending our children back to school," says one parent from Dar es Salaam.

The lavish spending on holiday clothes, family outings, and social events often distracts from the reality that school fees and other educational costs are right around the corner.

Despite the government's push for free education, which has removed direct school fees for primary and secondary schools, other financial demands such as parental contributions for school supplies, transportation, and additional fees still pose significant challenges, particularly for poorer families. This is especially difficult for families in rural areas and smaller towns, where the economic situation is more precarious.

A Dar es Salaam based teacher-Lasuli Ikizu points



Lecturers and graduates attend a graduation ceremony at Saint Augustine University on December 21st 2024. Photo: Guardian Correspondent.

out: "This year has been tougher than most. Parents are scrambling to find money for fees, and many cannot manage. It's a difficult time for many of us. Even we as teachers face delays in salary payments, especially in private schools where fee payments are often delayed, affecting our livelihoods."

Ikizu goes on to explain that, although schools have a budget for paying teachers throughout the year, financial constraints often delay these payments, particularly after the festive season. "When January comes, we face significant challenges. Even when the school has a yearly budget for salaries, sometimes our payments are delayed due to financial issues, and this affects many families."

This is a widespread issue

affecting teachers in both urban and rural areas, many of whom complain about delays in salary payments. While many schools require additional contributions for things like school supplies, reams of paper, and field trips, parents find themselves contributing more money just to ensure their children can attend classes.

"This has become a normal occurrence. Parents are expected to pay for school supplies, and sometimes they also have to pay for field trips that have high costs. This is a challenge for many parents, especially those from low-income families," says Anjela Mwasu, teacher from Mwanza Region.

In cities like Dar es Salaam, Mwanza, and Arusha, parents are struggling to pay school fees and other educa-

tional expenses. "This problem happens every year, but this year it's worse. We've encountered many families who need loans just to send their children back to school. It's a tough time for many parents, and it requires urgent solutions," says Teacher Amani Ngowi from Arusha.

Many parents agree that while the free education policy has eliminated school fees, other costs still create a significant barrier. International studies show that in many countries, the financial burden of education remains a heavy weight on poor families, preventing many children from realizing their right to education.

In countries like Zambia and Tanzania, many parents work hard to find ways to pay for school fees and other educational expenses, but

they often find themselves unable to manage. Despite government efforts, the cost of education remains high.

"We continue to face financial challenges. Private schools demand higher fees, and while government schools are free, many parents choose to send their children to private schools because of the better services offered," says Mwasu.

For many parents, financial challenges have led them to move their children from public to private schools. Even though public schools offer free education, the quality of service is often questioned.

"Many parents send their children to private schools because they receive better services. However, this is a financial issue, as not every parent can afford those

fees," explains Ngowi.

As financial pressure mounts, some parents have even resorted to taking out loans from informal savings groups to ensure their children can attend school. A parent from Dar es Salaam, who preferred to remain anonymous, shares, "The financial situation has become difficult for many parents. We've been using loans from Vikoba just to meet school costs. While our children love going to school, it's hard to find enough money to pay fees and cover other educational expenses."

This financial strain is a growing problem, with some children being able to attend better schools, while others are left behind due to a lack of funds. This exacerbates the gap between children from wealthy families

and those from poorer backgrounds, making it more difficult for the latter to access quality education. Parents across the country are lamenting the challenges, with many unsure of how to resolve the financial constraints that affect their children's education.

The issue of financial hardship in education calls for a deeper conversation, particularly in low-income communities, where the cost of schooling is a major obstacle preventing children from pursuing their dreams. Parents, teachers, and school owners must work together to find better solutions to ensure that all children can access quality education without financial barriers.

While the government has made significant strides in providing free education, it is clear that much more needs to be done to address the underlying financial barriers that continue to prevent many children from receiving an education. The issue of school fees and related costs remains a major concern, particularly in light of the growing divide between public and private schools.

A recent statement by Professor Costa Mahalu, Vice Chancellor of Saint Augustine University, highlighted the magnitude of the problem at the institution.

During the 27th Graduation Ceremony in Mwanza, he did not shy away from addressing the challenges facing the institution and its students. He revealed that over 647 students, representing 17.3% of this year's graduating cohort were unable to complete their studies due to financial constraints or other hardships.

"This is a call to action for the government and stakeholders to ensure that every deserving student has access to the resources they need to complete their education. Many of these dropouts are bright minds who could have gone on to achieve postgraduate success if not for poverty," he emphasized.

## Pros and cons of registering numerous apps for e-commerce

By Guardian Correspondent

**T**RADITIONAL opinion making on economic activity in the country has a rule, the more the better, a major relic of planned economy where everything that is placed on the ground is an additional input in driving towards economic success.

That isn't forcibly true in a competitive market economy, as here too many goods of the same type chase fewer buyers, or too many service providers chasing fewer users. E-commerce faces this scenario.

That is why acclamations on strides that the telecommunications sector is making, while true and exciting, have a way to leave what they at times say is a dry taste in the mouth.

Yes, no doubt that strides are being made in basic infrastructure to support the physical delivery of items purchased in electronic commerce, but that is all there is to it. A total of 146 apps were registered or obtained the regulatory go-ahead to engage in service provision.

Those in charge were enthusiastic with how infra-

structure to promote high-speed internet services and robust payment systems was being put up, on a daily basis. While the regulator sees these initiatives as key prerequisites for a thriving e-commerce sector, observers worry that there is more of offer than demand in a vast number of commercial subsectors.

There are many glittering shop frames and new ones coming up, such that one wonders if they really notice numerous customers, etc.

The regulator says that the policy and regulatory frameworks have addressed most enabling factors for e-commerce, which is evidently the case. What the report did not say was just how much business is being done, though admittedly that ought to come under Trade and Industry rather than Communications.

There are auxiliary reports though, like the chipped in datum that the residential address innovation is helping the postal corporation inch up business, faster than the various other apps.

Posts appear to be able to



cultivate an image of reliability as a public agency where complaints can be made, a weakness that started to be noticed with a range of supposed e-commerce service providers.

Surprisingly, the regulator has scarcely ever released data on e-commerce non-deliveries after payment was issued in due and proper form. It is vital that a digital system is developed showing which vehicle was tasked with transporting purchased goods, where other ID data will be available as well.

Registering apps for e-commerce is indeed the easier part, while there is the issue of rising demand to relate to the higher number of business seek-

ers. This relates to other spheres of economy like new investments or levels of profit being made in various spheres, and thus disposable incomes at household levels. Things aren't bad in this sphere either, as readiness to provide e-commerce utility shows considerable layouts, usable surpluses.

While there is indeed a rosy future that is emerging for e-commerce owing to rising aggregate incomes (as different perhaps from strict average personal incomes) all isn't just a highway to success. There are two categories of those who make investments, those who actually wish to make a living from such investment on

the basis of a modicum of savings (depending on the social stratum presumed, evidently), and those who wish to increase their savings fairly quickly.

E-commerce investors are likely to be similarly divided, those who need quick profits and those who can sit out grey days until the market really improves.

Traditionally there have been slumps in the market a few years after too many investors take to a certain sphere of investments. The last time a big slump was noticed globally was the 'dot-com' stock exchange collapse at the turn of the century, which sort of mirrors the current spate of registrations for e-commerce apps, by thousands of people.

Chances are that they are mainly those who seek a business opening rather than placing their fortunes or savings into a business so as to make a living, as with rentals.

The point at issue is that the country is experiencing technical modernization at a rather fast pace, while its overall structure in production and commercial activities remains fairly traditional. There is a modicum of success noticed at different periods, where new avenues of commerce spring up in tandem with market movements, here tied up especially with public sector consumption patterns.

**There are many glittering shop frames and new ones coming up, such that one wonders if they really notice numerous customers, etc.**

Those linked with the government and hundreds of public companies are easily the most important segment of the economy, with the private sector living on its wings, as its prosperity is tied more with transactions conducted with public agencies than within the private sector as such.

In the past decade the most visible collapse of an investment penchant was the building of hotels and guest houses, as well as flourishing catering and restaurant businesses, to which were attached astronomical land values on prime plots - or indeed anywhere in key urban centres.

The curtain fell with the blink of an eyelid if one could say so, as within six months government expenditure had shifted from 74 per cent recurrent and 26 per cent development (or capital) expenditure, to 61 recurrent and 39 development expenditure. Most front space catering had to be redesigned; new investments go to shop frames, not hotels.

The difference with the collapse in 2016 is that catering or hospitality is tied up with rental space use, which can be shifted or converted to other uses.

E-commerce applications are a local version of the 'dot-com' scenario, as its presence is on the internet and tied up with public demand for certain types of services. Still, unlike the catering or hospitality businesses of old, e-commerce apps don't seem to be a means of life for those who front them; hoping to make some money, not rely on them.



# After bruising election loss: What next for Kamala Harris?

By Courtney Subramanian

**E**XACTLY two months after her election loss to Donald Trump, Vice-President Kamala Harris will preside over the certification of her own defeat.

As president of the Senate, on Monday she will stand at the House Speaker's rostrum to lead the counting of Electoral College votes, officially cementing her rival's triumph two weeks before he returns to the White House.

The circumstances are painful and awkward for a candidate who decried her opponent as an urgent threat to American democracy, but Harris aides insist she will conduct her constitutional and legal duty with seriousness and grace.

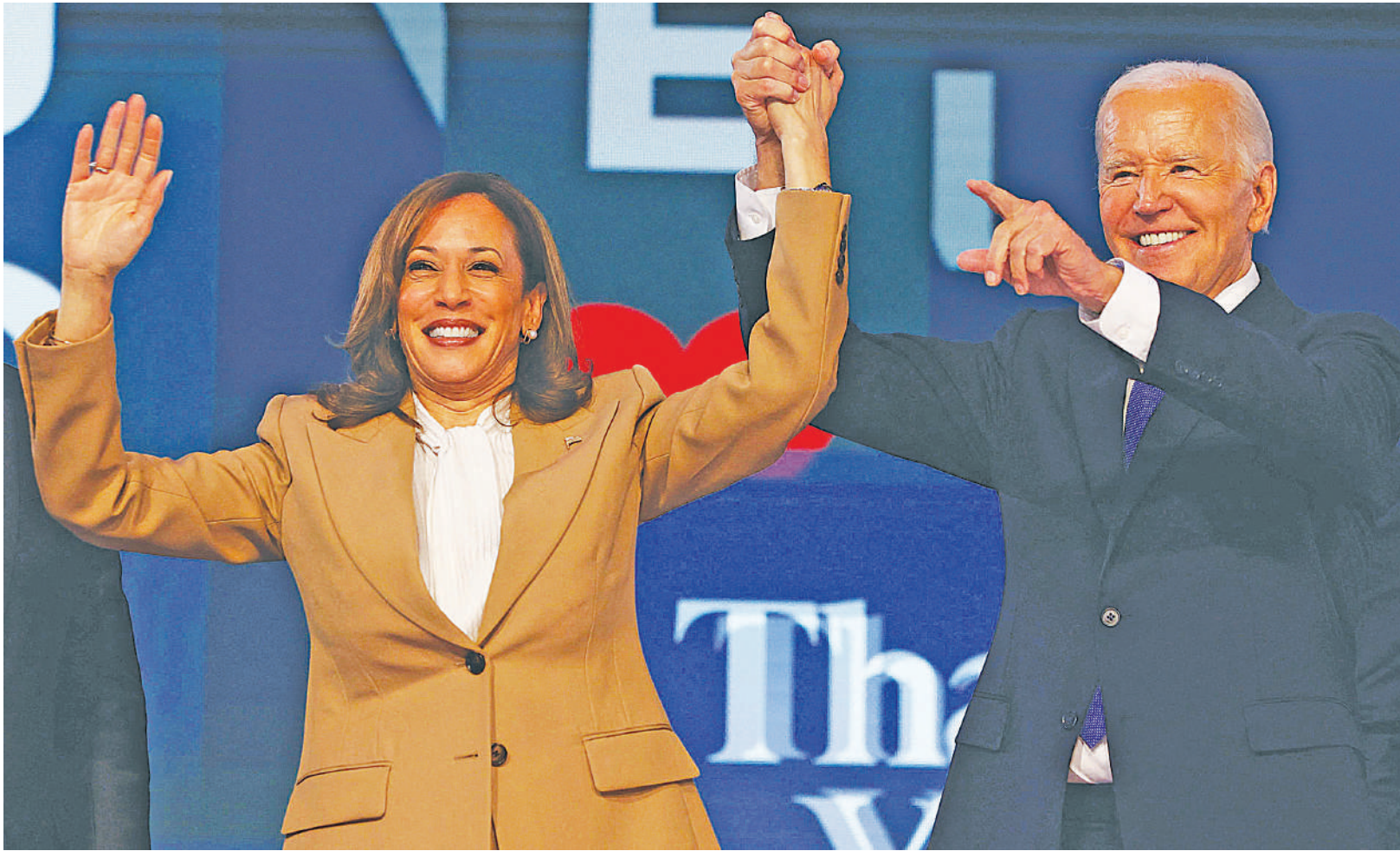
It is not the first time a losing candidate will lead the joint session of Congress to count their opponent's presidential electors - Al Gore endured the indignity in 2001 and Richard Nixon in 1961.

But it's a fitting coda to an improbable election that saw Harris elevated from a back-up to the nation's oldest president to the Democratic standard bearer - whose fleeting campaign provided a jolt of hope to her party before a crushing loss exposed deep internal fault-lines.

Harris and her team are now deliberating her second act, and weighing whether it includes another run for the White House in 2028 or pursuing a bid for the governor's mansion in her home state of California.

While recent Democratic candidates who lost elections - Al Gore, John Kerry, Hillary Clinton - have decided against seeking the presidency again, aides, allies and donors argue that the groundswell of support Harris captured in her unsuccessful bid and the unusual circumstances of her condensed campaign proves there's still scope for her to seek the Oval Office.

They even point to Donald Trump's own circuitous political path - the former and future president's bookend wins in



Biden and Harris at the Democratic National Convention in August, a high point for her campaign

2016 and 2024, despite losing as the incumbent in 2020.

But while many Democrats do not blame Harris for Trump's win, some - stung by a bruising loss that has called the party's strategy into question - are deeply sceptical of giving her another shot at the White House. A host of Democratic governors who coalesced behind the vice-president in 2024 but have ambitions of their own are seen by some strategists as fresher candidates with a much better chance of winning.

President Donald Trump points towards Democratic presidential nominee, Vice President Kamala Harris, as he speaks during a presidential debate.

Harris herself is said to be in no rush to make any decisions, telling advisers and supporters she is open to all the possibilities that await her after Inauguration Day on 20 January.

She is assessing the last few months, which saw her launch an entirely new White House campaign, vet a running-mate, lead a party convention and barnstorm the country in just 107 days. And aides point out that she



US Vice-President Kamala Harris

remains the US vice-president, at least for another two weeks.

"She has a decision to make and you can't make it when you're still on the treadmill. It may have slowed down - but she's on the treadmill until 20 January," said Donna Brazile, a close Harris ally who advised the campaign.

"You can't put anyone in a box. We didn't put

Al Gore in a box and it was obvious the country was very divided after the 2000 election," said Brazile, who ran Gore's campaign against George W Bush and pointed to his second life as an environmental activist. "All options are on the table because there's an appetite for change and I do believe that she can represent that change in the

future."

But the nagging question that shadows any potential 2028 run is whether the 60-year-old can separate herself from Joe Biden - something she failed to do in the election campaign.

Her allies in the party say that Biden's choice to seek re-election despite worries about his age, only then to ultimately

drop out of the race with months to go, doomed her candidacy.

Though Trump swept all seven battleground states and is the first Republican in 20 years to win the popular vote, his margin of victory was relatively narrow while Harris still won 75 million votes, an outcome her supporters argue can't be ignored as a currently faceless Democratic party rebuilds over the next four years.

