



Guardian BUSINESS

Tanzanians urged to protect their future with health insurance

Unlocking opportunities: Tanzania's growing rail sector awaits investment

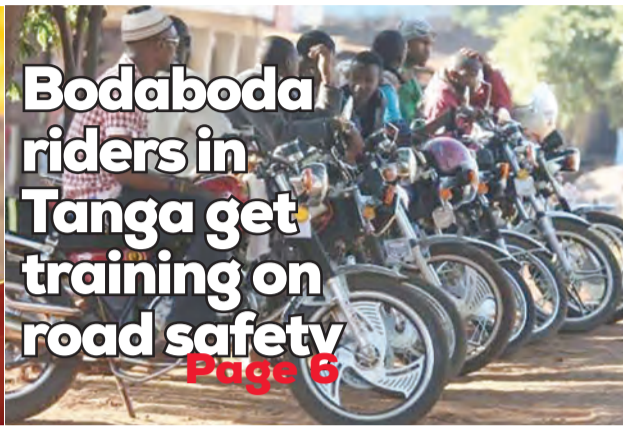
International tourism to top pre-pandemic levels in 2024

International Tourism to Surpass Pre-Pandemic Levels in 2024

Space firm going private to avoid bankruptcy after dismal public run



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Bodaboda riders in Tanga get training on road safety Page 6



'Bring International Women's Day message to rural areas' Page 7

UN Women, DSE ring the bell, decry gender setbacks



Several hours into an especially busy day yesterday, some members of staff of The Guardian Ltd (publishers of The Guardian and Nipasha newspapers) settle for a few minutes' recess to pose for a souvenir photo in marking International Women's Day at the firm's Mikocheni Light Industrial Area in Dar es Salaam. Pictorial spread on page 4. Photo: John Badi

Civic organisation leaders and various stakeholders emphasized the need to acknowledge roles and contribution of women and girls in the country's development.

By Guardian Reporters

THE Tanzania office of the United Nations Women agency (UN Women) is ready to support initiatives that empower women since by investing heavily in gender means the UN will help unlock gender setbacks around the world.

Mitra Sadanadra, the deputy country representative, made this remark at an event at the Dar es Salaam Stock Exchange (DSE) as part of activities to mark the International Women's Day.

The event brought together stakeholders like DSE, UN Women, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the International Finance Corporation (IFC) and the local branch of the Global Compact Network, an international voluntary initiative based on CEO commitments to implement universal sustainability principles.

She said that this is the seventh year the bell is rung with intent to bring attention to the pivotal role the private sector can play in advancing gender equality to achieve a socially sustainable economy.

If well supported, women and girls are good game changers and can greatly contribute to improvement of social welfare nationwide, she emphasized.

Maphosa Banduka, co-founder of Africa.dot initiative said at an event which brought

Health partners set for anti-AIDS monitoring drive

By Guardian Reporter

AMREF Health Africa (T) has launched a health sector strengthening project to accelerate a comprehensive HIV response with intent to end the AIDS pandemic by 2030.

Dr Yahaya Nawanda, the Simiyu regional commissioner, officiated at the project launching event, with project officials saying it is an evidence-based, person-centred HIV prevention and treatment programme.

It will be rolled out in health facilities and community outreach in Mara and Simiyu regions and at least one region in Zanzibar, aligning health system strengthening with infection control.

Dr George Mgomella, associate director of programmes at the local office of U.S. CDC, said the project, funded by the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEP-

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Mwinyi urging digital case format, translating all laws

By Guardian Reporter

ZANZIBAR President Dr Hussein Ali Mwinyi has appealed to the judiciary to increase transparency and enhance efficiency by greater use of electronic case management system (e-CMS).

Formally closing the biennial Commonwealth Law Ministers Meeting (CLMM) in Zanzibar yesterday, he said that the move will greatly speed up the delivery of justice.

It is a fully-featured system that automates and tracks all aspects of the case

life cycle from initial filing through disposition and appeal to each individual party for any case, he stated

The system provides a public portal

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SEE, WE CAN FLY...: Women police officers in Urambo District, Tabora Region, demonstrate their agility yesterday shortly before engaging in environmental cleanliness at the district's headquarters in marking International Women's Day. Photo: Guardian Correspondent



Hundreds of children abducted in Nigeria

ABUJA

GUNMEN attacked a school in Nigeria's northwest region on Thursday morning and abducted at least 287 pupils, the headteacher told authorities.

The incident marked the second mass abduction in the West African nation in less than a week.

Locals told The Associated Press the assailants surrounded the government-owned school in Kaduna State's Kuriga town just as the pupils were about to start the school day.

Authorities had said earlier that more than 100 students were taken hostage in the attack.

The headteacher, however, told Kaduna Governor Uba Sani when he visited the town that the total number of those missing after a headcount was 287.

Abductions of pupils from schools in northern Nigeria are common and have become a source of concern since 2014 when Islamic extremists kidnapped over 200 schoolgirls in Borno state's Chibok village.

In recent years, the abductions have been concentrated in northwestern and central regions, where dozens of armed groups often target villagers and travelers for huge ransoms.



President Samia Suluhu Hassan chairs a cabinet meeting at State House in Dar es Salaam yesterday. Photo: State House

UN Women, DSE ring the bell, decry gender setbacks

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together women journalists in Dar es Salaam, that women and girls need to realise the power within them, utilise educational opportunities and work hard to reach their actual potential.

March 8 is an important day to deeply reflect on women's contribution and the challenges they go through as they strive to reach the highest level of gender equality and inclusivity, the activist intoned.

Mary Mniwasa, the DSE acting director general, said that investing in women was not just a social advancement but also a profitable business decision.

In a statement, the CCM secretariat affirmed that it recognises the massive contribution by women from the time of independence, joining various activist organisations in commemorating the International Women's Day (IWD2024).

Civic organisation leaders and various

stakeholders emphasized the need to acknowledge roles and contribution of women and girls in the country's development.

In various gatherings organised to mark the important day, women were highlighted as key enablers and major contributors in development in social and economic spheres, as well as spiritually, technologically and politically.

Top government officials expressed commitment to pursue goals of empowering

women to participate in national development initiatives by creating a conducive environment enabling them to fruitfully engage in key investment initiatives.

The ruling party said that the country has attained major technological changes within the ambit of major contributions by women who worked hard to fulfil their dreams, responsibilities, served families and uplifted the wider society and the nation at large.



Tanzania's Ambassador to the United Arab Emirates, Lt Gen (rtd) Yacoub Hassan Mohamed (R), pictured yesterday exchanging greetings with One Mobility Group CEO Ahmed Abood Alyafei at the Tanzania Embassy in Abu Dhabi, where the latter later signed a condolence book in connection with the recent passing of former president Ali Hassan Mwinyi. Photo courtesy of the Embassy

Mwinyi urging digital case format, translating all laws

FROM PAGE 1

for users to file documents electronically with access to information for all case types across all jurisdictions, he asserted, highlighting that to facilitate effective implementation of e-CMS, the government has delivered video-conferencing facilities to criminal justice institutions for case proceedings.

An order has similarly been issued to translate the country's laws from English to Swahili and deliver judgments in Swahili as part of efforts to ensure access to justice for all, the president declared.

Commonwealth member countries need to strengthen the use of digital systems in judicial procedures to advance access to justice for all, he said, underlining the need to take up strategies meant to ensure that all groups of people in the society have effective access to legal services.

Strengthening information, communication and technology (ICT) infrastructure outlays and digital conversion of case management is essential to effective-

ness and integrity of the judicial process, he said.

"We should endeavour to create infrastructure for people with disabilities in all areas of service provision particularly in the areas of justice, adopting systems where persons with disabilities access their rights despite those challenges," he said.

The government has undertaken legal sector reforms accommodating digital methods in procedures for easy access to justice especially for vulnerable people, he stated, underscoring the relevance of legal sector reform to attracting foreign direct investments.

The country must capitalize on its rich natural resources and strategic positioning, where Commonwealth member states need to tap investment opportunities in the blue economy, tourism and hospitality industries in particular.

Patricia Scotland, the Commonwealth secretary general, said the delegates will leave Zanzibar with a powerful new consensus to take the next decisive steps forward together.

"We have the basis for a new

legal framework to unleash the benefits of the digital economy. We have the consensus to develop and deploy innovative new tools to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of people centered justice to provide vital protections for the most vulnerable members of our societies," she declared.

Haroun Ali Suleiman, the Constitutional, Legal Affairs, Public Service and Good Governance state minister in the Zanzibar President's Office said the judiciary in Zanzibar is now on the move to paperless services by taking advantage of technology on ICT application.

The judiciary has already initiated processes for an integrated case management system, involving the School of Law tasked to train persons to become qualified advocates and offer continued legal education.

The Department of Legal Aid is similarly charged with popularising legal education at the grassroots, encouraging people to register as paralegals assisting those in need to obtain remedy via the formal or informal institutions of justice, he added.

Health partners set for anti-AIDS monitoring drive

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FAR) through the U.S Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), is part of global efforts to end the AIDS epidemic by 2030.

Project officials will monitor, evaluate and follow up on the management, collection and analysis of accurate, timely information to strengthen the delivery of quality HIV services, he said.

Amref Health Africa (T) is in partnership with the Center for International Health, Education and Biosecurity Tanzania (CIHEB-T), the Tanzania Communication and Development Center (TCDC), aligned with PEPFAR.

The basic framework is the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) fast track targets of 95-95-95 by 2030, where 95 percent of People Living with

HIV (PLHIV) know their status, 95 percent of them are on lifelong antiretroviral treatment, and 95 per cent achieve viral suppression.

The launch was attended by various stakeholders, including government officials, development partner representatives (PEPFAR-CDC), Amref Health Africa staff, civil society organizations, implementing partners, regional religious leaders, communities, and private sector institutions.

The Tanzania HIV Impact Survey for the year 2022/2023 showed that the average rate of HIV infection among people aged 15 years and above stood at 4.4 percent, with approximately 1,548,000 people living with HIV countrywide.

Among them 1,517,040 people were on anti-HIV drugs,

while the rate of clients who achieved the required level of viral load suppression stood at 94.3 percent, it said.

The RC said the project would advance the fight against HIV, reducing the spread, and controlling new infections in the region. He pointed out that there has been a decrease in the HIV infection rate from 3.9 percent in 2016/2017 to 3.7 percent in THIS 2022/2023 and appreciated the efforts being made to combat HIV/AIDS.

Mara RC Said Mtanda emphasized the need to cut out new HIV/AIDS infections, reacting to THIS results for 2022/2023 showing that Mara region's infection rate stands at five percent, higher than the national average of 4.4 percent.

Dr Florence Temu, Amref (T) director, said the project seeks to increase the number of people living with HIV/AIDS who know their status through HIV testing and

provide long-term and sustained quality antiretroviral treatment (ART) services and viral load testing to ensure viral suppression.

The project will provide HIV testing services, link newly identified PLHIV to active ART services, and provide high-quality comprehensive prevention and treatment to PLHIV.

Clients will also be offered high-quality VMMC services for HIV prevention, and scale up innovative and effective interventions for HIV prevention and treatment services for at-risk individuals.

Project officials will boost monitoring and evaluation reporting, clinical surveillance and use of routinely collected data for improving program performance, she added.



Residents of Songe ward in Kilindi District, Tanga Region, pictured earlier this week taking part in preparing the groundwork for the construction of a building to accommodate classes for Forms Five and Six students at Seuta Secondary School. Photo: Correspondent Dege Masoli

PM orders road repair works with parts of Lindi 'isolated'

By Guardian Reporter

PRIME Minister Kassim Majaliwa has tasked government officials in Lindi Region to immediately repair damaged road networks to facilitate transportation.

Majaliwa gave the directive on Thursday during a meeting with ministers, permanent secretaries and senior government officials at his office in Dar es Salaam.

The meeting was meant to discuss effects of the ongoing rains different parts of the country. He expressed concern that road communication in Lindi Region has been disrupted whereby some areas such as Chibutuka and Nangano cannot be reached.

He added that responsible authorities should work to restore transport services within Lindi to enable transportation of people and goods.

"The police force should use its trucks in delivering relief food to people. In places that cannot be reached by road, the force should use helicopters to distribute food," he said.

The PM said that experts should work to open the Nangururu-Liwale road as an alternative of the affected Ruangwa-Nangurugwai-Mbwemkuru-Milwi-Kiangara road. He said the damaged road is important as it connects Liwale District with other parts of the region.

Innocent Bashungwa, Minister for Works promised to work on all the directives to ensure roads especially those in rural areas are passable during rains.

Jenista Mhagama, Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office (Policy, Coordination and Parliamentary Affairs) said the government is prepared to assist citizens whose residential areas cannot be reached due to damaged roads.

She assured the PM that despite transport challenges, the government assured continued provision of social services to Lindi residents.

"We have come up with a strategy to provide them with relief food as we work to restore damaged road networks," she said.

Biteko: Let's save women from effects of dirty cooking energy

By Guardian Reporter

DEPUTY Prime Minister and Minister for Energy Doto Biteko has said the country's initiative to enhance the use of clean energy is meant to protect women from health risks associated with the use of dirty energy sources.

He made the statement on Thursday in Dar es Salaam shortly after distributing 100 gas cylinders and

stoves to food vendors at Mbagala-Zakhem, Temeke and Stereo markets. The gas cylinders were donated by Oryx Gas Tanzania Limited (OGTL).