On the other side, those close to Biden remain convinced he could have defeated Trump again, despite surveys showing he had been bleeding support from key Democratic voting blocs.

They point out that Harris fell short where the president didn't in 2020, underperforming with core Democratic groups like black and Latino voters. Critics continue to bring up her 2019 campaign to become the Democratic presidential nominee, which sputtered out in less than a year.

"People forget that had there been a real primary [in 2024], she never would have been the nominee. Everyone knows that," said one former Biden adviser.

The adviser, who spoke

on condition of anonymity to discuss a sensitive matter, applauded Harris for reviving the Democratic base and helping key congressional races, but said Trump's campaign successfully undercut her on critical campaign issues including the economy and the border.

Members of Trump's team, however, including his chief pollster, have acknowledged that Harris performed stronger as a candidate than Biden on certain issues like the economy among voters.

Yet there's no escaping that any Democratic primary contest for 2028 would be a tough fight, with rising stars like Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer, Illinois Governor JB Pritzker and California Governor Gavin Newsom already weighing presidential runs.

Some Democrats say that Harris would nonetheless start ahead of the pack, with national name recognition, a much-coveted mailing list and a deep bench of volunteers.

"What state party would not want her to come help them set the table for the 2026 midterm elections?" Brazile said. "She's going to have plenty opportunities not only to rebuild, but to strengthen the coalition that came together to support her in 2024."

Others have suggested she could step out of the political arena entirely, running a foundation or establishing an institute of politics at her alma mater, Howard University, the Washington-based historically black college where she held her election night party.

The former top state prosecutor could also be a contender for secretary of state or attorney general in a future Democratic administration. And she'll need to decide if she wants to write another book.

For all of her options, Harris has told aides, she wants to remain visible and be seen as a leader in the party. One adviser suggested that she could exist outside the domestic political fray, taking on a more global role on an issue that matters to her, but that's a difficult perch without a platform as large as the vice-presidency.

In the waning days of the Biden-Harris administration, she plans to embark on an international trip to multiple regions, according to a source familiar with the plans, signalling her desire to maintain a role on the world stage and build a legacy beyond

being Biden's number two.

For Harris and her team, the weeks since the election have been humbling, a mix of grief and resolve. Several aides described the three-month sprint that began when Biden dropped out as having begun with the campaign "digging out of a hole" and ending with their candidate more popular than when she began, even if she didn't win.

"There's a sense of peace knowing that given the hand we were dealt, we ran through the tape," said one senior aide.

Following the election, Harris and her husband, Second Gentleman Doug Emhoff, spent a week in Hawaii with a small group of aides to relax and discuss her future.

During a staff holiday party at her official residence before Christmas, Harris recounted election night and how she delivered a pep talk to her family as the results became clear.

"We are not having a pity party!" she told the crowd of her reaction that night.

Advisers and allies say she is still processing what happened, and wants to wait and see how the new administration unfolds in January before staking out any position, let alone seeking to become the face of any so-called Trump "resistance".

Democrats have found the resistance movement that took off among liberals in the wake of his 2016 win no longer resonates in today's political climate, where the Republican has proven that his message and style appeals to a huge cross-section of Americans.

They have adopted a more conciliatory approach in confronting the incoming president's agenda. As several Democrats put it: "What resistance?"

Though she's kept a relatively low profile since her loss, Harris provided a glimpse of her mindset at an event for students at Prince George's Community College in Maryland in December.

"The movements for civil rights, women's rights, workers' rights, the United States of America itself, would never have come to be if people had given up their cause after a court case, or a battle, or an election did not go their way," she said.

"We must stay in the fight," she added, a refrain she has repeated since her 2016 Senate win. "Every-one of us."

## CAPITAL RADIO

# RATIBA YA VIPINDI JUMATATU - JUMAPILI

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

Tembelea mitandao ya kijamii ya CAPITAL RADIO



CAPITAL RADIO



By Wandile Sihlobo

# Misery, distress of French farmers and implications for South Africa

**A**BOUT a year ago, European farmers were on the streets in various regions protesting against government policies. The core challenges were the EU's declining agricultural subsidies, the stringent environmental policy to reduce chemicals and fertiliser use, and the need for protection against imports.

The protests only eased when the European Commission, the EU's executive arm, announced it would delay implementing environmental policies involving reducing pesticides and other farm inputs.

On the environmental issue, it was easy to sympathise with farmers. A drastic reduction in agrochemicals and fertilisers is not ideal, as that would negatively affect harvest quality and output. Hence, a reasonable transition under the framework of a moderate approach with feasible timelines, which EU farmers advocated for, was reasonable.

I also paid attention to this matter because the EU would apply the same rules to the exporting countries to the region. Therefore, the delay in its implementation also offered a breathing space to exporters such as those in my home country, South Africa.

As we started to forget this episode and start the new year focusing on the

US trade policy and other issues, the French farmers began another conversation. They are out on the streets protesting again.

But this time, the emphasis is not on environmental issues but on trade policies. The French farmers are unhappy about the EU-South America trade agreement, the EU-Mercosur trade deal. The deal will remove tariffs on around 90% of trade in goods between the two sides, primarily over a period of roughly 12 years. Agricultural exports from Mercosur will be subject to gradually rising quotas.

The French farmers say this is unfair competition, and the EU authorities do not understand the "level of misery and distress that farmers are going through at the moment".

This line of argument of farmers has found sympathetic voices in some corners. Writing in *The Spectator*, a weekly British magazine, on January 6, 2025, James Tidmarsh stated that:

"the French press will dance around the elephant in the room, but the farmers know the truth. This is about Brussels, not Paris. The policies strangling French agriculture - crippling environmental regulations, predatory trade deals,



and dwindling subsidies - are made in the European Union's corridors of power. France, despite its posturing as Europe's leader, doesn't have the weight to shape Brussels's decisions. For French farmers, it's become painfully

clear: their government isn't calling the shots. The real power lies with Ursula von der Leyen and her ideological crusade for a greener, more globalised Europe."

That is quite something from Tidmarsh! And I

don't like his tone on trade issues.

**Anyways, why am I writing about this issue?**

I am presenting it because the EU is an important trading partner for South Africa's agriculture.

According to data from Trade Map, the region is the second-most important market for South Africa's agricultural products, accounting for 27% of the country's total agricultural exports. Therefore, the unfavourable

trade conversation in that region is relevant to us.

The South African agricultural sector has faced various protectionist tendencies in the EU market, particularly in citrus. For example, the EU recently used non-tariff barriers

by alleging a "False codling moth", a citrus pest, in South Africa and requiring citrus products to be kept at certain temperatures before accessing the EU market.

This happens while South Africa has already treated the products to eliminate the chances of such pest occurrence. This was a subtle form of protecting Spanish farmers, who are also major citrus producers within the EU market.

With an outright view from farmer groupings in the EU that they face unfair competition in the global agricultural market, we worry that using various non-tariff barriers may be common.

## Policy considerations

Given farmers' rising discontent and protectionism worldwide, South African agribusinesses and the government should work to diversify agriculture's export markets. Some key growing markets are within the BRICS, such as China, India, and Saudi Arabia.

Still, South Africa must look broadly and deepen its agricultural trade with South Korea, Japan, the USA, Vietnam, Taiwan, India, Saudi Arabia, Mexico, the Philippines, and Bangladesh.

This export expansion should occur while South Africa works to maintain its access to critical markets in the EU, Africa, and various Asian and American countries.

## China-Ethiopia alliance takes free eye care to Addis Ababa

ADDIS ABABA

A TEAM of medical experts from China has officially launched a free cataract surgery programme at Tirunesh Beijing Hospital in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia's capital.

The initiative known as the China-Ethiopia Brightness Journey features a dedicated Chinese medical team made up of 10 experienced ophthalmologists and nurses.

They are on a mission to perform cataract surgeries for over 500 patients, with 80 individuals already benefiting from successful procedures as of Friday.

This phase of the Brightness Journey will last for more than 20 days, providing local medical professionals

with essential training in advanced treatment techniques.

Amsale Belay is one of the fortunate individuals benefiting from the project.

Thanks to the assistance of the Chinese medical team, her eyesight has been fully restored.

"I'm so indebted to the medical team. I have been seeking treatment for more than two and a half years at various hospitals, but I found no solution. I was told there was no hope. But now, I have full hope," she shared.

During the launch event of the project on Friday, Ethiopian Minister of Health Mekdes Daba highlighted the extensive advantages that the initiative brings.

"...We will be building skills for healthcare professionals in here because through the procedures... our community will have an additional shared experience... We really, deeply value this project and the support that we are getting," she said.

Chen Hai, the Chinese Ambassador to Ethiopia, emphasized that the project exemplifies the friendship shared by the two countries.

He stated, "The 'Bright Journey' project is a clear indication of our all-weather strategic partnership and deep-rooted friendship."

Cataracts are the primary reason for blindness and vision impairment in Ethiopia, affecting more than five million individuals, as reported by the health ministry.



By Simon Kuper

## Goats replace cows in S. Africa: Here's why

SOUTH Africa's Limpopo region has always been cow country. A bridegroom's family traditionally pays the lobola, or "bride price", in cattle. People here eat the parts of cows they can afford. In a supermarket serving mostly poorer Black shoppers, the butcher's section was selling cow heels alongside chicken feet and "pork head without cheeks". A road sign warning of "stray animals" depicted a cow.

Driving around the region, baking in the summer heat, I spotted only one small herd of actual cows: thin specimens picking through the dry grass by the highway. What I saw far more often were goats. They are displacing cows in some areas because they are more climate resilient, explains Kingsley Ayisi, director of the University of Limpopo's Centre for Global Change. Goats can survive on little grass and even eat acacia trees.

What's happening in

Limpopo is what's starting to happen worldwide: adaptation to climate change. (The other option was cutting emissions, but we collectively chose not to take it.)

"Adapt or die", says the cliché. Limpopo is adapting, yet could still die. How can poor regions like this remain viable for human habitation?

Limpopo is South Africa's northernmost province, bordering Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Botswana. Droughts that have always plagued the region have worsened, even if climate change barely features in political debates here. There's nothing unusual about this. "Nearly half the global land area experienced at least one month of extreme drought in 2023," says *The Lancet*. More than three-quarters of the earth's surface has be-

come drier in the past 30 years, reports the UN.

But climate change is existential in an area that already struggled to support human life. A UN official has called southern Africa's current drought (barely noticed outside the region) its worst in a century. Tens of millions of children are malnourished. Elephants looking for food and water stray into human territories near the Limpopo river. Some get eaten.

There's little climate tech in Limpopo. The region's small farmers can't afford irrigation. Agriculture here hasn't changed much over the centuries, people still live or die by the rains. A drier climate could doom the region's eternal staples of cattle and maize. Ayisi says farmers should be trained to switch from maize to sorghum, a plant that needs

less water. More generally, he advocates finding new foods: "There are over 2,000 edible plants, but the world is feeding on only about 20 to 30. So what happens to those other plants?" Fruits and leafy vegetables growing wild in Limpopo could perhaps be cultivated. "Time is not on our side," he warns.

I saw that in the daily produce market in Limpopo's capital, Polokwane. The place is stacked with boxes of tomatoes, potatoes, watermelons and more, most labelled with the names of white Afrikaans commercial farms. A worker told me that climate change was "100 per cent" affecting the produce. Outdoor crops, such as spinach and okra, were arriving withered for want of rain. He pointed to a porter carting away spoiled pro-

duce.

In theory, agriculture here could survive climate change. "I like the word 'efficiency,'" says Ayisi. For instance, shade nets could protect some crops against heat and raise the efficiency of water use. South Africans could improve harvesting of surface and groundwater.

But those interventions require capital and efficient government - both scarce in South Africa. "Nearly half the water piped through the country's infrastructure [is] lost through leaks, theft or non-payment," reports *Engineering News*. The developed countries that historically emitted most CO<sub>2</sub> have promised to help finance the climate transition in poor regions like Limpopo. However, at November's COP meeting in Azerbaijan, rich countries set a funding target of just \$300bn a year. Poor countries say they need much more.

Limpopo's climate transition probably won't be smooth. What happens then? Several people told me they doubted agriculture here would survive another 20 years. A South African government official said Limpopo should shift to sectors that don't need water: logistics, public services or banking. But that seems improbable in a province short on roads, train lines and well-educated workers.

More migrants will leave Limpopo, not for rich countries, but for the nearest metropolis, Johannesburg. Its infrastructure and job market already can't sustain its current population, but southern African climate refugees have few choices. Less resourceful people will be stranded in a drying Limpopo. We are glimpsing the planet's next phase.





By Ivan Lukanda

# Uganda's rolex is much more than a street food, it's a national treasure

WHEN Ugandans refer to getting a rolex, they seldom mean an expensive Swiss watch. Rolex is a popular kind of street food, made famous in global media. It serves more than just a practical function as fast food, but has many cultural meanings that form part of the country's national identity, and a rallying point for promoting social causes. These have been played out in Uganda's media - which is the basis of a recent study of the meanings of a rolex in Uganda. We asked journalism and communication lecturer Ivan Lukanda about his research.

## What is a rolex?

A rolex is a chapati (a flatbread made from dough) rolled around fried eggs to which have been added spices and vegetables. It's usually cooked in a frying pan on a charcoal stove. It's prepared on order and served very hot, usually in a paper wrapper, plastic bag, or plate.

The snack is common in Ugandan urban centres in east Africa. It's mostly prepared on roadsides at informal stalls. Artisans may simply have a table for kneading the dough, a pan for frying the eggs and chapati, a charcoal stove as a heat source and the ingredients - which can vary widely.

The snack also has more elite makers who prepare it in restaurants or mobile kitchens that add cheese, pepper and butter, among other ingredients. Rolex is commonly sold alongside vendors offering chicken, chips, roasted meat, goat, pork and beer or soft drinks.

Rolex varies depending on the region and on the demands of the clientele and ingredients available to the "chef" - much like jollof rice in west Africa. For example, some rolexes can have two or more eggs. Some can have two chapatis. Some have cooked or raw vegetables. Others might include "Indian", "Mexican" or "Kenyan" variants, which are marketed especially at rolex festivals.



Uganda's rolex became famous in 2016 when CNN called it the best street food in Africa.

This range of sizes and identities has created a diverse market, with varying prices and flavours. The nickname for a rolex can change accordingly. For example, it might be known as a double face (two eggs and two chapatis) or as a titanic (four eggs and two chapatis).

Beyond the street, rolex is made wherever people gather - be that weekly markets, funerals, prayer crusades, school events or political rallies.

## Why are they so often in the news?

Rolex was ranked the best street food in Africa by CNN in 2016. That same year, Uganda's Ministry of Tourism declared the rolex an official tourist attraction alongside the likes of mountains, the source of the Nile,

lions, elephants and mountain gorillas.

Two hands roll food in a thin bread wrapper, on a red tablecloth dishes are seen containing vegetables, a tray of eggs to the side.

In response, a non-governmental organisation called the Rolex Initiative started organising the annual Rolex Festival to draw attention to the snack. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the festival was held online.

Individuals shared short videos of themselves making a rolex at home. With funding from the United Nations Development Programme, the Rolex Initiative has been organising training to upskill rolex makers. Uganda has the Guinness world records for making the biggest rolex and the fastest rolex.



## How do Uganda's media portray the rolex?

The media present the rolex in many different lights. They portray it as a source of income, a job opportunity able to employ thousands in a country with high unemployment, symbol of national pride, and a basis for creating aware-

ness about social and environment causes.

Media also associate the making of rolex with the Basoga, a dominant ethnic group from Busoga in south-eastern Uganda.

Busoga has many residents of Asian origin, who arrived in Uganda mostly through Kenya during con-

struction of the Uganda railway. The Basoga and others in the region had early contact with Asian cuisine. So, the rolex is seen as a symbol of Asian influence. It's basically a Ugandan version of the Indian roti or other forms of chapatis eaten in Asia, using local ingredients such as eggs, vegetables and spices.