"Women are the most victims of dirty energy sources; they have been suffering from a number of diseases including chest infections. Some of them are raped while searching for firewood in the bush," he said.

"As we commemorate this year's

International Women's Day, we are happy that more use clean energy in cooking. We have a unique plan to promote the use of clean energy for cooking which was pioneered by President Samia Suluhu Hassan who launched the Women Clean Cooking Support Programme (AWCCSP) at the COP28 in Dubai."

Biteko commended the energy firm for its sustainable campaign in distributing gas cylinders and

stoves countrywide. He called upon stakeholders including religious, political and traditional leaders to also promote the use of clean energy to protect forest and hence the environment.

He said that Oryx has proved its good intention to support the government's clean energy initiative whereas the target is to see 80 percent of Tanzanians using clean energy by 2030.

Albert Chalamila, Dar es Salaam Regional Commissioner expressed gratitude to the Ministry of Energy for promoting the use of clean energy for cooking by providing gas cylinders and stoves. He said shifting to clean energy would help reduce deforestation and enhance conservation of both forests.

Earlier, Benoit Araman, OGTL managing director said the com-

pany is proud of being recognized as the main LPG supplier to Tanzanian citizens, adding it will continue to heavily invest in Tanzania to ensure transition to clean energy.

"The use of LPG in cooking would fast-track development of individual Tanzanians as well as the nation. We are doing this in support of the government's endeavours towards improving the livelihood of citizens," he said.

Zanzibar launches campaign to tackle violence

By Guardian Correspondent

ZANZIBAR has launched a special campaign dubbed 'Zanzibar Says NO MORE' meant to end domestic and sexual violence.

The Commonwealth Secretary-General Patricia Scotland and Zanzibar's Minister for Community Development, Gender, Elderly and Children Riziki Pembe announced the campaign on Wednesday during a visit to a medical camp organised by Zanzibar Maisha Bora Foundation.

Once operational, the local chapter will promote the safety and wellbeing of hundreds of thousands of women and girls in Zanzibar and will be part of the global 'Commonwealth Says NO MORE' campaign. It will provide ministries, businesses and individuals with culturally sensitive toolkits to raise awareness, offer better support to victims, challenge harmful social norms and encourage bystander intervention.

Spearheaded by Zanzibar First Lady Mariam Mwinyi, the campaign will also support long-term efforts as part of a broader government strategy to end the abuse. Launching the new campaign, the Secretary-General, who is in Zanzibar for the Commonwealth Law Ministers Meeting, commended the First Lady's commitment to ending gender-based violence.

Describing violence against women and girls as a global pandemic, she highlighted its alarming prevalence, affecting one in three women and girls within their lifetime.

The Secretary-General, who has made ending violence against women and girls' one of the Commonwealth's top priorities, added:

"Any other issue impacting one in three people, or men, would undoubtedly cause widespread outcry.

"We know this violence can be prevented and ultimately eliminated but only if we work together, with each one of us actively involved."

Addressing attendees, including more than 200 members of the public, she continued: "Through this campaign, all of you now have a shared platform to work together as active allies to break the silence on violence, support victims, hold perpetrators accountable, be effective bystanders and challenge harmful gender stereotypes.

"What you will do today, will ensure that the suffering and pain of women and girls become a thing of the past. Only through collective action can we achieve peace in our communities, countries and the world."

According to the UN, 14 percent of women in Zanzibar experience physical violence and almost one in 10 women experience sexual violence. Incidents often go unreported due to fear and shame.

In recent years, Zanzibar has implemented a range of measures to strengthen its efforts to protect women and girls from violence. These measures include setting up specialist gender desks in police stations to support victims and introducing a national action plan to promote an integrated approach to tackling violence.



Students from Iringa municipality's Mtwivila Secondary School move to push a three-wheeler stuck in mud along the Mangoi stretch of the Mtwivila-Mkimbizi on Thursday. Photo: Correspondent Francis Godwin

UNICEF: 230 million girls circumcised globally

CAIRO

OVER 230 million women and girls have undergone female genital mutilation, most of whom live in Africa, according to a report issued yesterday by the United Nations Children's agency.

In the last eight years, some 30 million people have undergone the procedure, in which external genitalia are partially or fully removed, UNICEF estimated in the report, which was released on International Women's Day.

The percentage of women and girls who experience female genital mutilation is declining, UNICEF said, but it warned that efforts to eradicate the practice are too slow to keep up with fast-growing populations.

"The practice of female genital mutilation is declining, but not fast enough," the report said.

The practice, incorrectly believed to control women's sexuality, can cause serious bleeding and even death. Girls are subjected to the procedure at ages ranging from infancy to adolescence.

Long term, it can lead to urinary tract infections, menstrual problems, pain, decreased sexual satisfaction and childbirth complications, as well

as depression, low self-esteem and post-traumatic stress disorder.

"We're also seeing a worrying trend that more girls are subjected to the practice at younger ages, many before their fifth birthday. That further reduces the window to intervene," said UNICEF Executive Director Catherine Russell.

Some 144 million women and girls have been through female genital mutilation in Africa alone, followed by Asia and the Middle East with 80 million and 6 million respectively, the report said.

Somalia tops the list of countries

where the practice, also known as female circumcision, is prevalent, with 99 percent of the female population between the ages of 15 and 49 having been circumcised.

Burkina Faso made the most significant progress, reducing the proportion of women between 15 and 49 who were circumcised from 80 percent to 30 percent over three decades. The report also showed that 4 in every 10 survivors live in conflict-torn countries with high population growth rates, adding that political instability disrupts efforts prevent the practice and provide support to

victims.

"Ethiopia, Nigeria and Sudan account for the largest numbers of girls and women who have undergone female genital mutilation in conflict-affected countries," the report said.

Although the report hailed the progress made in some countries, it warned that the world is falling short of what would be needed to meet the U.N.'s goal of eradicating the practice globally by 2030.

"In some countries, progress would need to be 10 times faster than the best progress observed in history to reach the target by 2030," said the

report.

Nimco Ali, CEO of the Five Foundation, a UK-based charity that fights female genital mutilation, said the UNICEF estimates were "shocking" and "devastating," and more funding is urgently needed to end the practice.

"We must use the last six years of this decade to finally get to grips with this abhorrent abuse of a girl's human rights and save the next generation from the horrors of FGM," the Somali-born activist, author and female genital mutilation survivor said in a press statement.

All in marking International Women's Day..



Tanzania Revenue Authority staff march along Dar es Salaam's Samora Avenue yesterday in commemorating International Women's Day. Photo: Correspondent Miraji Msala



It's business as usual as a vegetable vendor waits for customers at Kimara Tembani in Dar es Salaam yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Imani Nathaniel



BRAC headquarters staff join Bethsaida Girls' Secondary School students in a souvenir photo shortly after gifting the school foodstuffs and environmental hygiene equipment and supplies at Mpiji Magohe in suburban Dar es Salaam on Thursday. Photo: Guardian Correspondent



National Economic Empowerment Council executive secretary Beng'i Issa (2nd-L) with Morocco's Ambassador to Tanzania, Zakaria El Goumiri (L), when she visited the Tanzanian Women Entrepreneurship Exhibition 2024 at the Moroccan Embassy grounds in Dar es Salaam yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Christina Mwakangale



Watumishi Housing Investments staff pictured at the Ocean Road Cancer Institute in Dar es Salaam yesterday shortly before presenting an assortment of foodstuffs, medical supplies and various other items to the specialised medical centre. Photo: Correspondent



Barrick Gold Corp communications officer Neema Ndossi (3rd-R) pictured in Dar es Salaam on Thursday gifting Dr Zavery Benella (in white lab coat), a medical officer with the city's Mwananyamala Regional Referral Hospital, a patient monitoring machine on behalf of the firm. Photo: Guardian Correspondent



Finance ministry Women's Desk officer Wapheba Settembo (L) briefs Dodoma regional commissioner Rosemary Senyamule (R) at the ministry's pavilion at the International Women's Day anniversary exhibition held in Dodoma city on Thursday. Photo: Correspondent Ibrahim Joseph



Liwale District Prison head warden David Mkoby (3rd-R) receives an assortment of home use items members of women's CSOs gifted the corrective facility on Thursday for use by inmates. Photo: Guardian Correspondent



Mbeya Regional Police Commander Benjamin Kuzaga (3rd-R) and Mbeya Regional Road Safety Committee chairman Rajab Ghuriku (in tie) cut the ribbon in Mbeya city on Thursday at the presentation of two motorcycles the committee has extended as a gesture meant to boost road safety in the region. Photo: Correspondent Nebart Msokwa

Appeal: Ensure 'dropout girls' access alternative education

By Correspondent Zuwena Shame

THE government has been urged to ensure sustainable and expanded implementation for the five-year alternative secondary education pathway programme aimed at returning girls who drop out for various reasons back to public secondary schools.

A statement issued yesterday by Children Education Society (CHESO) executive director Richard Shilamba as part of commemoration of the International Women's Day (IWD) 2024, stated that through Institute of Adult Education, the alternative secondary education programme running from 2021 to 2026 targets girls aged between 13 and 20 years.

"In commemoration of this year's IWD, we appreciate the government for this programme whereby 12,000 girls who dropped out of secondary school shall return back and continue with their studies. We also urge the beneficiaries to study hard and reach their educational goals," reads the statement.

The statement said that CHESO is concerned to see that Tanzania has over 3.2 million out of school children aged between 7 and 17 years out

of whom 1.2 million have never attended school due to various barriers such as diseases, extreme poverty, early pregnancies, abuse, neglect, violence, exploitation, child rights violations and harmful impacts of climate change.

"These barriers disproportionately affect girls, pushing and keeping them out of schools. We also call upon the other stakeholders to intensify efforts to prevent, mitigate and remove these barriers to enable girls to access and successfully complete their full years of schooling across the country," said Shilamba in the statement.

Further, the statement noted that CHESO continues to contribute towards successful implementation of the programme by conducting education case management under which out of school girls are traced, their needs identified, addressed and are thereafter linked to the programme.

CHESO is a local, not for profit, non-governmental organization empowering communities to prevent and remove barriers hindering girl and boy children to enjoy their rights and realize their full education potentials in Tanzania.

Diaspora urged to grab opportunities in arts, entertainment

By Beatrice Philemon

TANZANIANS living in India and other countries have been called upon to grab investment opportunities in arts and entertainment.

Also, been challenged to support national development through cultural festivals which help people see and appreciate the beauty of both countries through arts and culture.

"Diaspora plays an important role in our country's development. It is also important to ensure children know the history of their countries.

It is through culture that people engaged in various sectors can market their products and strengthen business links," said Dr Emmanuel Ishengoma, Director of Arts Development in the Ministry of Culture, Arts and Sports.

Dr Ishengoma made the remarks in Dar es Salaam yesterday when addressing Tanzanian diaspora in India from the mainland and Zanzibar who attended a seminar on the contribution of diaspora in the development journey of Tanzania and shaping of India-Tanzania rela-

tions.

The event was jointly organised by the High Commission of India in Tanzania in collaboration with the National Museum of Tanzania. Participants discussed India's cultural and historical linkages with Tanzania.

"There is a need to organize festivals because both countries will get a chance to showcase the beautiful arts and culture they have, allow exhibitors to share ideas and promote arts and culture of both countries," he said.

He said Tanzania is set to jointly

host the 2027 African Cup of Nations (AFCON) hence the need for the diaspora community to further invest in the sector to make the event a success. He said there are a number of investment opportunities in the arts and entertainment.

Manoj Verma, Charge d'Affaires at the High Commission of India said the event brought together business leaders, writers, academics, social activists, political leaders, Indian diaspora and Tanzanian friends of India.

"The Indian diaspora carries a rich

legacy contributing to the development paths of countries worldwide and emerging as the living bridge connecting India to the world", he said.

"In Tanzania, the Indian community has played a pivotal role across diverse sectors from trade and commerce to education, healthcare and beyond."

He said their entrepreneurial spirit, cultural richness and commitment to community welfare have left a significant mark on the social and economic fabric of Tanzania.

"As we celebrate the accomplishment of the Indian diaspora in Tanzania, it is important to acknowledge the symbiotic relationship that has flourished between our two countries," he said, adding that diplomatic relations between the two countries are deeply rooted in shared values, traditions and a collective vision for a better future.

"Tanzania with its vibrant culture, diverse landscapes and dynamic economy has been a key partner in India's engagement with Africa."

Tanzanian businesswomen urged to seek, use AfCTA opportunities

By Guardian Reporter

A TANZANIAN businesswoman has advised women traders in the country to prepare for and use opportunities in the Africa Continental Free Trade Area (AfCTA) to expand their businesses.

Happiness Nyiti, director Aja Tanzania Limited and founder of Tanzania Sisal Fiber Company Limited based in Morogoro Region made the call during an interview with this paper.

She said in celebrating this year's International Women's Day, it is imperative for women entrepreneurs to dare and enter AfCTA market.

AfCTA agreement creates the largest free trade area in the world measured by the number of countries participating. The pact connects 1.3 billion people across 55 countries with a combined gross domestic product valued at US\$3.4 trillion.

She said the agreement has the potential to lift millions people out of extreme poverty, but achieving its full potential depends on putting in place significant policy reforms and trade facilitation measures.

The businesswoman said she was looking for women entrepreneurs who are ready to do business in the continental treaty so that they can be

trained on the rules, guidelines and other procedures.

"President Samia Suluhu Hassan has been at the forefront in opening up the country for business and trade with various countries and economic blocs, this is an opportunity for women," she said.

Nyiti said AfCTA is poised to benefit women in other countries, arguing that Tanzanian women should not play the role of the market but traders.

She said that in selling products in AfCTA markets, the prices should be competitive so that products can be sold more easily and quickly.

"There is a big opportunity for women because Minister of Industry and Trade Dr Ashatu Kijaji is the Chairperson of AfCTA trade ministers which is an advantage to Tanzanian women," she added.

"If women produce products based on our resources, we can sell in large quantities in this market; we should use these opportunities because President Samia has created a friendly environment for doing business beyond Tanzania," she said.

She said by doing business in AfCTA, entrepreneurs have the opportunity to import foreign products that are in the market agreement, an important opportunity for women traders in the country.



Dar es Salaam City Press Club chairman Samson Kamalamo (R) pictured in Dar es Salaam yesterday speaking at a meeting for members of the club and police officers stationed in the Kinondoni Police Region. Photo: Correspondent Joseph Mwendapole

Police, journos agree to work together in coming elections

By Correspondent Joseph Mwendapole

POLICE and journalists met in Dar es Salaam yesterday and resolved to work collaboratively, especially during local government elections later this year and next year's General Election.

The meeting which was coordinated by the Dar es Salaam City Press Club (DCPC) and Union of Tanzania Press Clubs (UTPC)

brought together high ranking police officers and senior journalists.

Speaking immediately after the meeting, Kinondoni Regional Police Commander, Senior Assistant Commissioner of Police Mtatiro Kitinkwi said the parties agreed that each will play their role professionally during polls.

"This year we have a local government election and next year we will have

a General Election. So, we have discussed the role of each part and agreed on the importance of obeying the law without coercion," he said.

The officer said that journalists are often not identified when law enforcers carry out various operations, adding that they agreed on the best way to identify journalists easily so that they are safe during such events.

"There are times when we have officers who are not in uniform who carry out their duties. We have put in place strategies to ensure that we know each other every time we execute various operations," he said.

He said that safety and security is a basic duty that every citizen is responsible for and enshrined in the philosophy of community policing.

"We have told journalist

that Dar es Salaam Special Zone is made up of three regions namely Temeke, Ilala and Kinondoni but it has a Zonal Commissioner who is the spokesperson," he said.

Speaking on behalf of journalists, Exuperius Kachenje said according to the statistics availed by the Media Council of Tanzania (MCT), a total of 272 journalists suffered various abuses while at work from 2013 to last year.

He said that among the journalists, 219 were men and 53 women, adding that other incidents involved journalists being physically attacked while fulfilling their duties.

He said that in that period of 10 years, 15 cases of journalists' equipment destroyed and confiscated were reported, including three cases of alleged murder.

He praised the readiness

of police to start sitting with journalists to discuss how to work together to eliminate the hostility that existed in previous years.

"This is a big step and it is very commendable because it opens a new chapter of our cooperation and I would like to commend Kinondoni RPC and his assistants for sitting with us and making joint strategies because we are building the same country," he said.



Akili Platform Tanzania managing director Roghat Robert (3rd-L) explains to teachers and students of Tabora municipality's Ipuli Primary School on Thursday on 'expert' vegetable farming and planting of fruit saplings. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

Bodaboda riders in Tanga get training on road safety

By Guardian Reporter

A TOTAL of 500 motorcycle riders in Tanga Region have been trained on road safety in a programme supported by the Embassy of Switzerland in collaboration with Amend Tanzania.

Ramadhani Nyanza, project officer at Amend Tanzania, said the training was sponsored by the embassy with the intent to enable bodaboda to avoid road accidents.

"The training provided practical lessons aimed at improving skills which riders are known to lack. It is relevant for the youth who have delved into the transport sector through motorcycles because they are free of charge and help prevent avoidable accidents," he said.

Nyanza said the project targets to reach more than 750 bodaboda riders operating in Tanga and Dodoma Regions.

According to him, the project had already trained 250 motorcyclists in Dodoma, adding that the goal is to reach 500 riders in Tanga Region.

He said that the embassy and the organization decided to roll out the training to reduce motorcycle casualties as data on road accidents showed that motorcycle riders were the most affected group, adding that

those who graduated from the programme have been exemplary ambassadors to other motorcyclists.

Some of the riders who attended the programme testified that the training they received equipped them with better knowledge on the importance of adhering to road safety signs.

Rehema Rashid, a rider who participated in the programme said the training was an eye opener because previously she had no knowledge on safety guidelines when riding a commercial motorcycle.

"I thank the organisers because with the knowledge, I can now ride and ensure my safety and prevent road accidents at all times", she said.

Lessons included the proper use of junctions and roundabouts, safe overtaking, and how to stop quickly in an emergency.

The training also included a component of first aid, delivered by a facilitator from the Tanzanian Red Cross.

Road injury is the leading cause of death for children and young people between the ages of 5 and 29 years worldwide. Sub-Saharan Africa has the world's highest road traffic death rates.

Data published by the World Health Organization suggest Tanzania has one of the highest motorcycle death rates in Africa.

Report backs women's role in Africa's clean energy sector

LAGOS

WORRIED by the poor representation of women in leadership positions in Africa's clean energy sector, a new report by Shortlist, a talent advisory firm and the Global Energy Alliance for People and Planet (GEAPP), advocate for the advancement and retention of women in the workforce.

The report titled 'Empowering Women in Clean Energy: Advancing and Retaining an Equitable Workforce' released new data on the ex-

periences of women in the clean energy sector. The data, collected from over 150 professionals across sub-Saharan Africa, provides insights into the causes of gender inequity in the male-dominated industry.

The report, which evaluated the clean energy sector's first pay equity, revealed that there are unequal job training and placement programmes on salaries in the industry.

It also investigated the talent pipeline and recruitment barriers for women entering clean energy jobs

and focused on workplace challenges that limit women's advancement and retention of women in the workforce.

Speaking at the official launch of the report in Lagos late last week, Ciara Remerscheid, director of Shortlist Futures, and author of the report, said there is a need to pay serious attention to female labour force who are participating in green jobs, especially at this time when investment in climate and clean energy is growing in Africa.

According to Remerscheid, the re-

port provides a blueprint for clean energy companies to harness the talent of women throughout their organisations.

She said that women remain severely under-represented across levels of management role in clean energy companies, adding that previous research shows that women hold only a quarter of leadership and manager roles at renewable energy companies in sub-Saharan Africa. "Empowering Women in Clean Energy synthesises insights from women in

the field and presents recommendations for better outcomes, including structured training, mentorship and coaching programmes, transparent pathways to promotion, flexible maternity leave policies and access to female role models," she said.

Makena Ireri, director of Demand Jobs and Livelihoods at GEAPP, said women experience the greatest repercussions of climate change, which amplifies existing gender inequalities. Ireri said a powerful transformation is underway in the African clean

energy sector, as companies are making explicit efforts to hire and retain women at every level.

"As we work to further an equitable green energy transition, we see an unprecedented opportunity to drive greater job and economic opportunities for women, youth and low-income communities," she said.

The reports were funded by GEAPP as part of the Women for Green Jobs (W4G) programme implemented by Shortlist with support from Value for Women.

Stop marrying off school age daughters, parents told

By Guardian Correspondent, Mkalama

THE government has urged parents in Mkalama District, Singida Region, to stop marrying off their daughters of school age, a practice which hinders progress in education and development in general.

Asia Messos, Mkalama District Executive Director, made the call on Thursday during an event organised to commemorate the International Women's Day held at Ntumul Ward.

Messos said that taking girls to school prepares them for future career and leadership roles.

"Respect amongst youth reduces violence by a significant margin. Therefore, women should prioritize raising their children well in addition to their other responsibilities as this enables them to serve as good ambassadors against sexual assault," she said.

The leaders added that if women fail in their basic duty of instilling good values into their children, the result is that the youngsters eventually end up in early sexual relationships and even marriage.

According to Messos, the government continues its efforts to bring development in the district by providing funding for a range of projects in the infrastructure, health and education but the same cannot benefit residents if parents do not play their roles.

Using recent examples, she said that Mkalama District Council received 600m/- to purchase medical supplies for Bomanga and Irunda health centers as well as 150m/- to purchase medical supplies for dispensaries in the district. "I also thank the Tumuli community for initiating the dispensary building project. The dispensary is important and as a council, we will request a special budget to complete it so that people start receiving medical services," she said.

The DC appealed to women to come out in big numbers and contest for various leadership posts in the upcoming local government election later this year and General Election next year.



Construction of a hospital at Kivule in Ilala District, Dar es Salaam Region, gets under way. Correspondent Jumanne Juma captured the scene earlier this week.

Health stakeholders rally to close surgical care gap

SINGAPORE

IN a significant move to improve safety for millions of people undergoing surgery each year, two major stakeholders have moved to close the critical surgical care gap.

The world's largest cleft-focused organisation Smile Train and safer surgery global nonprofit, Lifebox, have come together to urge healthcare systems and equipment standard guidelines, including those set by the World Health Organization (WHO) globally, to include capnography as an essential anesthesia monitoring equipment

for safer surgery.

Demonstrating their commitment to closing the global capnography gap, Smile Train this week announced they would be donating additional capnography valued at over \$300,000 to their partner hospitals around the world. This brings Smile Train's total commitment to delivering capnography to well over \$600,000.

"Through our partnership with Lifebox, we have seen firsthand the lifesaving impact of capnography in surgical settings," said Susannah Schaefer, President and CEO of Smile Train. "We believe inclusion of a capnography by professional societies

and national health authorities as an essential anesthesia monitoring equipment in operating rooms will catalyze its adoption worldwide, ultimately saving countless lives."

A capnography is the best tool for detecting leading cause of anesthesia-related complications and deaths in low-resource settings: the misplacement of the breathing tube supplying oxygen to the patient. Without an oxygen supply, the patient suffers catastrophic harm in a matter of minutes, including brain damage and death. The risk of a misplaced breathing tube is greater in children.

This vital tool has been a staple in operating rooms in high-income countries for more than three decades. Its introduction in the United States in 1991 led to a dramatic decline in anesthesia-related complications and deaths.

Yet, capnography remains largely unavailable across most low-resource-setting operating rooms, with research showing there is often a 100 percent gap between the need for capnography and its availability in low-income countries.

"Working without a capnography has been deeply concerning. It's like navigating a dark path without a flashlight; you

know the dangers are there, but you're unable to see them until it is potentially too late," said Dr Elizabeth Igaga, Director of Programmes Safety at Smile Train.

"The absence of such a critical tool not only increases the risk to our patients but places an enormous amount of pressure on healthcare providers to anticipate, identify, and manage complications without delay. Including it on essential operating room equipment guidelines will revolutionize our approach to patient safety, allowing us to detect and respond to potential complications before they become life-threatening."

African seed trade members meet to improve distribution

By Mohammed Yusuf, Nairobi

A TOTAL of 350 delegates from governments, research institutions and seed production companies are gathering in Kenya this week to address challenges in getting good-quality seeds to African farmers.

Experts say the lack of good seeds is hampering food production across the continent and contributing to the hunger crisis in many countries.

According to UN agencies, more than 280 million people in Africa are food insecure, with over a billion unable to afford healthy diets.

One of the problems is that quality seeds are inaccessible to many African farmers, leading to higher rates of crop failure.

Daniel Agan works with the African Seed Trade Association. He said the delegates meeting in Mombasa are trying to address some of the challenges.

"We are talking about Africa, which currently is grappling with issues like fake seeds, and counterfeit seeds," he said. "Some people call it counterfeit seeds. We are talking about plant health. How healthy are those certified seeds to be planted in whichever environment? And then we are also talking about the movement of seeds. And that has been one of the greatest elephants in the room in the sense that for seed to move from one country to another has been a very, very big issue."

In October 2022, Kenya approved the use of genetically modified organisms after a 10-year ban. However, the lifting of the ban has wor-

ried its neighbours who were skeptical of the GMO seeds and products.

Tanzania stated that it would monitor its border to prevent any such food from Kenya from entering the country.

Charles Miller, a board member of the African Seeds Trade Association, said countries would benefit if they harmonized their policies so seeds could be shipped across borders with no issues.

"We work together as an industry to lobby for that harmonization," said Miller. "And by having the ability to, for example, produce seeds in Kenya and ship them readily when it's needed to Tanzania or even to Senegal, under the same rules and regulations, it makes for a much more transparent and clear business model. And it also provides much more security to the other end of the production scheme."

Another issue is a lack of seeds that can thrive in harsh conditions like drought. Justin Rakotoarisaona is the secretary general of the association. He said there is not enough money to support researchers to produce more seeds that can overcome Africa's evolving climate patterns.

"For the research, I mean the development of new varieties, there is less and less budget allocated by the public sector to this section, whereas there is no plant variety protection in Africa," he said. "There is, but it is very difficult to implement it. And that implies the private sector may not be motivated to produce or to develop variety because there is no return on investment."