Rolex is portrayed as cheap, nutritious and convenient. And as fresh and healthy food for the poor. It's a practical meal that keeps towns awake - night workers and revellers have grown to rely on the snack instead of cooking. It is a marker of improvisation.

It's even a determinant for the price of eggs - rolex makers compete with schools and bakers for them.

The media often plays on the name being the same as the name of a luxury Swiss watch, a striking and witty way to contrast the rich and poor. This took on comic dimensions when the Swiss company patented the name "Rolex" in Uganda.

It is portrayed with pride as an export that has seen Ugandans win awards for taking the business to countries as far away as Denmark.

## What else does a rolex symbolise?

The rolex is a symbol of national identity, the same way the Swiss watch is synonymous with Switzerland. It's a Ugandan innovation and a symbol of nationalism. Ugandans travelling abroad are reported to long for a rolex and become homesick.

Rolex is a symbol of diplomacy. The increase in its size due to wheat scarcity from the Ukraine-Russia war was the most significant way ordinary Ugandans felt the effects of the conflict.

The rolex is a symbol of connection between Uganda's urban and rural areas. People (often temporarily) move to find employment as rolex makers or suppliers of ingredients for them.

People cook in bright traditional clothing on large pans under umbrellas next to water. Aman cooks what looks like a large omelette.

The snack breaks class and cultural barriers. It's consumed by the rich and the poor, the educated and the illiterate, by all ethnic groups and races.

But rolex kiosks also symbolise the poor organisation of urban life in Uganda where the poor hustle to survive. Questions about food safety arise because the snack is made on the roadside and can easily come into contact with dirt. Authorities are guilty of failing to plan urban spaces to meaningfully advance the rolex businesses.

Ultimately, the rolex is used to tell the story of Uganda's attempt to produce a unified identity around a "national meal" that caters to a wide range of ethnic and social groups.

# Zimbabwe scraps death penalty with new law

By Parvais Jabbar

ZIMBABWE hasn't executed anyone who was sentenced to death since 2005. With the passing of the Death Penalty Abolition Act 2024 on 31 December, Zimbabwe has become the 127th country in the world to end death penalty.

This process began with the introduction to parliament of an opposition private member's bill led by Edwin Mushoriwa, though some amendments were made by the government.

Other countries, too, have been moving away from the death penalty. In Africa, only seven of the 55 states in the African Union are "actively retentionist", meaning that they sentence people to death and have carried out executions in the last decade. These states include Egypt, Somalia and South Sudan.

Twenty-six African countries have abolished the death penalty in law. The most recent countries to do so include Ghana, the Central African Republic and Zambia. Another 14 within the African Union have moratoriums on executions.

Some governments that

retain the death penalty, such as Kenya, claim that they can't abolish it while there is considerable public support for capital punishment. Until now, this had been true in Zimbabwe, too.

Over a decade ago, Zimbabwe's then minister of justice, now president, Emmerson Mnangagwa, expressed his commitment to abolition, condemning the death penalty as an "odious and obnoxious provision". But a change in policy was not forthcoming because some Zimbabwean politicians claimed in discussions with rights organisations that the public was committed to retention.

The Death Penalty Project has done research in Africa, Asia and the Caribbean that has shown repeatedly that such perceptions - about public opinion being strongly in favour of retention of a death penalty - are false.

In 2017, we conducted a survey of 1,200 Zimbabweans for data on public attitudes to the death penalty. We found that most people knew and cared little about capital punishment. While 61% said they supported the death penalty, most said

they would accept abolition if it were government policy.

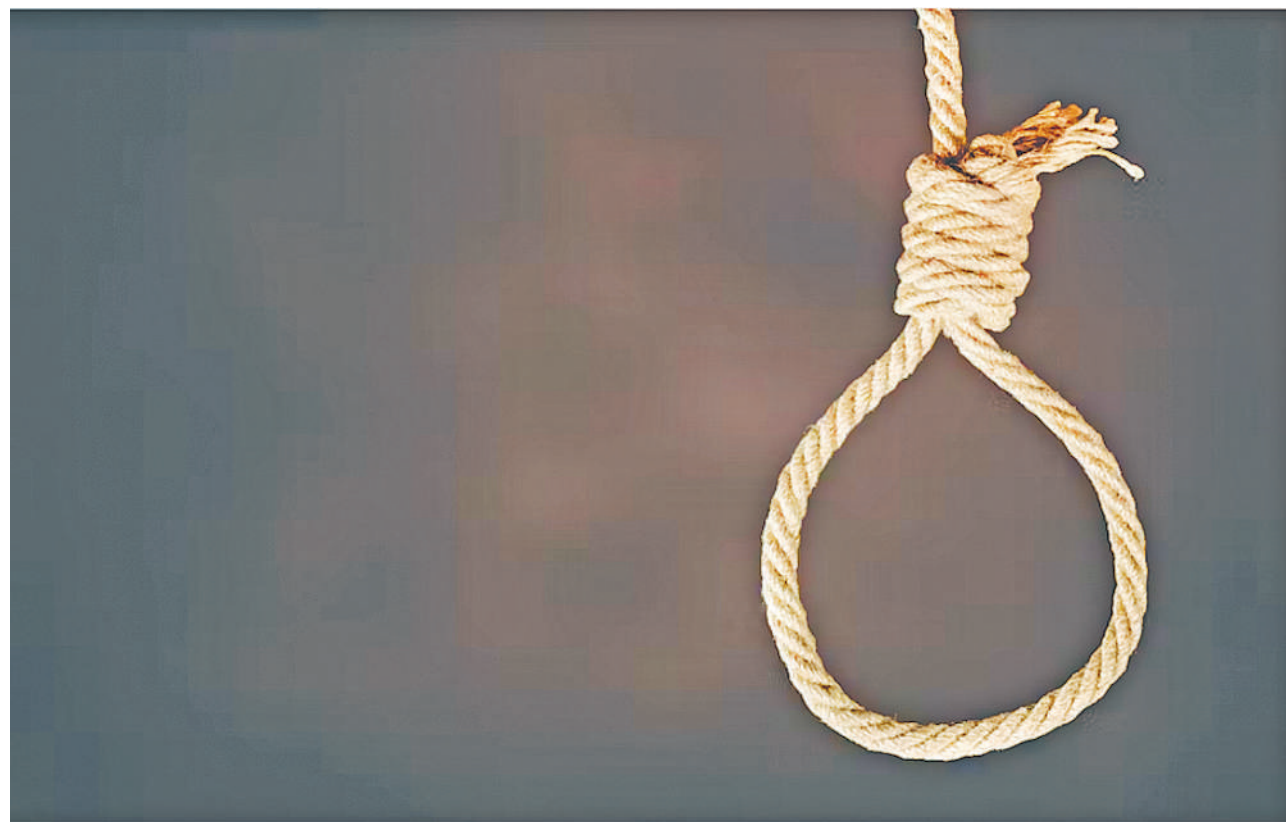
In 2019, we carried out in-depth interviews with 42 Zimbabwean opinion leaders. They included politicians, legal practitioners and religious, civil society and media leaders. An overwhelming majority (90%) were in support of abolition.

There remain many legitimate concerns about Zimbabwe's criminal justice system and wider abuses of human rights, which will not be fixed by abolition. Nevertheless, Zimbabweans should feel proud to have joined the global majority that has consigned the death penalty to the past.

In so doing, Zimbabweans have discarded a punishment that breaches the human rights of all those subject to it; that risks the execution of innocent people; that has a disproportionate impact on the poor and uneducated; and that doesn't reduce violent crime any more than a long prison sentence would.

## The road to abolition

The Zimbabwean path to abolition began about a decade ago, with a road-



map to gather evidence for advocacy and engagement with influential local institutions and politicians. The Death Penalty Project - a UK-based charity that provides free legal assistance to those facing the death penalty around the world and commissions research to assist advocacy efforts - and Veritas, a Harare-based NGO, set out to publish empirical studies on public views on the death penalty. This would test government claims that there was majority support for capital punishment.

In Zimbabwe, as elsewhere, public knowledge about things like the number or method of executions was limited. When we carried out our survey, we found that six out of 10 people supported retention.

However, less than half were certain that the death penalty should definitely be kept. When presented with a range of typical death penalty cases, by way of a series of scenarios, most respondents were against the imposition of the death penalty in five out of the six cases.

When asked what policies were likely to be most effective at reducing violent crimes, only 8% referred to executions. Most respondents favoured better moral education of young people and reducing poverty - social policy rather than criminal justice responses.

Perhaps most importantly, 80% of those who supported the death penalty made it clear that they would be willing to accept abolition if it were to become government policy.

In our study of opinion leaders, we found that

those who could shape policy in Zimbabwe were much better informed on the death penalty than the public.

Almost two-thirds didn't trust the criminal justice system to prevent miscarriages of justice. Most respondents were concerned about wrongful convictions and innocent people being sentenced to death.

The 90% who supported abolition weren't only concerned about safety. Most believed the death penalty to be an abuse of human rights, against their religious beliefs, a

poor deterrent and a stain on Zimbabwe's international reputation.

Like the public, the majority of opinion leaders felt that social policies to reduce poverty and educate the young were likely to be more effective in reducing violent crime than recourse to the criminal process. Furthermore, most (rightly) assumed that the public would accept a decision by parliament to abolish the death penalty.

## Research for policy

In dismantling this perceived barrier to abolition, our research attracted Mnangagwa's support. In a foreword to the opinion leaders' study, the Zimbabwean president wrote:

Most Zimbabweans know that the death penalty is a subject on which I feel deeply. As I have said in the past, I believe it to be a flagrant violation of the right to life and dignity .... It is my sincere hope that, in the near future, Zimbabwe will formally abolish the penalty by removing it from our statute books.

While ultimately abolition in Zimbabwe, as elsewhere, was achieved through political leadership, efforts by local and international civil society organisations played a significant role, and our empirical research was crucial in supporting this endeavour.





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## Investors paper wealth on DSE grows by 3.5trn/- in 12 months

By Guardian Reporter

Investors on the Dar es Salaam Stock Exchange (DSE) equities market saw their paper wealth expanding by 3.2trn/- during the period of twelve months ended on December 31, 2024.

The DSE's market reports show that this resulted from the increase of the market capitalisation to 17.8trn/- during the end of last year, from 14.6trn/- recorded during the end of 2023.

The increase of market capitalisation resulted from gaining of share prices among local and cross listed companies.

However, the major expansions of wealth on paper were recorded by cross listed companies, specifically East African Breweries Limited (EABL), Kenya Commercial Bank (KCB) and Jubilee Holdings Limited (JHL).

According to the reports, the combined value of domestically listed companies increased by 800bn/- after closing at 12.2trn/- during the end of last year from 11.4trn/- recorded at the end of 2023, driven by increase of share prices in banking, manufacturing and services counters.

Analysts say the equity market during 2024 saw a mix of stability and strategic growth, driven by key developments in the economy, regulatory adjustments, and investor behavior.

"The DSE experienced modest growth in 2024, with a focus on blue-chip stocks, particularly in banking, industrial, and telecommunication sectors," an analyst said.

The All Share Index (DSEI) showed resilience, benefiting from improved macroeconomic stability and investor confidence in the market.

The report shows banking shares have been a key driver, supported by better-than-expected financial results from major banks and strong credit growth fueled by favorable monetary policies.

Industrial stocks, particularly cement and manufacturing companies, also gained traction due to increased construction activities and government infrastructure projects while telecom sector maintained steady performance, backed by the growing adoption of digital services and increased mobile money transactions.

Despite growth in market capitalization, liquidity remains a challenge. Efforts by the Capital Markets and Securities Authority (CMSA) and the DSE to attract retail and institutional investors have yielded mixed results.

The introduction of digital trading platforms and investor education programs has increased participation, but trading volumes remain relatively low compared to regional peers.

However, market analysts said there was limited activity in initial public offerings (IPOs) in 2024.

However, discussions around po-

tential listings from energy, logistics, and fintech companies stirred investor interest.

Companies are also being encouraged to list through regulatory incentives, which could boost market activity in the future.

The Tanzanian government, through CMSA, has implemented measures to enhance market transparency and attract foreign investors.

Recent reforms in tax regulations and efforts to align market operations with global standards have improved investor sentiment.

Limited retail investor participation and low trading volumes continue to impact market dynamism, economic uncertainty caused by global economic pressures, including inflation and foreign exchange volatility, have posed risks to investor confidence.

According to analyst, the equity market is expected to remain steady in the coming months; with key drivers being strong economic growth projected at 5-6, continued expansion in sectors like energy, infrastructure, and digital services.

The equity market holds potential, particularly if structural challenges such as liquidity and investor participation are addressed.

"The future of Tanzania's equity market in 2025 looks promising, driven by economic growth, technological advancements, and ongoing regulatory reforms. Below are the key factors shaping the outlook for 2025," commented one of the analysts

Tanzania's projected GDP growth rate of 5-6 percent in 2025 provides a solid foundation for the equity market.

Key contributors include infrastructure development, agriculture modernization and stable inflation within manageable levels that will bolster investor confidence.

Banking stocks will likely maintain dominance, driven by increased financial inclusion, digital banking expansion, and credit growth to SMEs. Also, new investments in natural gas, renewable energy, and mining projects may lead to IPOs or improved performance of existing players.

Efforts to improve market liquidity will likely gain momentum specifically full adoption of mobile and online trading platforms by the DSE will attract younger, tech-savvy investors.

According to analysts awareness campaigns and investment literacy programs are expected to increase participation by retail investors.

Collaboration with the East African Community (EAC) markets may drive cross-border trading activity and foreign investment inflows.

"2025 could see a rise in IPOs, particularly in sectors like energy, logistics, fintech, and manufacturing. Companies may be encouraged by government tax incentives for listing, increased demand for public equity as businesses seek to raise capital for expansion," said an analyst.

## Global central banks tiptoe toward rate decrease under Donald Trump's shadow



US President Elect Donald Trump

WASHINGTON

GLOBAL central bankers are poised to cut borrowing costs further in 2025, but only warily – and with a keen eye on the policies of incoming US President Donald Trump.

While almost all major economies should see monetary easing during the coming year, the pace is likely to slow.

Bloomberg Economics projects its aggregate measure of advanced-world interest rates to drop just 72 basis points in 2025, less than it did in 2024.

The shifts in that gauge tell a tale both of easing cycles that have already progressed, of lingering caution about inflation pressures that might yet need to fully dissipate, and of the unknowns posed by the impending second era of Trump.

The next US president is a haunting presence for central bankers around the world. If enacted, his threatened trade tariffs could hurt economic growth, and stoke consumer prices too in the event of retaliation.

In the US itself, the Federal Reserve has already switched its attention to the danger of resurgent inflation, curbing the prospect for much easing for now. Other major counterparts, from the euro zone to the UK, are poised to keep lowering borrowing costs to aid economic growth, but with no sign of a hurry.

Out of 23 central banks focused on in this quarterly guide, just two may end the year with higher rates. Japan's hiking cycle is likely to continue, while Brazilian officials remain set on action to contain fiscally driven inflation.

"For central banks on the path to policy normalization, the last mile won't be smooth. Uneven progress toward 2 per-

cent inflation, shocks from the incoming Trump administration, and uncertainty about neutral rates all add to potential for surprises. Bloomberg Economics sees the average advanced-economy central bank rate headed from 3.6 percent at end 2024 to 2.9 percent at end 2025. Sometimes even short distances are hard to travel," says Tom Orlik, global chief economist, Bloomberg Economics.

According to Bloomberg Economics, markets are evenly split on a quarter-point cut by March with a move fully priced by June and an almost 70 percent chance of a second reduction by year-end.

The Fed delivered one more quarter-point cut in December, but new forecasts showed many policymakers had seen enough – at least for a couple months – and are pushing the pause button. Policymakers signaled just a half-percentage point of reductions for 2025.

Just a few months after the US labor market appeared dangerously close to tipping over, the Fed's focus is now firmly back on inflation, which appears to have stalled above their 2 percent target. Chair Jerome Powell made clear officials will have to see renewed progress on that front before they move again.