Gaming Board of Tanzania director general James Mbalwe pictured in Dar es Salaam earlier this week briefing editors from various media houses on the headway the agency has made since its inception in 2003. Photo: Correspondent Joseph Mwendapole

'Bring International Women's Day message to rural areas'

By Guardian Correspondent

WOMEN in various rural areas in Lake Zone have asked the government to diversify the celebration of the International Women's Day in various regions to enable many people to participate.

They argued that women in rural populations have been sidelined in many national activities, including festivals, meetings and even international commemorations which are

normally marked in big cities.

Joyce Aleni, a resident of Ihayabuyaga Village in Magu District, Mwanza Region said the involvement of rural women in the anniversary is vital as many of them are clueless about the International Women's Day and what positive impact it brings to them.

She said such tendencies have left rural women with little understanding on what the day is about and what it means for women's development.

"You are the only person who in-

formed me about this. I had no idea it was a special day for women. I don't even know what it means. I am positive they are capable of reaching us for us to recognize our rights and responsibilities in the society," she said.

Lidya Erro, a resident of Nyakato Village in the same district said that when voices from both urban and rural areas gather together and are heard, nations can get positive outcomes and inspire improvements that make women recognize their

importance in the society.

Salome Alex, a trader based in Kahama District, Shinyanga Region said they witness the increase in women politicians which inspires many to get into leadership.

She said that despite the limited political success, women from low-income backgrounds who are not engaged in politics are interested more in gaining economic empowerment so that they can improve their lives.

Mwajuma Issa, a resident of Nela

Village in Mwanza Region said women in urban areas have utilized this day to prepare and discuss various issues pertaining to women affairs so that they can continue to elevate themselves economically and combat life's challenges.

Shija Mabula, a resident of Mission Street in Mwanza city said that part of the celebrations should involve educating men so that they understand and appreciate knowledge, skills and talents women have, adding that,

such an approach will enable men to provide opportunities for women to do great things for the society and in their families and the nation.

Ashura Hamisi, a resident of Miembeni Ward in Bukoba Municipality, Kagera Region, said the celebrations present an opportunity for women to learn from other women who have made significant achievements through various pursuits and inspire the need to rise economically without waiting for affirmative action.



Construction of a road to tarmac level well under way in Dar es Salaam's Kinyerezi suburb earlier this week. Photo: Correspondent Jumanne Juma

Female business owners in Africa offer more jobs for women: report

By Special Correspondent, Nairobi

THE African Management Institute (AMI) has released new data showing how targeted business support is beginning to close the gender growth and financing gap for Africa's women entrepreneurs, amplifying job creation for women, although more is required to prioritise gender-mainstreaming in business development support.

Entitled 'Greenshoots for African female entrepreneurs - with a forest still to grow', the report underscores the importance of gender inclusion in business development support.

The report also revealed that women's participation leads to better outcomes across sectors because African women business owners and entrepreneurs create more jobs for women and found that 63 percent of job opportunities created by enterprises after AMI programming were filled by women, with female entrepreneurs responsible for 58 percent of the jobs, despite making up less than half of the AMI cohorts.

The report also stated that more women lead to greater growth in business since female entrepreneurs across Africa prioritize upskilling, benefiting both themselves and their

teams.

Additionally, the insights report covers the role of mentorship in facilitating women's business growth. One entrepreneur, Margaret Mutie, a participant at AMI's 2022 business growth programme, grew her enterprise by 40 percent after learning how to communicate her vision to her team.

The report also stated that gender inclusion makes business sense since African women produce 70 percent of the continent's food and have a stake in a large proportion of farm-to-fork businesses. At least 47 percent of women-owned agribusinesses reported revenue growth following AMI programming compared to 40 percent for men. Half of the women also gained access to finance after business development support.

Data from the insights report shows Greenshoots on business growth and financing, with 39 percent of women entrepreneurs supported by AMI accessing finance in 2022 compared to 40 percent for men. "Across our 10+ years working with thousands of businesses across the continent, we have sought to continuously expand our data collection and analysis capacity - translating to more informed BDS decisions," said AMI CEO and Co-Founder, Rebecca Harrison.

Clean energy uptake saw less pollution in 2023

PARIS

GLOBAL energy-related carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions rose less strongly in 2023 than the year before even as total energy demand growth accelerated, according to analysis by the International Energy Agency (IEA).

IEA said yesterday that the new data shows continued expansion of solar PV, wind, nuclear power and electric cars which helped the world avoid greater use of fossil fuels. Without clean energy technologies, the global increase in CO2 emissions in the past five years would have

been three times larger.

Emissions increased by 410 million tonnes, or 1.1 percent, in 2023 - compared with a rise of 490 million tonnes in 2022 - taking them to a record level of 37.4 billion tonnes.

An exceptional shortfall in hydropower due to extreme droughts - in China, the U.S. and other economies - resulted in over 40 percent of the rise in emissions in 2023 as countries turned largely to fossil fuel alternatives. Had it not been for the unusually low hydropower output, global CO2 emissions from electricity generation would have declined in 2023.

The new findings come from IEA's annual update on global energy-related CO2 emissions and the inaugural edition of a new series, the Clean Energy Market Monitor, which provides tracking of clean energy deployment for a select group of technologies and outlines the implications for global energy markets.

Advanced economies saw a record fall in their CO2 emissions in 2023 even as GDP grew. Their emissions dropped to a 50-year low, while coal demand fell to levels not seen since the early 1900s. The decline in advanced economies' emissions

was driven by a combination of strong renewables deployment, coal-to-gas switching, energy efficiency improvements and softer industrial production.

Last year was the first in which at least half of electricity generation in advanced economies came from low-emissions sources like renewables and nuclear.

"The clean energy transition has undergone a series of stress tests in the last five years - and it has demonstrated its resilience," said IEA Executive Director Fatih Birol.

"A pandemic, an energy crisis and geopolitical insta-

bility all had the potential to derail efforts to build cleaner and more secure energy systems.

Instead, we've seen the opposite in many economies. The clean energy transition is continuing apace and reining in emissions - even with global energy demand growing more strongly in 2023 than in 2022.

The commitments made by nearly 200 countries at COP28 in Dubai in December show what the world needs to do to put emissions on a downward trajectory. Most importantly, we need far greater efforts to enable

emerging and developing economies to ramp up clean energy investment."

From 2019 to 2023, growth in clean energy was twice as large as that of fossil fuels. The new IEA analysis shows that the deployment of clean energy technologies in the past five years has substantially limited increases in demand for fossil fuels, providing the opportunity to accelerate the transition away from them this decade.

The Clean Energy Market Monitor shows that clean energy deployment remains overly concentrated

in advanced economies and China, highlighting the need for greater international efforts to increase clean energy investment and deployment in emerging and developing economies.

China's deployment of clean energy technology continued to surge as it added as much solar PV capacity in 2023 than the entire world did in 2022.

However, a historically bad year for hydropower output and the continued reopening of its economy after the pandemic drove up China's emissions, which grew by around 565 million tonnes in 2023.

The Guardian

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SATURDAY 9 MARCH 2024

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

NHIF flat rates for public, private facilities 'too nice'

EVEN as the National Health Insurance Fund (NHIF) management prepares to meet with operators of private health facilities early next week, there is an impression from the quasi-monopoly insurer that there will be no disputes over its new packages.

It expects that a move by private hospitals to retake NHIF card holders while contentious issues are being handled is final, and it doesn't matter what conclusions will be reached.

This impression was visible in preliminary remarks by top NHIF officials, aware of where the Health ministry - and, presumably, the government generally - stands.

While asserting that the meeting is expected to strike an agreement with private health service providers over fair NHIF cost covering for its beneficiaries, there was a note to the effect that the flat rates for what NHIF categorises as regional referral hospitals includes the private sector.

There were references to seven private hospitals earlier boycotting NHIF card holders having restored the service.

It was apparent that NHIF expects the status quo to be maintained, which would largely imply that private health service providers had no real argument in the first place - quite unlikely the case.

One point that came repeatedly in a top NHIF official's remarks is that the new package is meant to enable health service providers to serve its members from various economic backgrounds.

The idea that the services will be provided at competitive market prices kept coming up, but that of competition in that sphere reminds one of the competitive cap prices in fuel or sugar.

And it is that the retailer is free to lower the price and capture a bigger chunk of the market! That

is outright price control ushered into a different aura of 'competitive prices'.

In the first place, suggesting that just seven hospitals had problems with the revised NHIF packages comes out as a little easy, what in revolutionary literature comes under the maxim, 'tell no lies, claim no easy victories'.

The idea that visiting a private health facility would likely involve similar costs to those one would have to bear at public facilities of the same size or installed capacities would be overly sweet.

That would apply for at least one reason, which is that it would rub out the difference.

Ostensibly, this widens access to private hospital care, so the idea is that they will compete by providing 'customer care,' quick services.

NHIF says that it will be hosting a consensus meeting this coming Monday (March 11) in the interest of its scheme beneficiaries, rebuffing arguments by several major private hospitals with some cryptic remarks.

Going by an apparent discovery by NHIF, rather than from the Controller and Auditor General's report, some payments NHIF used to make were grossly overestimated compared to market realities.

That is assuming that it costs the same to see a doctor at a public hospital and an equivalent facility in the private sector, the reason being that the market is the same.

With the fairly visible efforts by the government to build referral hospitals in most regions and equipping them with the best equipment in a continual manner, it is possible that a shade of the difference between public and private hospitals has been erased.

Were that to be the case, the flattening out of rates to go in tandem with hospital capacity (skills, bed numbers) could as well work.

Chaos in sugar sub-sector is profoundly unfortunate

REPORTS on the 'mayhem' induced by the controversial country-wide scarcity of sugar are unfortunate at this time when the country is just getting over with the statutory mourning period for former president Ali Hassan Mwinyi.

Arresting people for selling sugar or any other commodity at higher prices is in a sense self-defeating, as it transfers the burden of serving the people to those running shops instead of law-enforcement agencies. Ordinarily, anyone selling goods at higher than 'normal' prices risks losing customers, so price hikes are usually due to scarcity.

Scarcity may be due to low production or due to controls, especially in importing, as otherwise sugar from nearby countries would fill the shops and no one would sell at higher prices.

In that sense, the relevant public authorities know perfectly well the logic of the controls and the consequent pricing.

Letting market forces at will is one option, as eliminating import controls can mitigate "harm" for both traders and consumers.

We are supposed to have joined the Continental African Free Trade Area (CAFTA), but there are fears that the modality is meant for exporting our produce. So, when it comes to importing they bring down the shutters.

Admittedly, traders also gain something when prices are too high, and thus at some point they become the focal point or an expression of what is not going right.

At that point it all depends on someone's luck: if law enforcers decide to descend on one's shop the shop operator concerned will have

the choice of selling off the goods in question and possibly escape the wrath of the law.

So it is a matter of wisdom, or perhaps guesswork, as to whether one abandons retail trade or takes chances and sells at a particular price.

While there is always going to be an element of law enforcement in all trade as in other economic or social activities, when shortages are prevalent and shop operators are told to sell at indicative prices, there is a problem somewhere.

It is in part this kind of problem that led the ruling CCM to think of having no lesser an authority than the President meet ordinary people for a feel of grievances that people suffer silently for lack of serious attention from other authorities.

Those with several decades under the belt will remember sometime in the early 1980s, when shortages were rampant, then prime minister Edward Sokoine launched an overly energetic campaign against 'economic saboteurs'.

The idea was that "saboteurs" hide scarce or "scarce" commodities like sugar and edible oil for sale at higher prices by doling them out in shops.

The Sokoine campaign was immensely popular but soon proved hardly effective, with the shortages dying hard, as it were.

The government eventually changed tack, in part by gradually relaxing trade regulations to forestall retail trade collapse.

There were lessons the experience that are still very valid and worth both recalling and learning from.

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Gender equality plays critical role in achieving SDGs

By Special Correspondent

AS we come together to mark International Women's Day 2024, embracing the powerful theme "Invest in Women: Accelerate Progress", it is an important moment to reflect on Tanzania's journey towards sustainable development.

This momentous occasion resonates deeply, highlighting the fundamental principles of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 5's vision for gender equality and empowering all women and girls.

SDG 5 is also central to the Global Compact on Refugees, which provides for adopting and implementing policies and programmes to empower women and girls in refugee and host communities.

This commitment is closely aligned with the United Nations' ongoing endeavours in Tanzania, as detailed in the current UN Cooperation Framework, which aims at fostering inclusive economic growth, social development and environmental sustainability.

The United Nations in Tanzania has prioritised gender equality within its cooperation framework, acknowledging its critical role in achieving the SDGs.

By concentrating on pivotal areas such as economic empowerment, education and skills, health, nutrition, protection from violence and political participation, the UN's initiatives are crucial for building a society where women and men as well as girls and boys enjoy equal opportunities.

This is essential for the holistic development of the country's human capital and economic potential.

Economic empowerment: Vision for inclusive growth

Tanzania's commitment to SDG 8, focusing on Decent Work and Economic Growth, is vital for women's economic empowerment. Poverty and gender inequality go hand in hand. We can't end one without tackling the other.

In line with Tanzania's Generation Equality commitments, the United Nations, through its agencies, supports women's access to financial services, markets, sustainable entrepreneurship and employment opportunities.

This support extends across borders, enhancing women's participation in cross-border trade within the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), bolstering economic empowerment and the continent's economic diversification and growth.

Through this initiative, Tanzanian products such as coffee, sisal fibres, and cloves have found markets in Algeria, Nigeria and Morocco.

We strongly advocate initiatives that equip women, including refugees and asylum seekers in line with the Global Compact for Refugees to foster inclusive economic growth in refugee-hosting areas, with the necessary skills and resources to engage in the economy, as well as national and sectoral plans and



strategies that take gender considerations into account.

These are fundamental steps towards eradicating poverty (SDG 1) and fostering inclusive economic growth (SDG 10).

Educational Equity: Laying groundwork for empowerment

Poverty drives child marriage, traps adolescent girls in violent homes or relationships, and leads to adolescent girls shouldering heavy domestic responsibilities and missing out on their right to an education.

We strongly believe that extending girls' education beyond the primary level is crucial for their future. It not only improves their job prospects and economic status but also promotes their health, reduces early marriages, and decreases the risks of gender-based violence.

Girls and women have undeniable equal rights to quality education and lifelong learning as boys and men.

The UN's focus on quality education (SDG 4) in Tanzania demonstrates a genuine commitment to removing the obstacles girls and women encounter in education.

We support efforts to keep girls in school, this including those in refugee camps, and to eliminate social norms and practices that limit their educational opportunities.

Promoting literacy and STEM education for girls is essential for achieving gender equality and empowering women in today's knowledge economy.

[STEM is an approach to learning and development that integrates the areas of science, technology, engineering and mathematics. Through it, students develop key skills including: problem solving, creativity and critical analysis.]

In fact, the Binti campaign to end child marriage in Tanzania has been an instrumental platform for over 70 organisations and garnered

150,000 pledges crusading for the amendment of the Law of Marriage Act to raise the marriage age to 18.

We appreciate the government's commitment and concrete steps to amend the Law, and we sincerely hope that the bill will be passed in Parliament to set 18 as the minimum age of marriage for both girls and boys.

Health and well-being: A priority for a thriving future

Aligned with SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-being), the UN support for improving maternal health services and reproductive health care in Tanzania is crucial.

Investing in women's health not only enhances their quality of life but also plays a significant role in advancing human capital at large, placing women and fostering women's participation in economic development.

Political participation and leadership: Advocating inclusive policies

We strongly support women's leadership and their role in decision-making, particularly in peace-building efforts, aligning with SDG 16.

We applaud Tanzania's first National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security which promotes women's active participation in peace processes.

Women's involvement in peace-building is not only a right considering the unique impact of conflict on them but also essential because of their potential to drive positive social change and achieve sustainable peace in their communities.

Increasing women's involvement in decision-making enhances community well-being and ensures that inclusive policies reflect diverse societal needs.

The UN strategy supports expanding women's roles in leadership, aiming to empower women

and girls. We are dedicated to collaborating with the Tanzanian government and partners in promoting these efforts and investments for more inclusive governance.

Breaking the bias, embracing equality

We firmly believe that at the heart of empowering women and girls lies the crucial need for access to information. This access is pivotal in enabling them to assert their rights and bridge gender gaps effectively.

We must ensure that communities, especially women and girls, are equipped with the information they need to make well-informed decisions, tackle local challenges and engage actively in public life, regardless of the medium.

This commitment perfectly aligns with Sustainable Development Goals 16 and 5, which highlight the vital connection between information accessibility and the pursuit of gender equality as a cornerstone of sustainable development.

The theme for International Women's Day 2024, "Invest in Women: Accelerate Progress", is not merely a call to action - it is a blueprint for realising the 17 Sustainable Development Goals in Tanzania.

As we commemorate this International Women's Day, we urge all to renew our pledge to view gender equality as an essential pillar for a prosperous, inclusive and sustainable Tanzania.

** This the full text of joint message on International Women's Day from the UN Resident Coordinator and Country Representatives of UN Women, UNHCR, UNESCO, UNICEF and UNDP.*



We strongly believe that extending girls' education beyond the primary level is crucial for their future. It not only improves their job prospects and economic status but also promotes their health, reduces early marriages, and decreases the risks of gender-based violence

By Telesphor Magobe

IWD 2024: Inspiring inclusivity, taking women to another level

YESTERDAY, Tanzania joined other countries across the world to mark International Women's Day with the theme "Invest in women: Accelerate progress". Although there are global, regional and national campaigns for gender equality, there is still inequality and discrimination against women on the basis of sex.

In many societies women are treated as inferior to men, which is not right at all. Unfortunately, some women see themselves as inferior to men and think that by behaving in such a manner they show respect to men.

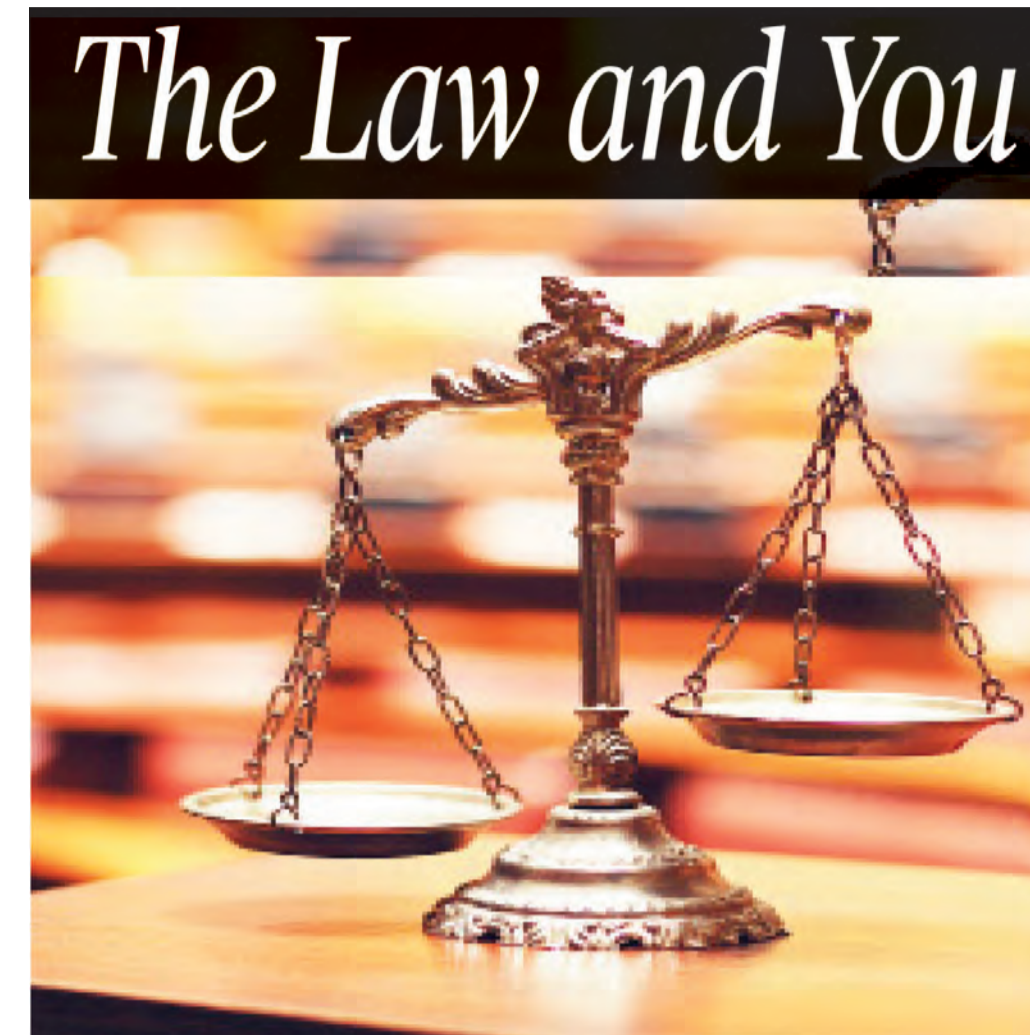
For men, to behave as superior to women makes them feel that they are in control of everything and some of them often quote certain scriptural texts they have memorised by heart out of context to justify sexual stereotyping. Other men respect women and see that men and women are meant to live together as companions and interdependent.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR, 1948) provides for equality of all human beings and no person should be discriminated against on the basis of sex. All human beings - men and women - have equal rights and should be treated equally. Article 1 says: "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood and sisterhood."

Men and women are also equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to equal protection of the law and are entitled to equal protection against any discrimination (Article 7). The Constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania too provides for equality of all human rights, recognition and respect for a person's dignity (Article 12). It also prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex - Article 13(5).

Aspiration 3 of Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want too sees men and women as equal. It envisages "An Africa of good governance, democracy, respect for human rights, justice and the rule of law - By 2063, Africa will have undergone a deepening of the culture of good governance, democratic values, gender equality, respect for human rights, justice and the rule of law."

A 2024 UNDP trends report: The landscape of development observes that the world is very far from equal for women and men, and democratic backsliding is making progress even harder. It says that major hurdles to gender equality remain, including lack of equality in law, persistent income gaps and gender-based violence.



"Social norms and cultural attitudes to gender equality are hard to shift, and the digital world is amplifying misogynistic voices."

On the equality gap it says not a single indicator for Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5, gender equality, has been met - or even "almost" met. "Women globally are empowered to

achieve only 60 per cent of their full potential. By 2030, over 340 million women and girls could still be living in extreme poverty; 1 in 4 will be food-insecure."

On social norms it says nearly 90 per cent of men and women hold fundamental biases against women. "The decline in democracy for the past 17 years has gone with a gender backlash, constraining women's rights and rolling back gender equality."

In only 14 countries do women have equal legal rights to men. In 2021 a woman was killed every 11 minutes by a relative. A quarter of people worldwide believe it is justifiable for a man to beat his wife."

In politics, women remain underrepresented and the share of women as heads of state or government has remained around 10 per cent since 1995 and only 26 per cent of parliamentarians are women (though that is up from 11 per cent in 1995, and increases to 35 per cent in local government in 141 countries), according to the 2024 UNDP trends report.

The world commemorated International Women's Day yesterday, which is marked each year on March 8. As this year's theme states "Invest in women: Accelerate progress" we can easily invest in women if we respect and treat them as equal to men and we have to start doing it now. Without this

we will always lean on our sexual stereotyping.

But to see things differently, it means to change from within first. We can turn gender inequality into gender equality if we change ourselves by respecting and treating every human being equally and as the Golden Rule says "Do to others as you would like them to do to you". We can expand it to say: "Treat others (men and women) as you would like them to treat you. With this rule in mind it is impossible to impose oneself as superior to others or to regard others as inferior to you."

We have to create communities in which we see each other as equal and deserve to be respected as we are. If this starts at family level it will grow and in the long run people will start seeing each other as equal in dignity and slowly discrimination against women will not have a place. But we need to make an effort. So, let us keep the fire of gender equality and respect for each other burning in us.

Today's legal maxim: 'Be not the first to quarrel, nor the last to make it up'.

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Improving access to, and use of, contraceptives key in reducing prevalence of teen pregnancy

By Correspondent Zuwena Shame

TEENAGE pregnancies not only cause harm to individual girls and women, but also their families, communities and the country.

Adolescents, defined by the World Health Organization (WHO) as individuals between 10 and 19 years represent almost one-fifth of the world's population. During adolescence, young people navigate numerous physical, cognitive, emotional, and behavioural changes as they acquire increasing autonomy and experiment in many areas.

WHO believes that achieving universal access and the realization of sexual and reproductive health services is essential in fulfilling the pledge of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development that 'no one will be left behind'.

The government has been implementing a number of strategies to curb teenage pregnancies whereas the Ministry of Health in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training introduced a comprehensive sexual education curriculum in primary and secondary schools that aligns with international human rights standards. The subjects are taught by trained teachers equipped with adequate resources and they are monitored by the ministries.

The ministry also trains healthcare providers on sexual and reproductive rights focusing on the right to access information and services, including contraceptive pills and understanding the various intersecting factors contributing to schoolgirls' pregnancies.

There are many different birth control methods depending on individual's overall health, age, frequency of sexual activity, number of sexual partners, desire to have children and family history of certain diseases. Some of them include oral contraceptive pills, implants, injectable, patches, vaginal rings, intrauterine devices and condoms.

There are an increased number of girls under the age of 18 using contraceptives whereas in some cases, parents secretly introduce them to the family planning methods to prevent them from getting pregnant while at school.

Neema Pangamawe, a mother of two daughters from Katuma village in Katavi Region told the Guardian that her children are using contraceptive pills to avoid pregnancy while at school because they already have sex partners.

"I convinced them to use contraceptive pills until when they are ready to get babies. I also fear my husband because once they get pregnant, he will kill me," said Pangamawe, adding the use of FP also prevents girls from sexual transmitted diseases.

Agnes Mashaka, a Form Three student at Nsimbo secondary school, in Nsimbo District in Katavi Region insisted the need for more education on reproductive health.

"Girls need to be educated on impacts of engaging on sexual relationship while at school; option to give them FP would also help prevent early pregnancies. They need to be educated on proper use of the contraceptives to avoid health risks that may be caused with improper use of the pills," said Mashaka.

Allen Kaiza, a peer educator in Tanganyika District, Katavi Region said most people are not aware of family planning. He said parents in Katavi, especially mothers go through difficult times when girls get pregnant, thus opting to give them contraceptives.

Kaiza added: "During our past reproductive health education event, a number of women asked for contraceptives



for their school girls. They were concerned that girls are no longer safe as they have sexual partners."