Powell expressed a fair amount of confidence that monetary policy remains meaningfully restrictive and inflation will continue moving down.

But based on new inflation forecasts and projections of the so-called neutral rate – where policy is neither helping nor hurting the economy – many of his colleagues appear more skeptical.

"The FOMC struck a hawkish posture at the last meeting of 2024, disappointing market expectations with only 50 ba-

sis points of anticipated 2025 cuts. Justifying that stance, inflation data early in 2025 will likely be solid due to residual seasonality. Even so, we think the Fed ultimately will have to cut by 75 bps in each of 2025 and 2026, as the unemployment rate continues to climb, ending 2025 at 4.7% and 5.0% in 2026," said Anna Wong.

In Eurozone, traders expect a 25-basis-point cut this month followed by three more by the end of June and a 25 percent chance of a fifth by the end of the year.

After a slow start, the ECB has embarked on a steady path of rate cuts that will likely take the deposit rate to 2 percent by the middle of this year in a series of back-to-back quarter-point steps. While the option of larger moves has been brought up by some officials, the majority sees no urgency to increase the pace.

While headline inflation is expected to settle at the ECB's 2 percent target in the course of 2025, services prices are still rising at nearly twice that rate, adding to lingering concerns over wages that have prevented policymakers from sounding the all clear.

Economic growth is seen picking up after a winter lull, bolstered by a rebound in private spending.

"Signs have emerged of a slowdown in GDP growth and we expect the threat of tariffs to weigh on activity as investment decisions are put on hold. Headline inflation will move below the 2 percent target in early 2025, wage growth is slowing and profit margins have stopped expanding. Restrictive policy has become hard to justify and we expect back-to-back rate cuts until March, followed by quarterly moves, until the deposit rate hits 2 percent. That's our estimate of neutral," said David

Powell, economist, Bloomberg Economics.

In Japan, Money markets are betting on a gradual pace of tightening, pricing a quarter-point hike by May followed by another toward year-end.

Bank of Japan Governor Kazuo Ueda faces a tough decision on the timing of his next rate hike.

Inflation has continued at or above the BOJ's 2 percent target for more than 2 1/2 years. With the economy growing, that seems a long enough stretch to raise rates from a very low level. A hike would also help support the embattled yen.

But the January meeting comes just four days after Trump's inauguration. Ueda has cited his policies among key uncertainties warranting caution. Waiting until March would give Ueda more clarity on the US economy and on the domestic wage trend. It would also give Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba's minority government more time to pass a budget.

"We expected Ueda to lay the groundwork for a rate hike in January at the December meeting. Turns out, he didn't – his cautious approach suggests the BOJ wants to keep some leeway to move when market and political conditions are conducive. We still have high conviction that it will hike rates in January. The reason – inflation looks increasingly likely to stay around the BOJ's 2 percent target. The yen's tumble will also add upside risks," said Taro Kimura, economist.

In UK, money market wagers favor policymakers to deliver a quarter-point cut in February and fully price a second reduction by November, with a 30 percent chance of a third in December.

The Bank of England (BOE) signaled it plans to stick with its once-a-quarter pace to rate cuts for now, even as domestic price pressures and uncertainty abroad build. Markets see a third reduction of the cycle as more likely than not in February, when the UK central bank will also deliver new forecasts and their annual stocktake of the economy's growth capacity.

Governor Andrew Bailey doubled down on the need for "gradual" cuts at the December meeting, largely dismissing a surprise jump in wage growth and pickup in inflation in the days before.

The outlook for rates beyond February is likely to depend on the fallout from the Labour government's first budget and any impact from the resurgence of global trade tensions.

"The BOE has indicated it intends to lower borrowing costs gradually. We expect it to ease at a quarterly pace in 2025 with rates ending the year at 3.75%. That would bring them to a more neutral level as the BOE balances above target inflation with a labor market that is tight but cooling. We think there's limited room to cut rates much further without stoking inflationary pressure," commented Dan Hanson, an economist.





## Digital marketing in 2025: Embracing change and innovation

THE digital marketing landscape is undergoing significant transformation, with emerging technologies and evolving customer expectations reshaping how businesses connect with their audiences.

Let us explore the "digital marketing plan for 2025" whereby we explore the shifts, offers and practical advice on how companies can prepare for the challenges and opportunities ahead.

One of the central themes is the growing importance of data privacy. Governments and regulatory bodies around the world are introducing stricter rules to protect consumer data, and businesses must respond

accordingly. Transparency in data collection and usage is no longer a competitive advantage it is a requirement.

There is a need for the emphasis of building trust with consumers through ethical practices and clear communication. It will be essential for businesses to maintain customer loyalty. Without transparency, brands risk damaging their reputations and losing market share in an increasingly competitive environment.

The transformative potential of artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning is another key topic covered in my articles in 2024. These technologies have become indispensable tools in the marketer's toolkit, enabling businesses to personalize

### DIGITAL MARKETING

Alley Mmatya



customer experiences, predict market trends, and optimize campaigns.

For instance, AI can help identify customer preferences more accurately, allowing brands to deliver tailored content that resonates with individual users. Additionally, machine learning algorithms can analyse vast amounts of data to uncover patterns and insights that would otherwise remain hidden.

Marketers are encouraged to embrace these tools, not as replacements for human creativity, but as enhancements that can improve efficiency and drive innovation.

However, leveraging these technologies requires preparation. Businesses must invest in upskilling their teams to understand and implement AI effectively.

Businesses that are competing for a bigger market

share should focus on building internal capabilities or collaborating with external experts to maximize the benefits of AI-driven strategies. By doing so, they can create more impactful campaigns that deliver measurable results.

Another pressing issue that I highlighted in 2024 is the rapid pace of change in the digital ecosystem. New platforms, technologies, and consumer behaviours are emerging faster than ever, making it crucial for businesses to remain agile.

Organizations that fail to adapt, risk being left behind as competitors seize the advantage of early adoption. In 2024, I also emphasized on the importance of continuous learning and staying informed about industry

try trends. For marketers, this means regularly updating their skills, experimenting with new tools, and remaining flexible in their strategies.

Moreover, businesses must prioritize a customer-first approach in their marketing efforts. In a world where consumer expectations are higher than ever, delivering value and authenticity is paramount.

I also pointed out that brands must go beyond simply selling products; they need to create meaningful connections with their audiences. Whether through personalized communication, social responsibility initiatives, or innovative experiences, businesses that put their customers at the centre of their strategies are

more likely to succeed in the long term.

In conclusion, "Your digital marketing plan for 2025" is your roadmap for navigating the complexities of the digital future. The key to success lies in embracing technological advancements like AI, prioritizing transparency in data practices, and maintaining a commitment to continuous learning.

By staying ahead of trends and putting customers first, businesses can craft strategies that not only meet the demands of today but also prepare them for the challenges of tomorrow.

**Alley Mmatya is Advertising, Marketing, Branding and Customer Experience Expert based in Dar es Salaam**

## OUTLOOK 2025: Transition finance depends on clear, market-aligned policy

By Emma McGarthy

GLOBAL public investors are increasingly recognising the risks associated with climate change and are exploring portfolio strategies to support the decommissioning of dirtier industries. To do this, it is crucial they implement clear and credible transition plans.

In 'Global public funds and transition finance', OMFIF spoke with public investors to uncover the opportunities, risks and challenges in the decarbonisation drive. The report, which launched at COP29 in Baku in November, is based on the conversations of the Transition Finance Working Group, featuring public pension and sovereign funds with a combined £5tn in assets under management.

One fund interviewed for the report stated that asset owners need to understand 'what the decarbonisation levers are, what the abatement costs are. Being able to develop that map curve is really important for the next five or so years.'

Despite this, the majority of asset owners do not yet track the transition plans of the companies they invest in. An asset owner declared that 'most listed companies have transition plans but the ones with credible plans are few'. As funds implement net-zero targets and portfolio transition strategies, establishing



assessment processes to measure and benchmark their supply chain activities is essential.

Barriers persist

One fund noted that evaluating the efficacy and the financial viability of transition plans is challenging due to divergence in approaches across sectors and jurisdictions. Another fund observed that, 'for some of the generation facilities, especially in the US, the transition plan in the next 10 years isn't really there'. This contributes to the lack of timely and reliable data, which remains a barrier to developing credible transition plans.

There are conflicting dynamics between government approaches and investors' transition plans. 'Countries whose economies will be 30 percent of global gross domestic product in 2050 admitted that they wouldn't be able to reach net zero until between 2060 and 2070,' said one fund. 'So, to be an institutional

investor and reach net zero by 2050, you either need there to be an aggressive increase of ambition in nationally determined contributions or an implicit commitment to divest probably 50% of the world's assets by 2050.'

It is clear that the current policy environment is not aligned with market outcomes. For there to be meaningful progress in 2025, policy-makers need to provide more clarity and incentives for stakeholders to invest in the transition.

What needs to change?

Consistency in reporting questions and survey models would enable the investor community to meet disclosure requirements.

Guidelines can help stakeholders in understanding transition opportunities. Global public investors are engaging with stakeholders and supply chains to begin decarbonisation, and some have taken active steps to invest in and decommission dirtier industries. However, there is a need for criteria and guidelines for shareholders, clients and risk managers to aid in understanding what a transition investment is and how asset ownership is taking place.

'I think if you could come up with a way to certify that this is a transition investment and have high conviction it will deliver the absolute emissions reductions, hopefully institutions could go to their stakeholders and say:

'I'm planning to put 25 percent of my balance sheet into things that are grey, that are headline level.' We're only going to do these where our partners have high conviction in the ability to decarbonise. But at the moment that would require hundreds of institutions to be reneging upon commitments,' said one fund.

Consistent standards and an incentivising policy environment will play important roles in ensuring the financial market transitions, and huge strides have been made in this regard. However, there is a fine line between the need for standards, criteria and metrics to support transition and an overbearing proliferation of frameworks that do not account for varying capacity and needs. Clearer definition on transition investments and funds is evidently needed, and guidance on how to manage asset ownership would help global public investors to unlock opportunities in the transition.

In OMFIF's conversations with public investors, the International Sustainability Standards Board received a ringing endorsement as the preferred body to drive interoperability and consistency. As we go into 2025, let us hope that authorities across jurisdictions and industries listen and adopt ISSB across the economy.

**Emma McGarthy (pictured) is Head of the Sustainable Policy Institute, OMFIF**

Residents and land officers struggle to pull a car out of deep mud at the border between Gendagenda and Mtonga villages. The vehicle was stuck due to the poor road conditions, which worsen significantly during the rainy season. Photo: Guardian Correspondent



## Villagers appeal for construction of 36-km road in Handeni district

By Correspondent Beatrice

Philemon

Over 14,000 residents of Gendagenda village and Mgambo Ward in Handeni District, Tanga Region, have appealed to the government to construct a 36-km road linking Gendagenda to Kabuku and other areas.

The poor road condition, compounded by clay soil, renders the road impassable during the rainy season, disrupting transportation for cars and motorcycles.

This challenge hampers economic activities, including transporting farm produce such as maize, oranges, sesame, paddy, and mangoes to markets.

Bakari Athuman, chairman of

the Mjumikwekige network in Mgambo Ward, emphasized the urgency of government intervention during a recent visit by journalists and staff from the Tanzania Community Forest Conservation Network (MJUMITA) and the Tanzania Forest Conservation Group (TFCG).

The visit assessed the impact of the Integrated Forest Biomass

Energy Solutions for Tanzania (IFBEST) project in the district.

Athuman stressed that a better road meeting gravel standards would enhance economic development, improve access to services, and facilitate sustainable charcoal production under the IFBEST project.

The project, funded by the European Union with 5.4bn/€, supports community-based forest management across eight villages in Handeni, Pangani, and Kilindi districts.

'The government's support is crucial. Poor road infrastructure affects food production, access to health services, and increases transportation costs for farm inputs and produce,' Athuman stated.

Athuman called on leaders in Handeni and Pangani districts to collaborate on constructing the road, ensuring the development and prosperity of Gendagenda and neighboring communities.

IFBEST project manager Simon Lugazo added that Gendagenda residents have already designated 4,799.5 hectares of village land for forest reserves under community-based management.

Improved infrastructure will enable villagers to fully benefit from the project, which aims to enhance sustainable charcoal production and economic growth.

## 60pc of Africa's investment funds held overseas

By Guardian Correspondent

About 60 percent of investment funds dedicated to Africa are registered outside the continent.

This figure comes from a study commissioned by the MasterCard Foundation in partnership with Menonite Economic Development Associates (MEDA) and conducted by a team of international experts, including Momentus Global (formerly International Financial Consulting), Samawati Capital Partners, and Stafford Law.

Places like Luxembourg, Delaware, and Dublin are more associated with tax havens and global financial hubs than with Africa. Yet, these places are where funds intended to finance African SMEs and the continent's vital infrastructure are based. This situation reflects Africa's structural challenges rather than an isolated anomaly.

The main reason behind this issue is that Africa has not yet become indispensable to global investors. International investors prefer jurisdictions that offer stability, reliable laws, and predictable courts.

Luxembourg, the world's second-largest fund hub with \$5 trillion in assets under management, is an example of how clear regulations, expert legal frameworks, and favorable tax policies attract fund managers. Singapore, with nearly \$5 trillion in assets, offers similar benefits.

In contrast, many African countries struggle with slow bureaucracies, vague laws, and economic instability. This deters investment, especially in promising sectors like SMEs, which account for 80% of formal employment on the continent.

A 2024 report on fund domiciliation in Africa highlights a \$940 billion funding gap for SMEs. This gap perpetuates a vicious cycle: limited funding leads to slow growth and reduced attractiveness for investors. Not all of Africa is absent from the global investment map. Mauritius has secured a strong position as a financial hub, attracting nearly \$20 billion in investments. Its success stems from clear regulations, investor-friendly tax policies, and an open-door strategy for international capital.

South Africa also stands out, with pension funds playing an active role. The Asset Owners Forum of South Africa (AOFSA) has mobilized over \$500 million for local projects. Despite political and economic challenges, the country benefits from a strong financial sector and skilled professionals.

Rwanda is pursuing a niche approach with its Kigali International Financial Centre (KIFC), focusing on sectors like technology and social impact. This bold strategy is beginning to show results, even for a small nation.

Many African countries, including Nigeria, the continent's largest economy, are still struggling to attract funds. Nigeria holds public assets worth \$43.6 billion but has yet to create an attractive investment environment. Côte d'Ivoire and Togo in West Africa are making efforts to position themselves as regional hubs, but progress has been slow.

Despite these challenges, Africa has immense untapped potential. Pension funds across the continent manage hundreds of billions of dollars, often underutilized. Redirecting these resources toward SMEs, infrastructure, and innovation could drive economic growth.

To reverse this trend, concrete efforts are crucial. African nations must simplify their legal frameworks, enforce contracts, and mobilize local capital. Institutions like national social security funds, deposit and consignment funds, pension funds, and public development banks, which collectively manage hundreds of billions of dollars, must play a central role.

African pension funds currently manage over \$600 billion, with \$500 billion in South Africa and \$33 billion in Nigeria.

By 2050, these assets could grow to \$7.3 trillion. This massive resource, if used strategically, could reduce perceived risks for private investors and attract additional capital. Public development banks, with over \$100 billion in total assets, also hold long-term resources that could be better utilized.



# 5 financial moves to become a millionaire in 2025

By Melissa Houston

WITH the right strategy and mindset, becoming a millionaire is no longer a distant dream. It is possible, but it takes work and it's not a get rich quick overnight scheme. You need to be committed to reaching your goal. Success takes time, discipline, and consistency, but the journey is worth it. When you set clear goals, build a plan, and follow it, the path to wealth becomes clear and attainable.

With digital opportunities and increased access to financial tools, there has never been a better time to take control of your financial future. Whether you are starting from scratch or looking to accelerate your progress, today's financial landscape offers endless possibilities to build and grow wealth.