He efforts are need to ensure more people especially those in rural areas are aware of FP and its use. He said during their educative campaign, they recommend girls aged 15 years to use contraceptives because it is acceptable.

General Secretary of the Tanzania Midwives Association (TAMA), Nicodem Komba said that current policies allow girls under the age of 18 to use FP, but specifically those who are sexually active.

He however noted that policies requires relevant authorities to make sure the girls are well educated on the FP before opting for a certain type of the methods.

"FP methods that are friendly and recommended for students include pills, injections and condoms," he said, noting that it is sometimes difficult for a student to take pills at school or at home without involving her family members.

When girls use the pills they experience heavy bleeding during their menstruation cycle, he added.

"Taking the pills need privacy and confidentiality. Some FP methods such as vasectomy or tubal ligation are not recom-

mended for adolescents. The issue of adherence is of utmost importance, as we all know that cultural barriers, schooling and shyness might hinder effective uptake of the services", said Komba.

The TAMA SG suggests the use of condom for teenage girls because it can effectively prevent pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases.

Komba added that the Intrauterine Copper Device (IUCD) method has been researched and found to have few side effects, noting girls who opt for it can use it for more than 4 years.

"These girls need freedom to live their future lives, the IUCD method offers freedom to conceive later after completing their studies. After removing it one can conceive within nine months. Health care providers must advise girls on the best FP methods as they go a number of challenges," added the Secretary General.

Providing appropriate FP services to adolescents would help reduce maternal deaths, he said, adding this can be achieved if service providers advise the girls accordingly.

The 2013 data from United Nations Population Fund (UNF-

PA) showed that complications of pregnancy and childbirth were the second leading cause of death among girls aged between 15 and 19-year, globally, with nearly 70,000 deaths annually.

Tanzania has the 17th highest adolescent fertility rate in Africa. The adolescent fertility rate has increased from 116 to 132 between the 2010 and 2015/16, as per the Demographic Health Surveys (TDHS). Teenage pregnancy has also increased by 4 per cent in Tanzania since 2010; by 2016 one in four adolescents aged 15-19 had begun childbearing.

Teenage childbearing rates differ across regions, ranging from a low of 5 per cent in Mjini Magharibi Region in Zanzibar and 6 per cent in Kilimanjaro Region to a high of 45 per cent in Katavi and 43 per cent in Tabora regions.

By Jeremy Hance

Culture and conservation thrive as Great Lakes tribes bring back native wild rice

IN the late summer of 2023, thick stands of wild rice stood tall and shimmered gold in some of Lac du Flambeau's lakes. The plant has been virtually absent in these lakes for decades, so for Joe Graveen, the sight of grain-filled stalks was a thing of joy, he says.

As the wild rice program manager for the Lac du Flambeau Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians, a tribal band in northern Wisconsin, Graveen was seeing the fruits (or grains, literally) of hard work he and his tribe's members had put in over the past six years.

"It was the first time that I think a lot of us saw wild rice in a while, in about 20 years or maybe longer," Graveen says. "It always brings a smile to my face to see our harvesters' reaction."

The wild rice only grew here after years of grit and endurance. In late 2017, the band launched a new program to revive wild rice in some of the 260 lakes on their reservation. Leading the program is Graveen, a "ricer" and knowledge keeper who learned about the plant and harvesting methods from his elders.

The restoration involved seeding the lakebeds with tons of rice seeds, monitoring water quality, fending off geese from gobbling the young rice plants, and keeping tabs on the lakes' water levels.

Across the Great Lakes Basin in the U.S. and Canada, there's a growing interest among many tribes and First Nations to lead efforts to revive wild rice. Closely intertwined with Indigenous culture and identity, wild rice was decimated after the arrival of European settlers.

But today, many partners are supporting initiatives to restore wild rice, including federal agencies, state agencies, intertribal agencies, funding initiatives, universities, and NGOs, recognizing the grain's cultural and ecological significance and vulnerability to climate change.

Manoomin: Gift of the Creator
Northern wild rice (*Zizania palustris*) is an annual wetland plant native to the Great Lakes. Called manoomin in Anishinaabemowin, it translates to "good berry" or "food that grows on water." Legend has it that the Anishinaabeg people – a cultural-linguistic group that includes the Ojibwe, Chippewa, Odawa, Potawatomi, Algonquin, Mississauga and other Indigenous peoples – once living near the mouth of the St. Lawrence River, walked south in search of this grain following a prophecy.

"Wild rice is very important to us because of the teachings," says Roger Labine from the Lac Vieux Desert Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians in Michigan, who hails from the Fish Clan of the Ojibwe Chippewa Nation. "We honor wild rice as a sacred gift from the Creator to identify where we needed to be on Mother Earth."

The plant grows in the muddy bottoms of shallow, slow-flowing lakes and rivers. The seeds germinate in the spring after being submerged under ice and snow in the winter. By summer, flowers develop into seeds, which are harvested in late summer and early fall. The nutty flavor and long shelf life made the light-brown grain a staple in the Anishinaabe people's diet.

"We had this in our wigwams when it was too cold to go hunt and fish and gather," Labine says. "We could stay in and have nourishment." A distant relative of domesticated rice (*Oryza sativa*) from Asia, wild rice is highly nutritious and is packed with more proteins, vitamins and dietary fiber than the former.

As a wetland species, wild rice creates a unique ecosystem, says Jonathan Gilbert, director of biological services for the Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission (GLIFWC), an intertribal agency comprised of 11 Ojibwe tribes. "It has a whole bunch of plants and animals and nutrients and energy flow, and it's diverse."

The grain is an important food source for many migratory and non-migratory waterfowl, including the locally threatened rusty blackbird (*Euphagus carolinus*), trumpeter swan (*Cygnus buccinator*) and common loon (*Gavia immer*). Wild rice beds serve as fish nurseries: juvenile fish feed on the insects and take cover from predators.

Wetland mammals like beavers (*Castor canadensis*), muskrats (*Ondatra zibethicus*) and river otters (*Lontra canadensis*) all call the rice beds home. The plants maintain water quality by absorbing nutrients in the sediments and preventing their buildup.

Wild rice also plays a vital role in the ceremonies of



A harvester using ricing sticks or knockers to knock down mature rice grains from the stalk.

native tribes and First Nations. "We are spiritually connected to it," Graveen says. "It's always been a part of who we are as Anishinaabe people."

Too hot for wild rice?

Historical accounts suggest that until the 1800s, wild rice covered tens of thousands of acres of lakebeds in the region. However, intense logging in the Great Lakes area in the 19th century clogged waterways and changed the chemistry of the water.

Dams altered the water levels in areas with wild rice. Railroads, farmlands and other developments destroyed nearly two-thirds of wetlands in the region – a critical habitat for wild rice. Mining and manufacturing industries spewed toxic chemicals like mercury into the water bodies.

While some of these threats, such as dams and pollution, still exist, wild rice is today most threatened by climate change and the resulting irregular weather patterns it brings: rainstorms, floods, tornadoes, and loss of snow cover. A 2018 GLIFWC climate change vulnerability assessment of species important to the tribes identified manoomin as "extremely vulnerable."

"Almost all of the concerns that wild rice face today tie directly to climate change," Gilbert says. "I think one of the reasons why the tribes are so concerned about climate effects on wild rice is because they see it as kind of like an existential threat to their identity."

Rising temperatures are conducive to wild rice diseases, such as brown spot disease, which can reduce seed production by 90%, and pests like rice worms (moth larvae). A lack of snow cover and ice, increasingly common due to climate change, favors invasive and native aquatic plants such as pondweeds, water lilies, hybrid cattails and flowering rush, which can outcompete wild rice.

The race is on to save the beloved manoomin from these threats before the plant and its knowledge keepers vanish.

Re seeding hope with restoration

For centuries, the Anishinaabe people have stewarded wild rice by perfecting harvesting techniques that ensure the annual crop returns every year. A typical harvest starts in the late summer or early fall and is a monthlong affair. It involves two people on a canoe; no motorboats, as they can destroy the rice stands.

With a push pole, one steers the canoe through the thick beds, and the other bends each stalk over and taps it with a ricing stick. The ripened grains fall into the bottom of the canoe, while the unripe seeds are left behind to mature.

Although a good rice bed acre can yield more than 500 pounds of seeds, or about 560 kilograms per hectare, hand harvesting captures only a tenth of this amount. The remaining seeds fall to the bottom of the lake, some of which are eaten by the birds and fish, while others grow into new plants. But with thriving rice beds gone, seed banks have vanished, too.

Today, restoration at Lac Vieux Desert involves manually seeding the rice beds, regularly monitoring water quality and level, measuring the stem density of rice beds, and educating owners

of summer cabins around the lakes not to destroy wild rice beds. The tribe has also actively engaged with federal and state agencies for monitoring, funding and enforcement against vandalism of wild rice beds.

"We're going out there like Johnny Appleseed" – an American nurseryman famed for spreading apple seeds wherever he went – "throwing rice out there on an annual basis," says Labine, who is also the water resource technician for the Lac Vieux Desert Band. "Last year we put 4,500 pounds about 2,000 kg of rice back in." Restorers must be patient; rice seeds can take up to seven years to germinate.

The work has resulted in 14 sites of thriving beds where members can harvest manoomin. The band has restarted ceremonies involving the sacred grain. While yields vary annually, the effort has gained momentum, with all 12 tribes in Michigan having similar restoration programs. "There's a big movement, just like reviving our language," Labine says.

Re seeding involves spreading freshly harvested rice back into rice beds.

In late 2023, Michigan recognized wild rice as the state's native grain after years of tribes pursuing protections for it. Labine says he hopes this recognition can further education and outreach efforts. The Michigan Wild Rice Initiative, a tribal collective, is working toward developing a statewide wild rice stewardship plan by the end of February 2024.

In Lac du Flambeau, the tribe seeded 3,500 lbs (about 1,600 kg) of wild rice in the last two years, resulting in the 2023 bumper yield. The return of wild rice in the reservation has meant restarting manoomin feasts, where community members gather to celebrate harvests. Now, the tribe is looking at how to ensure the yields stay.

"We're looking at trying to get good data, and then, eventually, we'll develop a management plan for wild rice," says Graveen, who's seeking the help of computer engineering researcher Josiah Hester from the Georgia Institute of Technology.

Using sensors and artificial intelligence, Hester's team is building wild rice monitoring infrastructure that captures real-time data on water quality, waterfowl activity, water levels, wakes from boat activity, and ice sheet thickness in the lakes. Machine-learning algorithms then churn through the sensor data, images and audio to predict the environmental trends, which, combined with Graveen's traditional ecological knowledge, can determine if the rice beds can sustain an abundant harvest in the coming year.

"We're building this for this urgent critical problem around rice and climate disaster mitigation," says Hester, who adds he understands the importance of traditional ecological knowledge as a Hawaiian native. For Graveen, the real-time monitoring system means spending less time in the field. "If we can cut down our time, I'm all for it – I'm just a one-man operation right now."

In Minnesota, the 1854 Authority, an intertribal agency working with the Bois Forte and Grand Portage bands, began a wild rice

restoration program in the St. Louis River estuary. By 2025, the program aims to restore at least 275 acres (111 hectares).

Besides monitoring water quality, the agency has installed nearly 50 enclosures around the beds to prevent ducks and geese from eating the plants. So far, more than 80,000 lbs (36,300 kg) of wild rice has been seeded, covering 260 acres (105 hectares). In 2023 alone, the agency seeded 12,547 lbs (5,691 kg) of the grain, covering 61 acres (25 hectares).

The agency has also started wild rice camps for students and resource managers to learn more about Minnesota's state grain, a status conferred on wild rice in 1977. "In addition to restoring rice, we are trying to restore people's knowledge and appreciation of rice," says Darren Volt, director of resource management at the 1854 Authority.

The Keweenaw Bay Indian Community in Michigan has similarly seeded thousands of pounds of wild rice seed in lakes within Baraga county over the past decade, reviving rice beds in lakes ravaged by pollution. On the Canadian side of the border, Plenty Canada, a local NGO working with First Nations in Eastern Ontario, has seeded a few lakebeds in the region with wild rice since 2018 under pilot projects.

While the ecological benefits of wild rice restoration have yet to be scientifically measured, Graveen, who fishes, hunts and traps, says he's seen the return of waterfowl and other wildlife in the lake after restoration.

The way forward

Despite tasting success, restoration programs face funding challenges and are dependent on periodic grants for which there's lots of competition. Often, the natural resources departments at the tribes, which usually run such programs, are short-staffed, with a handful of people managing many species, including manoomin. As most wetlands have been lost, very little land is available for restoration. But the tribes' persistence has meant wild rice restoration is now the focus of federal and state departments.

"I'm seeing a lot more attention being paid to wild rice these days, from not only the tribes but the states as well," Gilbert says.

For the tribes, being at the discussion table with federal and state agencies, university researchers, and funders – something that wasn't the case for several decades – is a win. While Graveen says he's convinced that wild rice may not return to its past glory, success for him is tribes working together on policy and management at the state and federal levels.

"It's going to take everybody to bring back wild rice," Labine says.