Let's explore five financial moves you can start today to reach millionaire status:

## 1. Create your wealth building plan

Create clear financial goals and build your plan to attain it. Calculate how much money you need to reach \$1 million in net worth then calculate how much



you need to invest to reach that goal. Do you need to make more money to reach that goal? Do you need to reduce your debt level? Do you know your investment targets? Ensure that you build your financial plan

that takes all those questions into account.

## 2. Maximize your income streams

To reach millionaire status you may need to add income sources such as a side hustle, freelancing

work and building passive income ideas. Identify areas where your skills match market demand. This is where you can either scale your business or career. If working 9-to-5 you can invest in career develop-

ment and negotiate a raise. If launching or scaling your business, invest in the tools and resources it takes to do so.

## 3. Invest strategically and consistently

Start investing now.

Whether you choose to invest in stocks, bonds, or real estate, be sure to diversify your portfolio and balance risk with a mix of assets. Set up automatic contributions and slowly build your investments. Even if it's small

amounts, invest now.

## 4. Eliminate debt

If you are carrying credit card debt and loans, these drain resources. You need to pay off debt as quickly as possible. If your credit score is suffering find ways to boost your credit score so that you can access better rates. Reinvest savings from debt payments into wealth building activities.

## 5. Protect your wealth

You are your largest asset, and you need to protect the income you generate. Be sure to protect yourself with health, life, and property insurance. Build an emergency fund where you save a minimum of three to six months of expenses that you keep in a high interest savings account.

The bottom line is that to become a self-made millionaire requires focus, strategy, and action. When you follow these tips, they will help you build a solid foundation for financial success.

The journey to \$1 million starts with a single step, so take action and watch your wealth grow. And remember that financial success is more than just the numbers; it's about creating options, opportunities, and a legacy for the future.

## Trends shaping S.Africa's business landscape 2025

CAPE TOWN

RAPID technological innovation, shifting societal priorities, and a heightened focus on sustainability from businesses across all sectors are shaping the global landscape as we rapidly approach 2025.

Some key trends that have become apparent include the rise of AI, the expansion of green technologies, and the adoption of immersive experiences.

South African businesses follow and adapt to emerging global trends, and hearing from business leaders from a variety of sectors helps us understand where we are heading in 2025:

### Cashless payments, MNO super apps and digital currencies

The global payments landscape is undergoing a rapid transformation. New technologies coupled with the rising demand for seamless, secure, and efficient transactions have spurred on an exciting new era of innovation and growth. With 2025 fast approaching, Luke Kyohere, group chief product and innovation officer at Onafriq, points out some important trends that will shape the future of payments.

"Until recently, real-time payments have been used in Africa for cross-border mobile money payments, but less so for traditional payments. We are seeing companies like Mastercard investing in this area, as well as central banks in Africa putting focus on this.

In 2025, we will also see the continued acceleration of

cashless payments across Africa. B2B payments in particular will also increase. Digital payments began between individuals but are now becoming commonplace for larger corporate transactions.

In the cryptocurrency space, we will see an increase in the use of stablecoins like United States Digital Currency (USDC) and Tether (USDT) which are linked to US dollars. These will come to replace traditional cryptocurrencies as their price point is more stable.

This year, many countries will begin preparing for Central Bank Digital Currencies (CBDCs), government-backed digital currencies which use blockchain. The increased uptake of digital currencies reflects the maturity of distributed ledger technology and improved API availability.

Lastly, to get more from their platforms, mobile network operators are building comprehensive service platforms, integrating multiple payment experiences into a single app. This reflects the shift of many users moving from text-based services to mobile apps.

Rather than offering a single service, super apps are packing many other services into a single app. For example, apps which may have previously been used primarily for lending, now have options for saving and paying bills."

### AI-powered insights

Businesses have adopted AI into their everyday use, simply because it allows for a more efficient operation. AI-powered insights are becoming increasingly prominent

because of the ability to analyse big data quickly and provide actionable recommendations for both the business and the consumer.

"As we approach 2025, businesses are increasingly leveraging technology to create more connected, resilient, and intelligent operations. From automation and AI-powered insights to enhanced customer experiences through unified platforms, technology is fuelling a wave of transformation.

"At Zoho, we're observing a growing shift toward integrated solutions that simplify processes while driving agility and innovation. In the year ahead, we anticipate further advancements in AI-driven personalisation, broader adoption of low-code platforms for faster deployments, and a stronger emphasis on data security and privacy.

"These developments will not only reshape how businesses operate but also redefine the way they engage with customers—enabling deeper, more meaningful connections," says Andrew Bourne Zoho regional country manager.

### The future of property: Foreign investment, sustainability, and AI

The new year could see us bring significant shifts in the property and lending sectors, largely driven by technological advancements and changing consumer behaviours. With these developments in play, there are a few trends that can be expected to alter and transform the property market next year.

## Five key charts to watch in global commodity markets



By Doug Alexander & Yvonne

Yue Li

A basket of the world's key commodities rose in 2024, helped in part to gold's stellar run. Coffee and cocoa were top performers among raw materials, much to the chagrin of chocolate lovers and coffee drinkers yearning for lower prices. And crude oil stockpiles at the largest US storage hub have fallen to the lowest seasonal level since 2007.

Despite impressive gains from coffee to gold, a key gauge of raw material prices ended up being close to an average year for performance.

The Bloomberg Commodity Spot Index – which tracks 24 energy, metal and agricultural contracts – rose 6.3percent for the year, reversing the decline seen in 2023.

A rally of Comex gold futures, the biggest component of the index, helped lift the BCOM, though plunging prices for agricultural crops such as wheat, corn and soybeans limited the gauge's performance.

### Oil

US crude inventories shrank by 1 million barrels in the last full week of 2024 as stockpiles in the vital storage hub

of Cushing, Oklahoma, held to a 17-year seasonal low. The dwindling supply has pushed up the premium of West Texas Intermediate futures contracts in the near term. The so-called prompt spread is hovering at three-month highs, signaling supply tightness.

### Softs

Cocoa and coffee were the top performing commodities in 2024, with a relentless rally that's sure to make chocolate lovers and cappuccino drinkers cringe in the coming months. Leading coffee producers have been looking at price hikes as one way to mitigate a surge in the cost of arabica beans, the kind favored by chains such as Starbucks Corp. Chocolate fans have been suffering the impacts of cocoa's gains for months, with candy bars getting more expensive and smaller. That's expected to continue through 2025.

### Gold

Investors sold off gold-backed exchange-traded funds for a fourth straight year, with holdings declining 3.2 percent in 2024. While optimism of interest rate cuts by the Federal Reserve in 2024 helped gold ETFs regain

some ground in 2024, the US election results in November ended that momentum.

A stronger dollar following Donald Trump's election win saw a renewed selloff of gold ETFs, with bullion prices declining from an all-time high as investors redirected money elsewhere, including equities and Bitcoin.

### Green Hydrogen

Green hydrogen has been touted as a key fuel for a carbon-free future, but it'll remain far more expensive than previously thought for decades to come, according to BloombergNEF estimates.

BNEF had in the past forecast steep declines in the price of green hydrogen, which is made by splitting it from water with machines called electrolyzers running on renewable power.

In its latest forecast, the firm more than tripled its 2050 cost estimate, citing higher expenses for those electrolyzers. Its outlook doesn't include subsidies or other government incentives for making the fuel, such as new rules by the Biden administration that loosened some stringent safeguards on a tax credit worth billions of dollars for hydrogen production.

VIEW FROM THE TOP





## WORLD

# Canada PM Trudeau is likely to announce resignation - source



Canada's Prime Minister Justin Trudeau leaves after a cabinet meeting on Parliament Hill in Ottawa, on Dec 20, 2024. AP

ister until a new Liberal leader is selected, the Globe and Mail report added.

## Calls to resign grow

Trudeau took over as Liberal leader in 2013 when the party was in deep trouble and had been reduced to third place in the House of Commons for the first time.

If he does resign, it would likely spur fresh calls for a quick election to put in place a stable government able to deal with the administration of President-elect Donald Trump for the next four years.

The prime minister has discussed with Finance Minister Dominic LeBlanc whether he would be willing to step in as interim leader and prime minister, one source told the newspaper, adding that this would be unworkable if LeBlanc plans to run for the leadership.

Trudeau, 53, had been able to fend off Liberal legislators worried about the polls and the loss of safe

seats in two special elections.

But calls for him to step aside have grown since December, when Trudeau tried to demote Finance Minister Chrystia Freeland, one of his closest cabinet allies, after she pushed back against his proposals for more spending.

Freeland quit instead and penned a letter accusing Trudeau of "political gimmicks" rather than focusing on what was best for the country. Trudeau propelled the Liberals to power in 2015 promising "sunny ways" and a progressive agenda that promoted the rights of women and a promise to fight climate change.

But the everyday realities of governing gradually wore him down and like many Western leaders, the need to deal with the effects of the pandemic ate up much of his time.

Although Ottawa spent heavily to protect consumers and businesses, racking up record budget deficits, this provided little protection from public anger as prices soared.

tives in an election that must be held by late October.

Sources told the Globe and Mail that they did not know definitely when Trudeau would announce his plans to leave but said they expect it would happen before an emergency meeting of Liberal legislators on Wednesday.

An increasing number of Liberal parliamentarians, alarmed by a series of gloomy polls, have publicly urged Trudeau to quit.

The prime minister's office did not immediately respond to a request for comment outside regular business hours. The prime minister's regularly published schedule for Monday said he would participate virtually in a cabinet committee meeting on Canada-US relations.

It remains unclear whether Trudeau will leave immediately or stay on as prime min-

## OTTAWA

CANADIAN Prime Minister Justin Trudeau is increasingly likely to announce he intends to step down, though he has not made a final decision, a source familiar with Trudeau's thinking said on Sunday.

The source spoke to Reuters after the Globe and Mail reported that Trudeau was expected to announce as early as Monday that he would quit as leader of Canada's ruling Liberal Party after nine years in office.

The source requested anonymity because they were not authorized to speak publicly.

Trudeau's departure would leave the party without a permanent head at a time when polls show the Liberals will badly lose to the official opposition Conserva-

# Musk turns on Farage, says he should quit as UK Reform party leader

## LONDON

ELON Musk said Nigel Farage should quit as leader of Britain's right-wing Reform UK party in an abrupt withdrawal of support by the US billionaire for the Brexit campaigner who is trying to shake up the British political establishment again.

"The Reform Party needs a new leader. Farage doesn't have what it takes," Musk said on his social media platform X on Sunday, a few hours after Farage described him as a friend who made Reform look "cool".

Musk - a close ally of US President-elect Donald Trump - had seemingly backed Farage and posed for a photograph with him last month.

Reform won 4.1 million votes or 14 percent of the total and five seats in parliament in last July's national election.

Farage has previously said he is in negotiations with Musk about the billionaire donating to Reform to help it challenge the dominant Labour and Conservative parties.

But Farage has distanced himself from comments made by Musk in support of British anti-immigration and anti-Muslim activist Stephen Yaxley-Lennon, known by the pseudonym Tommy Robinson, who is serving a prison sentence for contempt of court.

Farage responded to Musk's post on Sunday saying: "Well, this is a surprise! Elon is a remarkable individual but on this I am afraid I disagree. My view remains that Tommy Robinson is not right for Reform and I never sell out my principles."

Last month, Musk endorsed the Al-



Reform UK leader Nigel Farage speaks during the New York Young Republican Club's annual gala at Cipriani Wall Street, Dec 15, 2024, in New York. AP

ternative for Germany, an anti-immigration, anti-Islamic party labelled as right-wing-extremist by German security services, ahead of national elections in February.

Musk has previously sought to influence British politics and has criticised Prime Minister Keir Starmer repeatedly since anti-immigration riots last summer.

The Tesla founder last week backed calls for a national inquiry into the handling of cases of rape by men of Pakistani heritage of underage girls by the government's prosecution service which Starmer previously ran.

A 2014 inquiry found at least 1,400 children were subjected to sexual exploitation

in Rotherham, northern England, between 1997 and 2013.

The Times said Starmer was expected to address the criticism at a news conference on Monday by saying he gave the green light to prosecuting paedophile gangs in 2013 and reformed the way that child abuse cases are handled by prosecutors.

But he was unlikely to criticise Musk directly given the billionaire's proximity to Trump, the newspaper said.

A spokesperson in Starmer's office declined to comment.

On Sunday, UK health minister Wes Streeting defended Starmer and another member of his cabinet, Jess Phillips, who

incur Musk's ire for reportedly saying that any fresh inquiry into another gang rape case should be handled by the local authority.

"It's all very easy to sit there and fire off something in haste and click 'send' when people like Keir Starmer and Jess Phillips have done the hard yards of actually locking up wife beaters, rapists and paedophiles," Streeting told the BBC.

# Why S. Korean investigators fail to arrest impeached president

## SEOUL

SOUTH Korean investigators with the anti-corruption investigative unit on Friday failed to arrest the impeached President Yoon Suk-yeol and left the presidential residence after being blocked by the presidential security service.

The Corruption Investigation Office for High-Ranking Officials (CIO) said the continued confrontation virtually made it impossible to execute the arrest warrant against Yoon, which was the first in the country's constitutional history that an arrest warrant had been issued against a sitting president.

## WHAT HAPPENED

The CIO reportedly decided to carry out the arrest operation early Friday morning to minimize possible clashes with Yoon's supporters, who were expected to gather in larger numbers later in the day.

The Seoul Western District Court on Dec. 31 issued the arrest warrant for Yoon, citing allegations of insurrection, along with a search warrant for the presidential residence.

The warrant is valid until Jan. 6. However, Yoon's legal team on the same day after the issuance of the warrant issued a statement asserting that the arrest and search warrants requested by an agency lacking jurisdiction over insurrection charges are illegal and invalid.

Since then, conservative supporters opposing Yoon's impeachment began gathering near the presidential residence. On Jan. 1, Yoon addressed his supporters in a letter, pledging to "fight to the end," which was interpreted by local media as a call to resist the warrant's execution.

At around 7:21 a.m. on Friday, a team of 150 personnel, including 30 CIO officials and 120 police officers, arrived at the presidential residence. To prevent potential clashes, over 2,800 additional police officers were deployed around the residence. On the previous day, police dispersed Yoon's supporters to secure access to the residence.

The CIO stopped the execution operation at about 1:30 p.m. local time after being blocked by the presidential security service, expressing deep regret over the attitude of Yoon who refused to comply with legal procedures. The investigative unit added that it will decide on future measures after relevant reviews.

## WHY DID THE ARREST FAIL

Although Yoon's presidential duties have been suspended due to impeachment, he remains the sitting president and continues to receive protection from the security service, which operates under his command.

Since Yoon declared martial law, the security service has followed his orders and blocked investigators from entering the residence, citing the Presidential Security Act and the Criminal Procedure Act. Although the court clarified that the warrant was not subject to the Criminal Procedure Act, the security service insisted on following "legal procedures" for security measures.

Reports indicated that the security service invoked a clause in the Presidential Security Act allowing entry restrictions for security purposes.

While 80 CIO personnel managed to enter the residence area and breach two security lines, they were stopped in front of the main building. The law enforcement presented the warrant to the security service director, who, however, refused entry, citing the Presidential Security Act.

## WHAT'S NEXT

After a five-hour standoff, the CIO announced that it was suspending the operation due to safety concerns. With only three days left before the warrant expires, the chances of successful execution appear slim unless the security service relents. The CIO has filed charges against the security service's leaders for obstructing justice and summoned them for questioning.

The CIO is considering its next steps, including pressuring Acting President Choi Sang-mok to request the security service's cooperation. If successful, Yoon would be taken to the CIO office in Gwacheon for questioning and later detained at the Seoul Detention Center. The investigation would be recorded, and the CIO would have 48 hours to decide whether to seek a detention warrant. Should the current warrant expire without execution, the CIO may reapply or directly request a detention warrant again.