CAPITAL RADIO

RATIBA YA VIPINDI JUMATATU - JUMAPILI

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

Tembelea mitandao ya kijamii ya CAPITAL RADIO



CAPITAL RADIO

Report: Heatwaves and floods affect rural women and men differently, widen income gap

ROME

CLIMATE change is disproportionately affecting the incomes of rural women, people living in poverty, and older populations, as their capacity to react and adapt to extreme weather events is unequal, a new report from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) finds.

The Unjust Climate report highlights a stark reality: each year in low and middle-income countries (LMICs), female heads of households in rural areas suffer significantly greater financial losses than men.

On average, female-headed households lose 8 percent more of their income due to heat stress and 3 percent more due to floods compared to male-headed households. This translates to a per capita reduction of \$83 due to heat stress and \$35 due to floods, totalling \$37 billion and \$16 billion respectively across all LMICs.

If the average temperatures were to increase by just 1°C, these women would face a staggering 34 percent greater loss in their total incomes compared to men. Considering the significant existing differences in agricultural productivity and wages between women and men, the study suggests that if not addressed, climate change will greatly widen these gaps in the years ahead.

FAO analysed socioeconomic data from over 100,000 rural households (representing more than 950 million people) across 24 LMICs.

By integrating this information with 70 years of georeferenced daily precipitation and temperature data, the report examines how various climate stressors impact people's incomes, labour, and adaptation strategies, differentiating based on their wealth, gender, and age.

Impacts differ not just by gender but by

socioeconomic status, according to the data. Heat stress, or overexposure to high temperatures, exacerbates the income disparity between rural households classified as poor, who suffer a 5 percent greater loss (\$17 per capita) than their better-off neighbours, and the figures for flooding are similar. Extreme temperatures, meanwhile, worsen child labour and increase the unpaid workload for women in poor households.

"Social differences based on locations, wealth, gender and age have a powerful, yet poorly understood, impact on rural peoples' vulnerability to the impacts of the climate crisis. These findings highlight the urgent need to dedicate substantially more financial resources and policy attention to issues of inclusivity and resilience in global and national climate actions," said FAO Director-General QU Dongyu.

Indeed, barriers such as access to resources, services and employment opportunities affect rural people's capacity to adapt to and cope with climate change. For example, discriminatory norms and policies place a disproportionate burden on women for care and domestic responsibilities, limit their rights to land, prevent them from making decisions over their labour and hamper their access to information, finance, technology and other essential services.

Similarly, households led by young individuals have an easier time finding off-farm job opportunities during extreme weather conditions compared to older households. This makes their incomes less susceptible to these events.

Extreme weather also compels impoverished rural households to resort to maladaptive coping strategies. These may include reducing income streams, selling off livestock, and shifting spending away from their farms. These actions, however, exacerbate their vul-



nerability to long-term climate changes.

The report suggests that addressing these challenges requires targeted interventions to empower various rural populations to engage in climate-adaptive measures.

The study finds rural people and their climate vulnerabilities are barely visible in national climate plans. In the nationally determined contributions (NDCs) and national adaptation plans (NAPs) of the 24 countries analysed in the report, only 6 percent of the 4,164 climate actions proposed mention women, 2 percent explicitly mention youths, less than 1 percent mention poor people and about 6 percent refer to farmers in rural communities.

Similarly, of the total tracked climate finance in 2017/18, only 7.5 percent went towards climate change adaptation; less than 3 percent to agriculture, forestry and other land uses, or other agricul-

ture-related investments; only 1.7 percent, amounting to roughly \$10 billion, reached small-scale producers.

Agricultural policies also miss the opportunity to address gender equality and women's empowerment and intersecting vulnerabilities such as climate change. An analysis of agricultural policies from 68 low- and middle-income countries done by FAO last year showed that about 80 percent of policies did not consider women and climate change.

Among several policy highlights, the report calls for investing in policies and programmes that address the multidimensional climate vulnerabilities of rural people and their specific constraints, including their limited access to productive resources. It also recommends linking social protection programmes to advisory services that can encourage adaptation and compensate farmers for losers, such as cash-based social assistance programs.

Gender-transformative methodologies that directly challenge discriminatory gender norms, could also tackle the entrenched discrimination that often prevents women from exercising full agency over economic decisions that impact their lives.

Inclusive climate actions are embedded in FAO's Strategy and Action Plan on Climate Change and in the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-2031, where tackling the impact of climate change is mainstreamed in efforts to achieve the four betters: better production, better nutrition, better environment and better life for all.

Similarly, FAO's Global Roadmap for Achieving SDG 2 without breaching the 1.5°C threshold, establishes that gender inequalities, climate actions and nutrition are simultaneous considerations, and actions must encompass these dimensions and promote inclusivity for

AI and Africa: Supportive policies and robust infrastructure key for technical opportunities

By Special Correspondent

AFRICA needs supportive policies and robust infrastructure to tap the limitless opportunities of Artificial Intelligence to leapfrog its development, experts have said.

Speaking at a panel discussion on 'Fostering prosperity through policies on artificial intelligence in Africa', on the sidelines of the 56th Session of the Economic Commission for Africa Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development (COM), experts agreed that Artificial Intelligence presented massive development opportunities for Africa if the right policies and infrastructure were in place.

Ousman Bah, Minister of Communications and Digital Economy of Gambia, said it was important to have

the right policies to regulate the use of AI and also avert its risks, but Africa should not wait to have the regulations in place to embrace the technology.

Artificial intelligence, a fast-evolving technology that taps the intelligence of machines or software is transforming all social spheres globally.

Research shows that the technology has the potential to contribute up to \$15.7 trillion to the global economy by 2030, of which \$1.2 trillion could be generated in Africa, representing a 5.6 per cent increase in the continent's gross domestic product by 2030.

Fayaz King, Deputy Executive Director, Field Results and Innovation for the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), said necessary strate-

gies were important to ensure that all approaches to AI from development, deployment to use are in the public interest.

"In the effervescent realm of AI, the known, the unknown and the unknowable is best addressed through governance with humanity at its centre, for what AI giveth, AI also taketh," King said, underscoring the need to bridge the digital divide by including marginalized communities in the AI initiatives.

Baratang Miya, Chief Executive of Girltype Coders Academy, said governments should regulate and incentivise stakeholders across AI value chains with focus on Small Medium Scale Enterprises to foster innovation and equitable access to AI technologies. Baratang said there should be a balance in policy development and

humanity to ensure that the AI technology does take over. Government needs to establish ethical frameworks on the development and deployment of AI through data privacy, security, transparency and accountability in AI systems. Africa needs to collect more data to have access to its own data and governments need to facilitate data democratization policies.

"We really need data that speaks to Africa itself and that case for open data means we are empowering citizens and at the same time encouraging innovation and efficiency and not using data that is inaccurate," said Miya, emphasizing that to host proper data for countries, good cloud infrastructure, including reliable electricity access are important.

Sandra Makumbirofa, Senior economist, Research ICT Africa, said AI

has transformative potential to boost African economies through effective financial inclusion, employment creation and enhanced public service delivery. However, most of the market value of AI was realised in United States and China, she said, citing research by UNCTAD. It was therefore important for African countries to actively participate in global fora to ensure their interests were represented.

"Our database is inadequate for global policy making," Ms. Makumbirofa noted. "The data that we have as African countries is not represented in the training of AI models. This means that the AI that we are using in Africa from foreign countries does not necessarily have the African context and therefore we are not able to use them efficiently as we can."

Contributing to the discussion,

which was moderated by Dorothy Ooko, Head of Communications and Public Affairs for Africa at Google, the UNECA Executive Secretary, Claver Gatete, highlighted that most people were not aware of AI and a drawback of AI was its dependence on data which has to be accurate.

Gatete said the development of infrastructure such as internet connectivity was key to tapping the benefits of AI and that the technology must be shared among countries to avoid inventing the wheel.

"Out of the 1.6 billion people who are not connected, Africa really is one of the biggest places where we are not connected. If you are not connected you cannot even talk about AI. We need infrastructure, we need energy investment going hand in hand with the IT infrastructure," said Gatete.

New report documents increase in HIV drug resistance to dolutegravir

By Special Correspondent

A recent report from the World Health Organization revealed some concerning news about the increasing resistance to the HIV drug dolutegravir, manufactured by GlaxoSmithKline plc (GSK), across the world.

The HIV Drug Resistance or HIVDR report stated that the level of resistance rose from 3.9 percent to 8.6 percent and reached 19.6 percent among people who received treatment and transitioned to a dolutegravir or DTG-containing antiretroviral therapy or ART while having high HIV viral loads.

The report shares some good news and some concerning news. It highlights high levels of HIV viral load suppression (>90 percent) in populations receiving dolutegravir (DTG)-containing antiretroviral therapy (ART). However, observational and country-generated survey data indicate that levels of HIVDR to DTG are exceeding levels observed in clinical trials.

Since 2018, WHO has recommended use of dolutegravir as the preferred first- and second-line HIV treatment for all population groups. It is more effective, easier to take, and has fewer side effects than other drugs currently in use. It also has a high genetic barrier to developing drug resistance.

However, among the four surveys reported, levels of resistance to dolutegravir ranged from 3.9 percent to 8.6 percent, and reached

19.6 percent among people experienced with treatment and transitioned to a DTG-containing ART while having high HIV viral loads. To date, only a few countries have reported survey data to WHO.

"The worrying evidence of resistance in individuals with unsuppressed viral load despite dolutegravir treatment underscores the necessity for increased vigilance and intensified efforts to optimize the quality of HIV care delivery," said Dr Meg Doherty, Director, WHO Department of the Global HIV, Hepatitis and STI Programmes.

He noted: "Standardized surveillance of HIV drug resistance is essential for effectively preventing, monitoring, and responding to these challenges".

Haiti was the only country to report data from a survey of HIVDR among ART naïve infants or infants starting ART for the first time. One infant, whose mother had received DTG-based ART, was found to have DTG resistance. Effective management of high viral loads among pregnant and breastfeeding women is critical to prevent transmitting HIV to infants. Increasing routine surveillance for HIVDR among infants newly diagnosed with HIV not yet taking HIV treatment will be important to guide appropriate ART options for the future.

In 2022, more than 75 percent of the 39 million people living with HIV globally were receiving HIV treatment. Countries have im-



plemented the WHO recommendations with 116 of 127 having adopted WHO preferred first-line DTG-based treatment for adults and adolescents, and 74 percent of reporting low- and middle-income countries adopted viral load monitoring for adults and adolescents.

But progress towards the SDG targets has stalled as there were still an estimated 1.3 million new HIV infections and 630 000 deaths from HIV-related causes. Between 2017 and 2022, for most countries reporting through the Global AIDS Monitoring (GAM) system, programmatic quality indicators for HIV treatment did not achieve established global targets, which further highlight the need to proactively improve the quality of HIV treatment and care services.

In 2022, only 12 of 45 WHO focus countries reported conducting surveys or had integrated the monitoring of HIVDR early warning indicators into routine monitoring and evaluation systems. Many countries continue to miss the mark when it comes to optimizing retention in care, population-level viral load suppression, and switching people with virological failure to different regimens. Additionally, antiretroviral drug stock-outs continue to happen which may negatively impact patient treatment adherence.

WHO recommends that countries routinely implement standardized sur-

veillance of HIVDR to follow the prevalence and patterns of resistance among people not achieving suppressed viral load. This is critical, as information and data from surveys influence the development of treatment guidelines and inform the quality of treatment programmes.

The report also documents cases of resistance to integrase-strand transfer inhibitors (INSTIs) after recent exposure to cabotegravir (CAB-LA). Delayed detection and confirmation of HIV infection can increase the risk of developing resistance to INSTIs. Since 2022, WHO has recommended the use of long-acting injectable CAB-LA as an additional HIV prevention option for people at substantial risk of HIV infection.

Despite the possible risk, WHO recommends the roll-out of CAB-LA for pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) and calls for the scale-up of PrEP to be accompanied by standardized surveillance of drug resistance among people testing positive for HIV while receiving PrEP.

Routine monitoring of quality-of-care indicators at both clinic and national levels, followed by addressing any suboptimal performance, remains a cornerstone for the success of ART programmes. Key quality-of-care indicators include on-time ART pick-up, retention on ART, viral load testing coverage, timely second-viral load test, ARV drug stock-outs and timely switch to second-line ART.

The new HIVDR report emphasizes the importance of strengthening data reporting systems so that countries can effectively monitor and report quality-of-care indicators. It underscores the active engagement by ART clinics and programmes in use of indicator data to develop locally appropriate and sustainable solutions. These efforts are crucial for optimizing service delivery quality, thereby reducing the emergence of drug-resistant HIV.

Minimizing the spread of HIV drug resistance is a crucial part of the broader global response to antimicrobial resistance that needs coordinated action across all government sectors and levels of society.

Tanzanians urged to protect their future with health insurance

By Correspondent James Kandoya

Subscribing to health insurance is a critical step towards ensuring financial security and peace of mind in times of unforeseen medical emergencies, as it serves as a safety net that provides access to quality healthcare regardless of one's financial situation.

During a charitable visit to the maternal ward of Mwananyamala Regional Referral Hospital in Dar es Salaam, Fatma Kilinga, the marketing officer for Strategis Insurance, expressed the company's commitment to supporting the community.

As part of their annual celebration of International Women's Day on March 8th, the firm generously donated to the hospital various items including baby diapers, powder soaps, under pads, and maternity pads.