# China's development great opportunity for Africa, says former Nigerian president

## ABUJA

CHINA'S remarkable transformation over recent decades is "a source of inspiration and opportunity for Nigeria and Africa," former Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo has said, emphasizing the potential for strategic collaboration to accelerate mutual growth and development.

In a recent interview with Xinhua, Obasanjo expressed great admiration for China's development while reflecting on his recent visit to the country in October 2024.

"China changes every time you go there," he said, underscoring the country's "capacity for innovation and adaptation," which he believes Nigeria can learn from.

"If it has been done in China, it

can be done elsewhere," the former president said. Obasanjo said there are many lessons Nigeria can take from China's development, highlighting China's unique role in fostering global peace, shared prosperity, strategic partnerships, and poverty alleviation.

He added that these achievements demonstrate China's ability to transform its society and its potential to contribute to global development.

China has lifted 800 million people out of poverty, "a feat unparalleled in world history," he said, lauding Beijing for its willingness to share its experience and help other developing nations "learn how to fish," which he sees as essential for empowering nations to create their



own wealth.

As Africa's most populous nation and leading economy, Nigeria has much to gain from a deeper partnership with China, Obasanjo said, noting the elevation of China-Nige-

ria ties to a comprehensive strategic partnership in September 2024 will help promote trust and mutually beneficial outcomes.

He said the China-proposed initiatives like the Belt and Road Initia-

tive (BRI) offer immense opportunity for Africa to boost intra-African trade and infrastructure development.

With over 150 nations and over 30 international organizations involved, the BRI aims to enhance global connectivity and trade, he said, noting that improved communication and transportation networks are critical for developing the African continent.

While responding to concerns about China's expanding global influence, Obasanjo said that China's engagement with Africa is based on strategic cooperation, not exploitation.

"Strategic relationships mean mutual benefit, economically, diplomatically, and technologically," he

said, calling on Nigeria to harness its agricultural and mineral resources to drive industrialization and value addition as part of this partnership. "Fair trade, not aid, is the way forward," Obasanjo stressed.

The former president emphasized the importance of leadership in promoting unity, harmony, and shared prosperity.

He underlined the need for equity, justice, and inclusivity at all levels of governance, warning that a world without these principles would be "dangerous for everyone."

Looking ahead, Obasanjo expressed hope that Nigeria and China, by strengthening their partnerships and embracing fair trade, could jointly create a more secure, equitable, and prosperous world.



## Israeli army intensifies strikes on Gaza amid renewed efforts to reach truce

GAZA

The Israeli military has ramped up airstrikes on the Gaza Strip amid revived negotiations in Doha aimed at halting a 15-month conflict, Palestinian officials and witnesses reported.

The surge in attacks followed a warning earlier on Sunday from Israeli Defense Minister Israel Katz, who vowed "stronger strikes than Gaza has seen in a long time" unless Hamas ceases rocket fire and releases hostages. Local residents described the raids as among the most intense since the war began.

Mahmoud Basal, spokesperson for the Palestinian Civil Defense, told Xinhua that at least 17 Palestinians were killed in the strikes on Sunday.

He detailed that five people died in an airstrike targeting a house in the Nuseirat refugee camp, while four others were killed in Jabalia.

In Khan Yunis, five were killed, and dozens injured in a strike on a Hamas police center. Three more fatalities occurred in two separate airstrikes in Rafah.

The Hamas-led media office reported that the Israeli military has conducted 94 airstrikes over the past 72 hours, leaving 184 dead.

Meanwhile, the Israeli military said it targeted 100 locations in Gaza over the weekend, claiming to have killed dozens of Hamas operatives.

Efforts to broker a ceasefire and prisoner exchange deal have gained momentum

in Doha, with mediators from Egypt and Qatar applying pressure on both sides. Palestinian sources familiar with the discussions said Hamas has shown flexibility toward a phased agreement.

Israeli media outlet Yedioth Ahronoth cited officials suggesting that the talks focus on a "limited, partial deal," including a short-term ceasefire of six to eight weeks and a prisoner exchange.

Mossad chief David Barnea is set to join the Israeli delegation in Doha on Monday.

Amid the violence, civilians in Gaza expressed mixed feelings about the prospects of a truce.

Samir al-Amoudi, a displaced resident of Khan Yunis, voiced hope for a swift resolution. "Every day, dozens die, and entire families are erased. We must stop this catastrophe," the father of six said. Others, however, remain skeptical.

"There's no optimism yet," said Ahmed al-Hams, also from Khan Yunis. "The suffering grows daily -- killing, destruction, starvation. This must end."

The war erupted on Oct. 7, 2023, when Hamas launched a surprise attack on southern Israel, killing 1,200 people and taking around 250 hostages.

Israel responded with large-scale air and ground operations in Gaza, where over two million residents face mounting casualties and devastation.

According to the health authorities in Gaza's Sunday tally, Israeli strikes have killed approximately 45,805 Palestinians and injured over 109,064.

## Zelensky uses foul language, blames West for not providing help

MOSCOW

VLADIMIR Zelensky used bad language when talking about Western partners in an interview with US journalist Lex Fridman.

Zelensky used profanities in Russian during the interview. He did not give the interview in Russian as the journalist had suggested but used Russian words many times talked obscenities several times on the video released by the Zelensky's office.

In his opinions, Western partners were to attempt to "intimidate" Moscow by sanctions and arms supplies to Kiev even before February 24, 2022.

"Everybody said something, forecasted and so on but I requested just one, primarily from the United States, <...> give me two things - reinforce us with weapons but the best thing is to reinforce us with preconditions. These are not the weapons; these are the sanctions in the first instance," Zelensky said.

"The fact is that we did not receive aid. If we consider that words are the aid, well then, we received plenty of that," he added.



## Ethiopia, Somalia agree to solidify ties following recent diplomatic tensions

ADDIS ABABA

ETHIOPIAN and Somali officials have reiterated common commitments to ensuring peace and stability in Somalia and the region as the two countries solidify ties on the backdrop of recent diplomatic tensions.

This came during a meeting between officials of the two countries as a high-level Ethiopian delegation led by Ethiopian Minister of Defense Aisha Mohammed made an official working visit to Somalia, the Ethiopian Ministry of Foreign Affairs said in a statement issued

Friday.

According to the statement, the Ethiopian delegation held "fruitful discussions" with Somali President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud and other senior officials. It said the discussions "reaffirmed the commitment of both countries to working together to ensure peace and stability in Somalia and the region."

The two countries "agreed to collaborate on the African Union Support and Stabilization Mission in Somalia and strengthen bilateral relations." They also agreed to enhance exchanges of visits and

discussions among officials of the two countries, according to the statement.

Reiterating Ethiopia's commitment to contributing to the peace and stability of Somalia, the Ethiopian defense minister stressed that combating terrorism is a key area of cooperation between the two Horn of Africa countries.

Somali Minister of Defense Abdulkadir Mohamed Nur expressed his appreciation and gratitude for the Ethiopian Defense Forces' sacrifices and contributions to ensuring peace in Somalia, according to the statement.

Tensions had been escalating between Ethiopia and Somalia after Ethiopia and Somaliland reportedly signed an agreement earlier in 2024, allowing Ethiopia access to the Red Sea in exchange for its recognition of Somaliland, a region of Somalia, as an independent state.

Somalia said the agreement is legally invalid. Leaders of Ethiopia and Somalia reached an agreement in December 2024 after Turkish-mediated negotiations in Ankara, marking a breakthrough in resolving recent misunderstandings.

## Four years on, is Donald Trump set to pardon January 6 rioters?

WASHINGTON

Four years after the January 6 Capitol riots, attention has turned to the possibility that President-elect Donald Trump may issue pardons to many of the more than 1,500 individuals charged in connection with the attack, NBC News reported.

The inauguration of Trump as US President is scheduled to take place on January 20.

In an interview, Trump had pledged to prioritise relief for his supporters on his first day in office, criticising their treatment within what he described as a "corrupt" justice system and vowing quick action. Although, Trump hinted at exceptions for those he deemed "radical" or "crazy."

In an exclusive interview with NBC News' "Meet the Press," Trump said that on his first day in office, he will bring legal relief to the January 6 rioters who he said have been put through a "very nasty system."

"I'm going to be acting very quickly. First day. They have been in there for years, and they're in a filthy, disgusting place that shouldn't even be allowed to be open," Trump added.

Trump further said that there "may be some exceptions" to his pardons "if somebody was radical, crazy."

On being asked about over 900 other people who had pleaded guilty in connection to the attack but weren't accused of assaulting officers, Trump said, "I know the system. The system's a very corrupt

system. They say to a guy, 'You're going to go to jail for two years or for 30 years.' And these guys are looking, their whole lives have been destroyed. For two years, they have been destroyed. But the system is a very nasty system," NBC News reported.

During his campaign events last year, Trump had frequently brought up the events of January 6, and denounced the 2020 elections that he lost.

While addressing a rally in March 2024 near Ohio's Dayton, he had announced to issue pardons for Trump supporting 'hostages' on the first day of his presidency. Referring to the people imprisoned in connection with the January 6 Capitol riots as hostages, Trump, in his opening remarks had said, "You see the spirit from the hostages. And that's what they are - hostages."

In a post on social media platform Truth Social, Trump in March 2024 wrote, "'My first acts as your next President will be to Close the Border, DRILL, BABY, DRILL, and Free the January 6 Hostages being wrongfully imprisoned!'"

Notably, over 1,350 people were charged in nearly all 50 US States for crimes related to the breach of the US Capitol, according to the US Department of Justice, after rioters stormed the building to protest former President Trump's election loss and the validity of Biden's win.

Of those, at least 560 defendants received sentences while at least 335 were sentenced to periods of incarceration, the DOJ had said

ANI

## Syria's security remains fragile after Assad's ouster

DAMASCUS

A series of incidents across Syria over the weekend underscored the fragility of the security situation following the ouster of Bashar al-Assad's government last month.

In southern Quneitra province, Israeli forces reportedly crossed into several villages on Sunday, erecting dirt barriers that disrupted civilian life and closed schools in at least one community, according to the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights.

The Observatory, citing eyewitnesses, said residents attempted to block the incursion, but Israeli units advanced, taking up positions and detaining at least one person in nearby Daraa province.

Tensions also persisted in northern Syria, where Turkish-backed factions within the Syrian National Army (SNA) targeted the U.S.-backed Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) near Manbij, northeast of Aleppo.

The observatory reported Turkish airstrikes aimed at breaching SDF defensive lines, potentially targeting strategic locations around Maskanah in the Aleppo countryside.

Over 100 fighters were killed in two days of clashes, the majority from Turkish-backed forces, accord-

ing to the Observatory. Separately, the observatory reported a surge in the circulation of small arms, much of it looted from abandoned government military depots.

The weapons, now being sold cheaply, have ended up in the hands of teenagers lacking training and awareness of the dangers, the Observatory said.

Citing a doctor at Damascus' Mujtahid Hospital, the report said two to five child-related gun injuries are being treated weekly.

"They pick up stray ordinance as if they were harmless objects," the doctor said, warning of potential psychological trauma for young survivors.

In eastern Homs province, security forces continued a crackdown for a second day on Sunday, reportedly detaining around 500 people over the weekend, including former soldiers of the Assad government, according to the observatory.

The Britain-based monitor reported abuses during the raids, including mistreatment of individuals believed to have ties to the previous military and security apparatus, despite official pledges of a transparent legal process.

## New Year's key traditions reviewed

AS New Year has arrived, the TASS-FACTBOX team has compiled a report on customs, decorations, and characters associated with this holiday.

Christmas tree

The custom of decorating Christmas trees dates back to biblical myths. One legend recounts that a fir-tree, an olive tree, and a palm grew near the cave where Jesus Christ was born. When the Guiding Star appeared in the skies to announce that the Savior was born for all, the olive tree produced its golden fruit, the palm provided shelter from the heat, and the evergreen conifer stood aside. A miracle occurred as stars shot from the sky and transformed the tree.

Several alternative stories exist about the origins of the Christmas tree decoration tradition, many linked to Christianity. However, ancient Germans celebrated Yule, a medieval mid-winter festival aligned with the winter solstice. They decorated forest trees, lit candles, and performed rituals to appease forest spirits.

They also placed evergreen branches inside homes, believing these symbols of endurance, health, and longevity. As Christianity spread, most pagan rituals took on new meanings, and Yule was completely replaced with Christmas by the 15th-16th centuries. Still, these traditions endured, and fir trees remained a feature of Christmas celebrations. Initially, trees were placed outdoors, but eventually, a tradition emerged of decorating them inside homes. It is known that, in 1419, apprentices at a bakery in Freiburg decorated a fir tree outside a Catholic hospital for the poor with apples, nuts, and gingerbread.

By the 16th century, the custom of placing Christmas trees spread throughout Germany, with decorated conifers remaining until New Year. Over time, the tradition spread across Europe and eventually to America.

Russia has celebrated New Year and Christmas with decorated fir trees since Peter the Great's reign. In 1699, the Russian tsar ordered the move of New Year celebrations from September 1 to January 1 "to follow other Christian nations' practice." In the late 19th century, Russia adopted the European tradition of artificial fir trees, originally



made of tissue. From 1929 to 1935, when the Soviet Union banned religion, Christmas celebrations were prohibited, and New Year festivities were also cancelled as "bourgeois remnants." However, starting in 1936, New Year parties resumed in schools, children's centers, and orphanages, with events featuring fir trees held at the Column Hall of the House of Unions. In 1954, the first party was held at the Hall of the Order of St. George in the Grand Kremlin Palace. Since 1962, the country's primary New Year event for children has been held at the Kremlin Palace of Congresses (now the State Kremlin Palace).

Decorations

Apples, nuts, eggs, and candies were the original Christmas tree decorations, with paper, cardboard, cotton, and painted fir-tree cones added since the 18th century.

All decorations had deep Christian symbolism: six-pointed stars placed atop trees symbolized the Holy Star of Bethlehem, which guided the Magi to Christ's birthplace. Apples symbolized the fruit from the Tree of Knowledge, while candles represented purity.

As craftsmen began producing Christmas tree decorations, brass figures of angels were placed on fir trees. The 1848 apple crop failure in Germany led to the creation of glass decorations. That year, glass-makers in Lauscha, Thuringia, made "apples" from thick glass, marking the start of regular Christmas tree decoration production. In 1867, gas torches were used to blow not only glass bubbles but also objects in other shapes. Over time, glass decorations were primarily made in Germany, though other

countries began producing them by the late 19th century.

The first electric lights were placed on the White House tree in Washington in 1895. In Europe, electric lights first appeared on Christmas trees in Finland in 1906.

In Russia, Christmas trees have been decorated since the 1830s. Decorations were handmade or baked. Later, glass decorations began to be imported from Germany. The glassmaking plant in Klin, near Moscow, was the first to begin mass-producing Christmas tree decorations. During the Soviet era, the Star of Bethlehem was replaced with a five-pointed red star, the state symbol, atop the tree. Figures of people, animals, fruit, and vegetables, made from glass, cotton, cardboard, and papier-mache, were popular. The Soviet Union began producing electric lights in 1938.

While today's assortment of Christmas tree decorations is almost identical worldwide, with baubles being the most common, colored lanterns and tin tinsel remain particularly popular in Ireland. In Norway and Sweden, sun- and snowflake-shaped toys, along with animal figures made from straw or wood, are top sellers.

Gifts

The tradition of New Year gift-giving is believed to have originated with the ancient Romans. It is said that Gaius Julius Caesar started the custom of giving a laurel wreath and a coin on New Year's Day.

In Japan, it's customary to exchange oseibo gifts (simple sets of essentials) or otoshidama (money in decorative envelopes). In the U.S., people often give gift items

with receipts attached for easy returns. In Austria, practical gifts that can be used daily are common, with tickets for the Vienna State Opera also being popular presents. In Sweden and other Nordic countries, where evenings come early, candles are ideal gifts, helping to create a warm and festive atmosphere. In China, where family harmony is highly valued, it is customary to give pairs of items as gifts.

In Russia, children typically receive sweets and toys as New Year gifts, while adults often get perfumes, chocolates, accessories, or beauty products.

Fairy tale characters

In Europe and America, the primary gift-giver for Christmas and New Year is a figure based on Archbishop Nicholas of Myra, who lived in Asia Minor during the 3rd-4th centuries. He was canonized as a saint and became St. Nicholas the Wonderworker. Legend has it that he once dropped gold coins down the chimney of a house where three poor women lived. The coins landed in their stockings-or, in another version, in boots placed by the chimney. This led to the tradition of placing gifts in shoes or stockings. Over time, the image of St. Nicholas evolved into various Christmas figures with distinct national traits.

He is called Grandfather Christmas in some countries, Pere Noel in France and other Francophone regions, Papa Noel in Spain, Babbo Natale in Italy, Sankt Nikolaus in Germany, Mikulas in the Czech Republic and Slovakia, Swiety Mikolaj in Poland, and Sinterklaas in the Netherlands, Belgium, and former Dutch colonies.

Russia's Grandfather Frost dates back to pagan times. In Old Slavic folklore, he was depicted as a short, old man with a long beard and as severe as Russian winters. People left food outside their homes to appease him. Today, Grandfather Frost, or Father Frost, hails from Veliky Ustyug, in the Russian North. He is depicted as a white-bearded old man in a long robe, wearing felt or long boots, carrying a staff and a bag of gifts. Grandfather Frost has no direct counterpart in Western Christmas traditions. He is accompanied by Snegurochka, the Snow Maiden, a figure rooted in Russian folklore and 19th-century literature.



# Yanga breathe new life, Simba edge out CS Sfaxien in CAF campaigns

By Lloyd Elipokea

**A**FTER ringing in the New Year, Young Africans have laid down a marker about their intentions to revive their concerning CAF Champions League Group Stage campaign.

Indeed, after gaining just a meagre point from their group stage matches so far, Young Africans impressively bounced back last Saturday when they hosted TP Mazembe at the stately Benjamin Mkapa Stadium in a group clash with a lot being on the line.

In spite of the fact that TP Mazembe drew first blood, Young Africans recovered to level the match in the 33rd minute with a powerful strike by Clement Mzize, which was a real corker.

Now with the momentum, The side pressed forward in a bid to seize the lead but unfortunately, all these efforts proved to be fruitless in the remainder of the first half. Come the second half, though, Young Africans claimed two quick-fire goals in the 56th and 60th minutes, which helped the Jangwani Street-based titans to assume a 3-1 lead in the absorbing encounter.

Pleasingly, Young Africans would not relinquish their lead for the remainder of the second half, which happily meant that the team had secured a morale-boost-



Simba SC attacking midfielder Jean Charles Ahoua pictured on Sunday scoring his side's winning goal against CS Sfaxien during their CAF Confederation Cup Group A match at the Olympique Hammadi Agrebi Stadium in Tunisia. Photo: Courtesy of SSC

ing triumph, which keeps alive their hopes of advancing from the group stage to the quarterfinals of the CAF Champions League.

Meanwhile, in the CAF Confederations Cup's group stage, our flag-bearers in that competition, Simba SC, are distinctly on the up and up following a hard-fought, slim 1-0 victory against their hosts CS Sfaxien in Tunisia last Sunday.

As a result of that ecstatic win, Simba now

have nine points in the Group A and it is hoped that the Msimbazi street-based football outfit can maintain their winning ways en route to hopefully the quarterfinals of the CAF Confederations Cup.

Let us now switch gears and discuss the title prospects of our own African female tennis ace, Ons Jabeur of Tunisia, who will be earnestly seeking to bag the New Year's first grand slam, the Australian Open, that will get underway this Sunday.

Frustratingly, Jabeur's 2024 was sadly marred by a painful shoulder injury, which prompted her to end her season last year prematurely. Now, with her fitness restored, Jabeur will be carrying the hopes of all Africans as she seeks to return to her magnificent best form.

It should be noted here that Jabeur has reached the final of the most sought-after grand slam, Wimbledon, on two consecutive occasions in re-

cent years.

It should also be recalled that in the last few years, Jabeur successfully managed to enter into the top ten rankings of global women's tennis, which was a truly unprecedented accomplishment for African women's tennis.

Thus, with the time for the Australian Open now nigh, it is a given that all African tennis fans will be cheering Jabeur on as the Tunisian boldly attempts to rewrite the history books even further.



Antas Sports youth team coach, Sam Sanyagwa, pictured recently giving instructions to his players during a training session at the Jakaya Kikwete Sports Park grounds in Dar es Salaam. PHOTO: CORRESPONDENT JUMANNE JUMA

## Australia debacle exposes India's Bumrah dependency

By Amlan Chakraborty

INDIA'S 3-1 defeat in Australia exposed the fragility of their top order, but equally unmissable was how much they rely on pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah, who gave it all until he broke down in the series finale in Sydney.

The seam-bowling genius finished the five-test series with 32 wickets at an average of 13.06 and was the obvious choice for the player-of-the-series award despite being on the losing side.

Bumrah, laid low by a back spasm, was not available to bowl in Australia's second innings in

the low-scoring thriller in Sydney where the hosts prevailed by six wickets to reclaim the Border-Gavaskar Trophy after a decade.

"It's a little disappointing in the end because I probably missed out on the spiciest wicket of the series," a dejected Bumrah said after India lost the series even though his own stature grew.

Australia run-machine Travis Head said he could not think of a better individual display than Bumrah's superlative performance in the series.

Former India opener Wasim Jaffer said Bumrah alone kept alive India's hopes of levelling

the series in Sydney until his injury.

"Every time Bumrah stood at the top of his mark this series Aus cricket fans held their breath and only released it after the ball was played out safely," Jaffer wrote on X.

"Have rarely seen a cricketer dominate the Aussie psyche so much..."

But there is a limit even for arguably the best all-format bowler of his generation, who was over-bowled with little support from the other end.

His new-ball partner Mohammed Siraj, who finished with 20 wickets, was inconsistent and expensive in the low-scor-

ing series.

Akash Deep bowled well in Brisbane and Melbourne before a back injury cut short his tour, while Prasad Krishna claimed six wickets in the only test he played in Sydney.

The difference between the bowling averages of Bumrah and his seam-bowling teammates stood at 21.76, suggesting Bumrah operated as India's one-man army with the ball.

He bowled 53.2 overs in Melbourne - the highest in his 45-test career - and skipper Rohit Sharma conceded they over-bowled Bumrah.

"If somebody is in such

a great form, you want to try and maximise that form," Rohit said after the Melbourne test.

"That is what we've been trying to do with Bumrah."

Apart from mentoring the young seamers in the squad, Bumrah also led India in Perth and Sydney, with Rohit skipping the first test and being dropped from the last.

The Australia tour adds another layer of sheen to Bumrah's reputation as a premier bowler of his era, but India will return worrying about their shallow pace reserve ahead of their England tour in June-July.

REUTERS

## Mwera chess competition now promotes youth development in Zanzibar

By Guardian Correspondent

AT the end of December 2024, the fifth edition of the Mwera Chess Competition in Zanzibar was organized by Dr. Konrad Czernichowski, an economics lecturer at Jordan University College in Morogoro and the University of Maria Curie-Skłodowska (UMCS) in Lublin, Poland.

The competition, aimed at children in Zanzibar, took place at St. Mark Catholic Parish, thanks to the hospitality of the Parish Priest, Fr. Jean-Claude Malu CSSp.

Jackson Boniphace Joseph emerged as the champion for the fourth consecutive time, maintaining a perfect record by winning twice against every other participant.

He was awarded a chess book in Swahili as his prize. Jackson has held the title since 2021, solidifying his dominance in the competition.

The runner-up was Baraka James, a Form 2 student who made significant progress compared to last year when he finished in fifth place.

The third position was claimed by Judith Boniphace Joseph, Jackson's sister and the only girl participating in the tournament.

The competition was highly competitive, with no participant finishing with zero points.

Some children joined for the first time, showcasing potential for growth. Teaching children chess is vital as it develops critical skills such as logical and abstract thinking, strategic planning, decision-making, and resilience in the face of failure.

Chess also fosters unity among

people of different nations, religions, and backgrounds. The International Chess Federation's (FIDE) motto, "Gens una sumus" (Latin for "We are one family"), encapsulates this spirit.

There is hope that some of these children may achieve success on the international stage in the future.

History shows that most chess grandmasters began playing at an early age. Tanzania is still waiting for its first grandmaster, currently ranking 156th globally according to FIDE's website.

On January 2, 2025, Said Mohammed Mugheri, one of Tanzania's top 15 chess players and a chess teacher in Zanzibar and Dubai, visited the children of Mwera Chess Club alongside his exceptional student, Ibrahim Abdulla Ali.

Mugheri conducted a session on the basics of chess openings and held a simultaneous exhibition match against multiple players.

He also praised the performance of the two girls, Rose and Lydia, who participated despite losing their games, noting their potential and determination. Ali assisted beginners by teaching the fundamentals of chess.

In the past, Zanzibar had a strong chess community, but many top players have since emigrated.

However, chess enthusiasts in the region are hopeful about reviving the game on the island.

Training sessions are held every Sunday at 10 a.m. at Africano Restaurant in Stone Town, and all Zanzibaris and visitors are welcome to participate.



Participants pictured recently with Said Mohammed Mugheri during a training session at Mwera Chess Club in Zanzibar. Photo: Correspondent



## Luis Enrique praises PSG's fighting spirit in Super Cup victory

PARIS

PARIS St Germain coach Luis Enrique praised his team for starting the year on the right foot and said their 1-0 win over AS Monaco in the French Super Cup on Sunday thanks to Ousmane Dembele's last-gasp goal was well-deserved.

Dembele sealed the win for the French champions two minutes into injury time after PSG created 27 chances, nine of them on target, without breaking the deadlock.

"Today it was a very difficult game, against an opponent with very high quality players and a lot of attacking ones," Luis Enrique told PSG TV.

"We had... moments of domination and moments of defensive suffering, but I think that in the end the goal did justice to a team that never stops fighting, that continues to attack, that does not stop running, that does not stop defending.

"I think it is something very positive and that we must continue to value."

PSG won a record-extending 13th domestic Super Cup, having faced last season's Ligue 1 runners-up Monaco after the Parisians had won both the league and the French Cup.

"Winning a title is always a source of joy," the Spanish coach added.

"Starting 2025 this way, in an almost full stadium, with a lot of Parisian supporters in it... it gives us confidence, it's important for morale, and we have to enjoy it before thinking about the future.

"With the game idea that we have and the profile of our players, we must continue to grow as a team, to improve in any situation."

The French champions, who alongside Serie A side Juventus are the only unbeaten teams remaining in Europe's top five leagues this season, have not lost any domestic game since May last year.

Their three defeats so far in the campaign came in the Champions League.

REUTERS

## Man City's Grealish must fight for spot, says Guardiola

LONDON

JACK Grealish must fight for his place in Manchester City's starting line-up and rediscover the level he showcased during the club's treble-winning season, manager Pep Guardiola said.

The 29-year-old made 50 appearances in City's 2022-23 campaign, scoring five goals and registering 11 assists to help his side win the Champions League, Premier League and FA Cup.

However, the England international has failed to impress this season and was dropped to the bench in Saturday's 4-1 league win over West Ham United, with Brazilian Savinho starting instead.

"Savinho is in better shape and everything than Jack, and that's why I played Savinho," Guardiola told reporters.

"Do I want the Jack that won the treble? Yeah, I want it, but I try to be honest with myself for that. They have to fight. You can say it's unfair.

"If you think that, then it's fine, but you have to prove (to me), 'Okay, I'm going to fight with Savinho, to deserve to play in that position', every single day, every single week and every single month."

Grealish, who also spent a spell on the sidelines this season due to injury, has made just six starts for City in the league.

"Two weeks ago, he was injured and he needs rhythm, and to play, but players need training," Guardiola said.

"I don't have any doubt about the quality of Jack or any of these players. They would not be here (otherwise).

"I know that he can do it because I saw him. I saw his level and I want that, every single training session and every single game."

City next host fourth-tier side Salford City in the FA Cup on Jan. 11.

REUTERS

# Man United boss Amorim the 'only guy upset' after spirited draw with Liverpool



Manchester United's Amad Diallo scores their second goal past Liverpool's Alisson Becker during their Premier League match at Anfield, in Liverpool, Britain on January 5, 2025. REUTERS

By Lori Ewing

MANCHESTER United boss Ruben Amorim was delighted with the intensity his side showed in their breathless 2-2 draw with Premier League leaders Liverpool on Sunday, but said his team's performance left him wanting more.

A week after Amorim said his reeling team could face the threat of relegation, Lisandro Martinez and Amad Diallo scored United's first goals in the cauldron of Anfield since 2018, going toe-to-toe with the league's best team in a well-deserved draw.

"Today I'm allowed to be the only guy upset with the team," Amorim told reporters. "But today we were a team.

"I want to see my team play so much better, but I think the most impor-

tant thing to address today is the mentality. That is the key for everything. Today, we were a different team, not because of the system, not because of the technical aspect of the game, the tactical aspect of the game.

"We faced the competition in the way that we are supposed to face every day, training and match. It doesn't matter the place... we need to face every day like that."

The draw saw United climb a spot to 13th in the table, still 11 points behind sixth-placed Manchester City and 13 behind fourth-placed Chelsea, but it felt like a win for the delighted travelling United fans who had braved the wintery drive. United captain Bruno Fernandes, one of their best players on the day, was left frustrated by the game.

"I'm pretty upset," he said. "If we show this

level at Liverpool, first in the league, why can't we do this everywhere?"

Amorim agreed.

"It's really clear," he said. "We lost three games in a row at home, some of the games we suffered two goals without doing nothing (defensively)."

Amorim had been optimistic that with no mid-week games, he would finally be able to have a full week of training since his arrival in mid-November.

"I don't want to use that, but of course, when you train, you understand better the way we play, the positioning, the characteristics of the teammates, the things are really important. But I don't want to use that today," he said.

"Today is all about the focus when you are playing football, the focus on set pieces, the focus on passing the ball, not in

the sloppy way, but in the way that we cannot lose one ball because in the other part of the pitch is (Mohamed) Salah, is (Luis) Diaz, so you don't lose the ball.

"If you lose the ball in some parts of the pitch, you know that we are going to suffer. If you have that mentality every day, you are a different team and I think that is really clear."

United nearly pulled off a victory with Harry Maguire missing a sitter with the last kick of the game.

"I don't think anyone would have predicted them scoring two goals today or nearly nicking it at the end. But the key is that they have to back it up," former United captain Roy Keane said on the Sky Sports broadcast.

"The argument to all of this though is that you can't just pick and choose when you want

to turn up for a game at Manchester United."

Meanwhile, Liverpool boss Arne Slot defended Trent Alexander-Arnold who drew scathing criticism from pundits after their 2-2 draw with mid-table Manchester United on Sunday, a result that felt like "two points lost" for the Premier League leaders.

United's Bruno Fernandes and Diogo Dalot left the Liverpool defender -- who has been linked this week with a move to Spanish giants Real Madrid -- chasing shadows for much of the game, and former United captain Roy Keane pulled no punches.

"We talk about how brilliant Trent is going forward, but Trent's defending today, my goodness it's like schoolboy stuff," Keane said on the Sky Sports broadcast.

"There's talk about him going to Real Madrid, the

way he's defending he's going to Tranmere Rovers after this. He's got to do better."

Asked if Alexander-Arnold was distracted by the chatter about his contract, which is set to expire at the season's end, Slot said: "I don't believe in those things.

"I think nine out of 10 people will tell you that it affected him, but I'm one of the 10 that tells you that I don't think that affected him. What affected him is that he had to play Bruno Fernandes and Diogo Dalot, two starters for Portugal, great, great, great players," Slot said.

League Two's Tranmere Rovers responded to Keane's comments with a tongue-in-cheek post on social media platform X, writing: "Trent to Tranmere, Roy? Nah, we're alright thanks."

Cody Gakpo and Mohamed Salah scored for the Reds, who remained top of the table with 46 points, six ahead of second-placed Arsenal with a game in hand.

Slot said the draw felt like their 1-0 loss to Nottingham Forest in mid-September, their only defeat this season.

"Of course, it feels for us as two points dropped," the Dutchman said. "It was a difficult game, bit similar to maybe the Nottingham Forest game, where playing style of both teams were quite similar. Defending in the low block with a lot of bodies, and if they had the ball, not to risk to build up, but play it long.

"That is not always easy to play against that style of football, and that's what showed against Forest, and it showed again today as well."

REUTERS

## Indonesia sack coach Shin, citing World Cup target

JAKARTA

INDONESIA sacked coach Shin Tae-yong yesterday with the country's football chief saying the team needed stronger leadership as it battles for a place at the 2026 World Cup.

Tens of millions of people in the Southeast Asian nation are passionate football fans, but Indonesia's sole World Cup appearance came during Dutch rule in 1938 and the country has rarely threatened a return since independence in 1945.

Erick Thohir, who heads the Indonesia Football Association (PSSI), said Shin's work with the team had "ended" and his replacement, whom he declined to name, would arrive in Indonesia on Jan. 11.

"We need a leadership that implements strategies as agreed with the players, communicates better, and implements better programmes for our national team," Thohir told a press confer-

ence. Indonesia are third in their World Cup group after six of 10 matches, one point behind Australia in the battle for the second automatic spot in the finals.

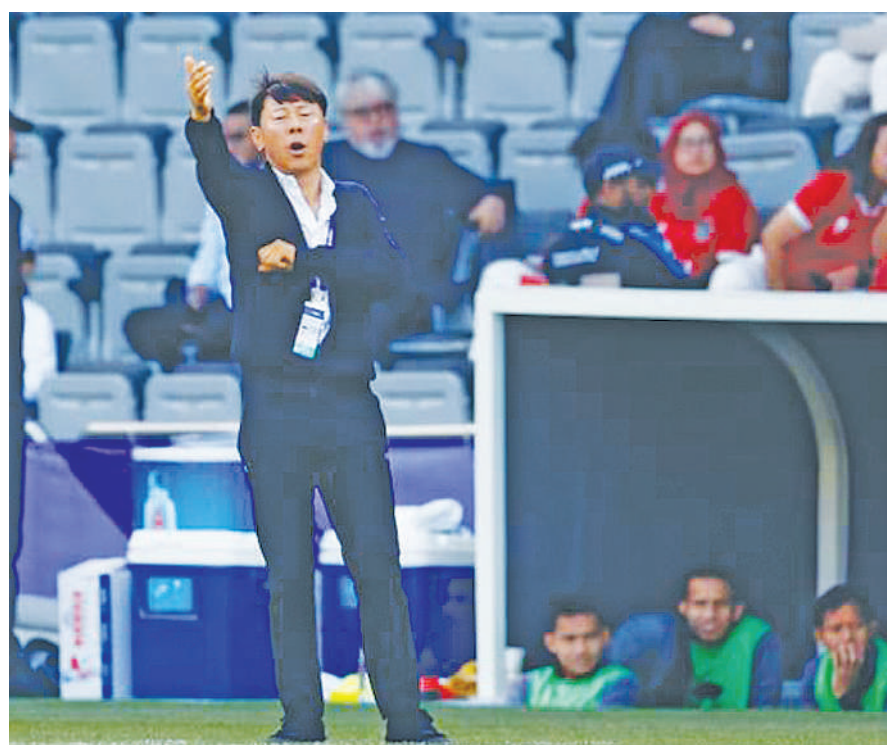
Reuters has sought comment from Shin (pictured) via his social media.

If they finish third or fourth, they could still get to the finals in North America through further rounds of qualifying and an intercontinental play-off.

Thohir, who said he had interviewed three candidates to replace Shin during a recent trip to Europe, was not concerned that changing coaches in the middle of the campaign would disrupt the team.

"It's normal. Lots of countries switch coaches during World Cup qualifiers," he added.

"This is something we've been discussing for many months back, but I think the moment is right, because we still



have 2 1/2 months preparation for next games.

"We still have four matches and we want to get as many points as we can."

South Korean Shin took over as coach in 2019 and Thohir said he would be compensated for the remainder of his contract, which runs to 2027.

Shin benefited from a PSSI policy of enticing members of the Indonesian diaspora, mostly born in the Netherlands, to play for the national

team. Indonesia were the only Southeast Asian nation to reach the third round of qualifying and last November stunned regional powerhouse Saudi Arabia 2-0 in Jakarta.

Shin needed an interpreter to coach the team and Thohir said he would be looking for improved communication and better technical guidance from his replacement.

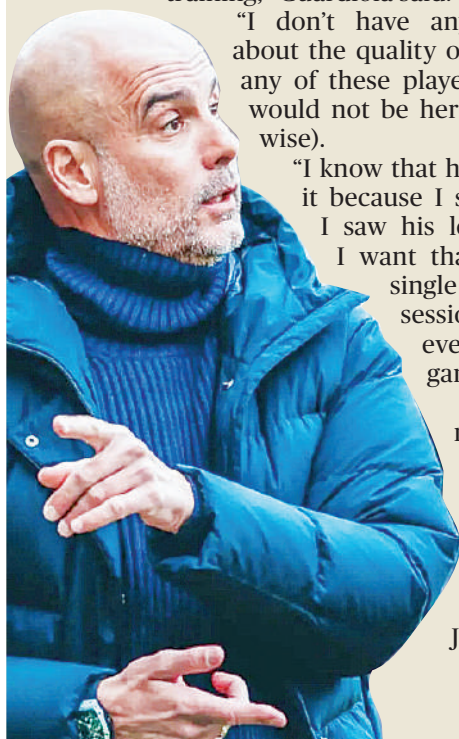
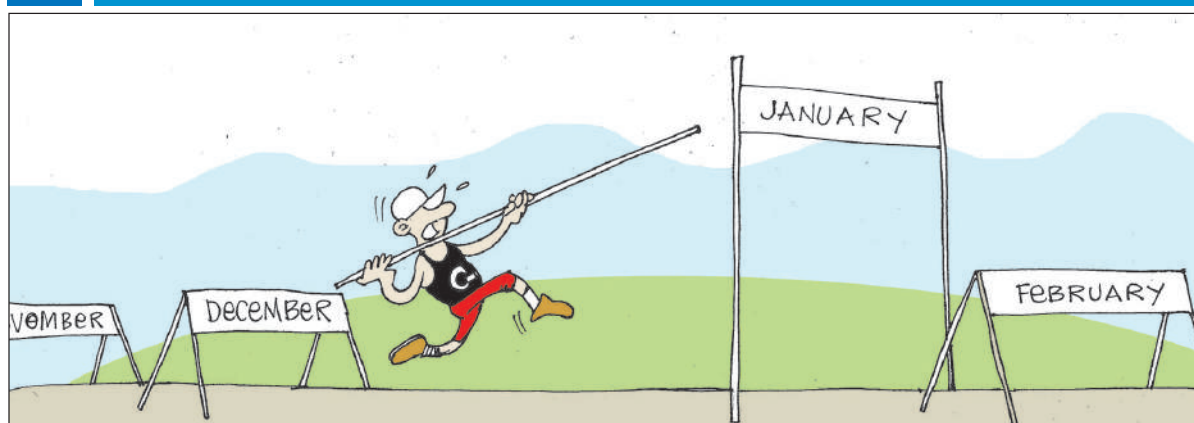
Thohir, who used to own Italian club Inter Milan, said he had made it clear to the candidates that qualifying for the World Cup was the main priority.

"All the candidates that we interviewed during the five days I was in Europe ... agreed that this was the target," he said.

"This is why they agreed to join the interviews."

REUTERS

Gwiji by David Chikoko





## SPORT

Man City's Grealish must fight for spot, says Guardiola

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## CAF confirms 2024 CHAN draw in Kenya amid hosting concerns

By Correspondent Seth Mapoli

THE Confederation of African Football (CAF) has announced that the draw for the 2024 African Nations Championship (CHAN) will take place in Kenya, despite lingering doubts over the country's readiness to co-host the tournament.

The CHAN tournament, which exclusively features national teams composed of players from domestic leagues, is slated to run from February 1 to February 28, 2025.

This edition will be jointly hosted by Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda, marking a historic collaboration among the three East African nations.

While preparations for the tournament appear to be on track in Tanzania and Uganda, Kenya has faced delays in completing renovations of its stadiums. Both Tanzania and Uganda have finalized the refurbishment of their stadiums and installed all necessary equipment.

In contrast, Kenya is yet to meet similar milestones, raising concerns about its ability to host matches as planned.

The issue of infrastructure development in Kenya has been a recurring challenge. Although CAF has urged the host nations to expedite their preparations, Kenya's slow progress has cast doubt on whether the nation will fulfill its hosting obligations in time for the tournament.

CAF confirmed in a statement issued on January 5, 2025, that the draw for the 2024 CHAN tournament will take place at the Kenyatta International Convention Centre (KICC) in Nairobi.

The event is scheduled for January 15, 2025, and will determine the group-stage matchups for the competition.

The draw is expected to attract widespread attention, as the tournament provides a unique platform for showcasing local talent from across Africa.

With only 28 days remaining until the competition kicks off, CAF is also facing the task of confirming the final two participating teams to complete the 19-team lineup.

To date, 17 teams have secured their places in the tournament following a rigorous qualification process. However, CAF has yet to announce the identity of the two additional teams that will join the final roster.

This delay has added to the anticipation surrounding the draw, as fans and analysts alike await the unveiling of the complete tournament lineup. The 2024 CHAN will feature an expanded format, with the number of teams increasing from 16 to 19. This change reflects CAF's commitment to promoting the development of domestic football across the continent.

The decision to award hosting rights to Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda was hailed as a significant milestone for East African football.

It marks the first time that three countries have come together to co-host the CHAN tournament.

Tanzania and Uganda, both experienced in organizing international football events, have been lauded for their swift preparations. Kenya's delays, however, threaten to overshadow the collaborative effort.

CAF officials are reportedly monitoring the situation closely and have not ruled out the possibility of reallocating matches to other host countries if Kenya fails to meet the required standards.

The CHAN tournament holds a special place in African football, as it is exclusively for players plying their trade in domestic leagues. This provides a unique opportunity for lesser-known talents to showcase their skills on an international stage.

The competition also serves as a platform for local leagues to gain recognition and strengthen their profiles. Over the years, CHAN has grown in stature, with several players using the tournament as a springboard to launch successful professional careers abroad.

The 2024 edition is expected to build on this legacy, particularly given the expanded format and the involvement of three host nations.

# Dauids optimistic as Simba SC secure historic away win in CAF Confederation Cup



CS Sfaxien goalkeeper Aymen Dahmen pictured on Sunday failing to stop a shot from Simba's Jean Charles Ahoua (not in picture) during their CAF Confederation Cup Group A match at the Olympique Hammadi Agrebi Stadium in Tunisia. Photo: Courtesy of SSC

By Correspondent Seth Mapoli

SIMBA SC head coach Fadlu Dauids praised his team's resilience after a crucial 1-0 victory over Tunisia's CS Sfaxien in the CAF Confederation Cup, marking their first away win of the season in the competition.

The victory, sealed by attacking midfielder Jean Charles Ahoua, keeps Simba firmly on track for a quarter-final spot.

"Simba is a big team in Africa, so every match we play to win. If we don't win, then we don't lose," Dauids said confidently.

"I want to tell our fans that after this win, it's not over. We still have two group matches to play, and we need to win to secure our qualification. We must stay united, and I believe we will perform well and advance to the next stage."

The match, played at the Olympique Hammadi Agrebi Stadium in Tunisia, was decided in the 34th minute when Ahoua demonstrated composure and skill inside the penalty box.

Receiving a precise pass

from Leonel Ateba, the Ivorian midfielder unleashed a powerful shot past CS Sfaxien goalkeeper Aymen Dahmen. This goal, his second in the competition, adds to his growing reputation as Simba's standout player, having also scored in the group opener against Bravos do Maquis of Angola.

The win lifts Simba to nine points from four matches in Group A, significantly enhancing their chances of progressing to the knockout stages.

The victory also carries historical significance, as Simba join a select group of Tanzanian teams to claim wins on North African soil.

It echoes the 2022 CAF Confederation Cup campaign of their arch-rivals Young Africans, who de-

feated Tunisia's Club Africain in the play-off stage before narrowly losing the final to Algeria's USM Alger on away goals.

Dauids introduced Ellie Mpanzu to Simba's starting lineup, marking her debut in CAF matches since being signed in the limited transfer window. Mpanzu played 77 minutes before being substituted for Debora Mavambo, showcasing promise in his first appearance.

Despite the win, Simba missed several opportunities to secure a more comfortable margin against a struggling CS Sfaxien side, who remain winless and eliminated from the competition.

Playing behind closed doors due to a CAF-imposed ban on fans follow-

ing crowd trouble in their previous match, Sfaxien failed to capitalize on their home advantage.

Simba, on the other hand, dominated proceedings, creating more chances in both halves. The Tanzanian giants showcased superior tactical discipline and were only let down by their inability to convert additional scoring opportunities.

With two matches remaining in Group A, Simba need just one more win to guarantee a quarter-final spot. Their next challenge comes against Bravos do Maquis next weekend in Angola.

A victory there would render their final group game against CS Constan-

Benjamin Mkapa Stadium on January 19 a mere formality.

Dauids urged fans to maintain their support, emphasizing the importance of collective effort as the team pushes for success.

"This journey requires unity. With the quality we have, I am confident we will achieve our goal of qualifying for the next stage," he said.

The win against CS Sfaxien not only boosts Simba's morale but also reinforces their reputation as a formidable force in African football.

The team's tactical adaptability and individual brilliance, particularly from players like Ahoua, underline their potential to make a deep run in the competition.



Mapingira Veterans soccer team player Bakula Mohamed (R) dribbles past Jiji Dar City's Levis Chilemeje during their friendly match held recently at the Jakaya Kikwete Sports Park grounds in Dar es Salaam; PHOTO: CORRESPONDENT: JUMANNE JUMA

## Newcastle urged to carry momentum into clash with Arsenal

LONDON

NEWCASTLE United must make the most of their strong form when they take on Arsenal in the League Cup semi-finals, coach Eddie Howe said on Monday as he urged his team not to be complacent.

Newcastle have won their last six games across all competitions, including impressive victories over Aston Villa, Manchester United and Tottenham Hotspur.

"This is an important game for us. We need to be at our absolute best, a high-level game. There is a lot at stake for us," Howe told reporters ahead of the first leg trip to Arsenal today.

"We've got to be really good off the ball and solid defensively. We've got to cause Arsenal prob-

lems the other way.

"I don't think we should overthink it, we just need to get that mix right. Let's try and continue the good performances we've given recently and try and win the game."

The English manager hailed striker Alexander

Isak, who scored for a seventh successive Premier League game in their 2-1 win over Spurs, but said the Swede's goal-scoring run was down to the team's collective effort.

"Alex will naturally (feel like scoring), when

you are on the run of goalscoring games that he is," Howe added.

"The team is creating for him, the team is playing in a really good way for Alex and others. Alex is playing his part in that by finishing them off but the team is playing great

and creating the chances for him."

Newcastle have also received a boost in defence with Sven Botman returning to the team against Spurs after undergoing anterior cruciate ligament surgery in March.

Asked if Botman would also start against Arsenal, Howe said: "We have to speak to the player, the medical team, the experts. They'll give me some of the answers to what we do with him next."

REUTERS

## Flexibles by David Chikoko