The insurer explained that subscribing to health insurance can alleviate the stress and anxiety associated with potential medical expenses, allowing individuals to focus on their recovery and well-being without worrying about the financial implications.

For instance, in times of illness or injury, health insurance provides a sense of security and support, enabling patients to receive the necessary treatment without delay or hesitation.

Ultimately, investing in health insurance is investing in one's physical and financial well-being, and it is an important step towards achieving comprehensive healthcare coverage and peace of mind.

Moreover, Kilinga encouraged individuals to seek timely medical care and preventive services, leading to better health outcomes in the long run.

"By having insurance coverage, people are more likely to schedule regular check-ups, screenings, and vaccinations, which can help detect and manage health issues before they escalate into serious conditions," she said.

Adding that: "This proactive approach to healthcare not only benefits the individual's well-being but also reduces the overall healthcare costs by preventing costly treatments for advanced illnesses. We offer a range of health insurance packages tailored for individuals, small and medium-sized enterprises, and corporate clients. We encourage everyone to take advantage of these options."

Florence Uledi, the Nurse in-charge at the visited hospital, conveyed heartfelt appreciation for the support provided by the insurance firm. She urged additional stakeholders to unite in aiding patients requiring help.

Uledi emphasized the significance of promoting a culture of voluntary giving within the community, advocating for sustained support for individuals in need beyond just public holidays.

Neema Willson, a resident of Kawe who is currently receiving care at the maternal ward, expressed sincere appreciation to the company for their donation of essential items. She recognized the ongoing impact these supplies would have even after their discharge.



Ride the future: Tanzania Railways Corporation's inaugural test run of first ever electric train. Photo: File

Unlocking opportunities: Tanzania's growing rail sector awaits investment

By Correspondent James Kandoya

OPPORTUNITIES abound for companies looking to tap into the burgeoning rail sector in the country as the Tanzania Railway Corporation (TRC) extends an exclusive invitation to both foreign and local investors to capitalize on the upcoming launch of its first electric train route in July this year.

In a ground-breaking declaration at the rail and investment forum in Mwanza, Masanja Kadogosa, TRC Director General, unveiled the golden opportunity awaiting companies to soar to unmatched success in the dynamic railway sector.

Kadogosa astutely pinpointed a multitude of profitable ventures within the coveted realm of standard gauge railway (SGR), encompassing investment prospects in upscale hotels, fine dining restaurants, luxurious real estate devel-

opments, state-of-the-art conference facilities, and elegant social venues.

Additionally, he highlighted the great potential in establishing vibrant recreational centers, exclusive clubs, sophisticated commercial complexes, bustling malls, vast parking facilities, and an array of services for inland containers and container freight, beckoning ambitious companies to secure their place in this thriving landscape.

"We stand prepared to forge strategic partnerships with prospective investors for our cutting-edge rail project. Notably, we have proactively revised our Rail Act to facilitate private sector participation," he affirmed.

Emphasizing the transformative impact of the SGR on regional connectivity, Kadogosa underscored its pivotal role in linking East, Central, and South Africa, positioning TRC as a beacon for ambitious investors seeking to capitalize on this

unparalleled opportunity.

Kadogosa further emphasized the lucrative prospects available for private sector entities to invest in the railway infrastructure, enabling expedited recoupment of construction costs for the government.

To date, the government has spent a substantial sum of 23.5tn/- for the development of the Dar es Salaam - Mwanza and Tabora - Kigoma sections, illustrating a strong commitment to advancing railway infrastructure.

In recognition of the pivotal role of the private sector, the government has diligently cultivated a supportive climate for their involvement, exemplified by the comprehensive review of the Railway Act ensuring an inclusive and conducive environment for investment.

Notably, in a strategic move, the government implemented crucial amendments to the Railway Act

(CAP. 170) last year, ushering in a new era of open access for private sector entities seeking to play a pivotal role in the railway industry.

The amendment allows the private sector to have a significant role in service provision by procuring wagons and locomotives for transporting goods, paying concession fees to the government for utilizing the railway.

Under the new provisions, individuals intending to utilize railway facilities are required to apply to the corporation and adhere to specified fees.

Previously serving solely as an operator, TRC now assumes the dual roles of regulator and operator, marking a significant shift from its previous function as a service provider.

With these changes in place, the amendment is poised to drive heightened efficiency, utility, and increased competition within the railway industry.

International tourism to top pre-pandemic levels in 2024

New York

WHILE few industries were spared by the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic over the past three years, even fewer have been hit as hard as the tourism sector.

After Covid-19 had made 2020 "the worst year in tourism history", international tourist arrivals increased by just 13 percent in 2021, as travel restrictions remained in place for long periods in many parts of the world.

Now, nearly four years after the WHO declared Covid-19 a pandemic, optimism has finally returned to the industry.

According to the UNWTO World Tourism Barometer, global tourism continued its recovery in 2023, ending the year at 88 percent of pre-pandemic

levels, with an estimated 1.3 billion international tourist arrivals.

China's reopening earlier in 2023 had marked another milestone on the road to full recovery, after the region long trailed behind the rest of the world.

In the first nine months of 2023, international tourist arrivals in the Asia-Pacific region reached 62 percent of pre-pandemic levels, with a clear upward trend towards the end of that period.

That's a significant improvement compared to 2022, when the region saw just 26 percent of 2019 arrivals due to ongoing travel restrictions, especially in China.

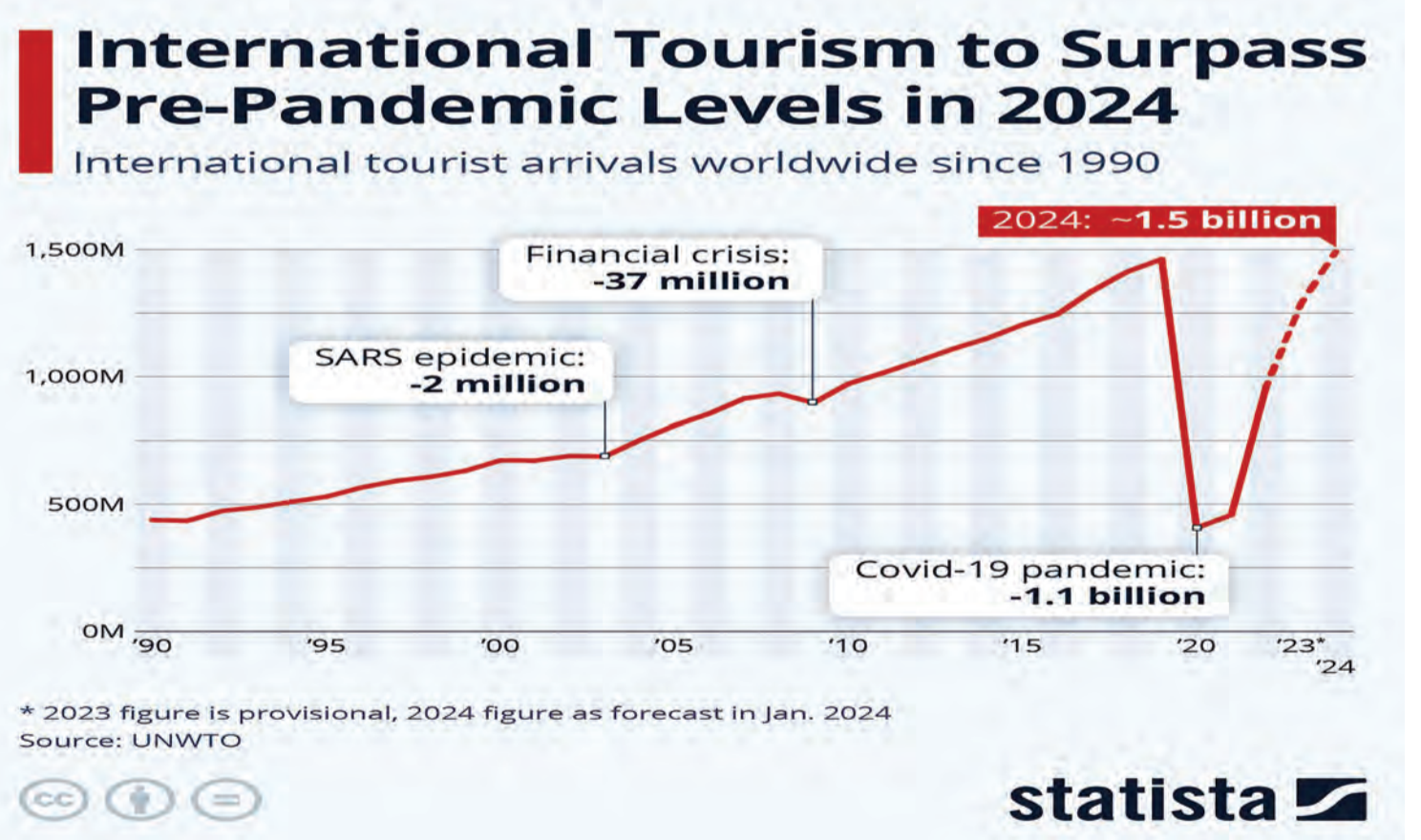
Citing the "unleashing of remaining pent-up demand, increased air connectivity, and a stronger recovery of Asian markets

and destinations", the UNWTO now expects international tourism to make a full recovery by the end of 2024.

This is no mean feat considering the challenging economic backdrop and the uncertainties associated with lingering geopolitical tensions and several ongoing conflicts.

Prior to the coronavirus outbreak, the global tourism sector had seen almost uninterrupted growth for decades. Since 1980, the number of international arrivals skyrocketed from 277 million to nearly 1.5 billion in 2019.

As our chart shows, the two largest crises of the past decades, the SARS epidemic of 2003 and the global financial crisis of 2009, were minor bumps in the road compared to the Covid-19 pandemic.



Rocket LV0006 tilts during liftoff. Photo: Astra / NASA Spaceflight

Space firm going private to avoid bankruptcy after dismal public run

California

SPACE company Astra will go private in a cut-rate deal with its founders after a dismal run as a publicly-traded stock.

Astra co-founders Chris Kemp and Adam London, chief executive officer and chief technology officer, respectively, signed an agreement with the company's board to acquire all outstanding common stock at 50 cents a share. The deal is expected

to close in the second quarter.

A special committee of the board, with Kemp and London abstaining, voted in favor of the take-private plan. After the founders last month cut their offer from \$1.50 a share to 50 cents, the board's committee emphasized it believed the deal was "the only alternative" to filing for Chapter 7 bankruptcy.

Astra's stock, halted at 85 cents a share near the time of the announcement, closed at

58 cents a share Thursday.

The company's market value is about \$13 million at current levels, a sliver of the \$2.6 billion equity valuation it went public at via a SPAC three years ago.

The San Francisco-area company, incorporated in 2016, once aimed to mass produce small rockets and conduct launches as often as daily.

Since its stock debut, Astra's rockets reached orbit twice, but the company also suffered

three launch failures.

Its rocket-launching business has been on hiatus since a June 2022 mission failure. Despite acquiring a spacecraft propulsion business, the company was unable to drive meaningful quarterly revenue and conducted layoffs last year in a bid to survive.

The company recorded more than \$750 million in net losses since announcing it would go public.

CNBC

Coast Region set to drive economic growth, prosperity forward

By Julieth Mkireri

THE government in Coast region is committed to fostering a favorable business environment, as emphasized by regional commissioner (RC) Abubakar Kunenge, as he underscored the importance of a thriving private sector, stating that without its success, the overall economic growth would be stifled.

Additionally, Kunenge said that the government is proactively addressing obstacles that deter investments, with a particular focus on tackling the electricity shortage as the matter will soon be resolved with the completion of the Julius Nyerere Hydroelectric Power Plant (JNHPP).

Addressing a gathering at a business forum in Kibaha district on Wednesday, Kunenge implored investors to promptly submit detailed data on their electricity requirements for ongoing projects, highlighting the importance of proactive planning. By fostering communication and collaboration in this manner, precise assessments of the electricity demand in the industrial sector can be made, paving the way for strategic solutions to mitigate challenges caused by power disruptions.

In a powerful call to action di-



The Coast region business council addressed by regional commissioner Abubakar Kunenge. Photo courtesy of the regional commissioner's office

rected at district councils in the region, Kunenge emphasized the vital need for allocated spaces to be set aside specifically for small-scale entrepreneurs to effectively showcase and market their products.

Expressing his enthusiasm for the rapidly evolving technological landscape, Godwin George, the secretary to the local business council, highlighted the transformative impact of Information and Communica-

tion Technologies (ICTs) in the country.

He underscored how ICTs have played a pivotal role in streamlining processes, thereby eradicating bureaucratic hurdles for both businesses and investors.

Philemon Maliga, the regional chairperson representing petty traders, called upon the government to designate business-friendly areas to prevent capital loss for entrepreneurs.

Additionally, council member Mariam Nhwani proposed a reevaluation of the employee testing process, suggesting that one central institution be responsible for conducting these tests.

She underscored the critical need for workers to obtain certification from the region's Chief Medical Officer prior to their employment in factories. This streamlined approach not only enhances efficiency in the hir-

ing process but also eliminates unwarranted interference from various institutions.

Currently, the Coast region proudly hosts a grand total of 1,533 factories, with 33 of these being large-scale establishments acquired as part of the government's sixth-phase initiatives to transition from medium to large industries. Additionally, 25 factories are on the brink of completion, signaling tremendous industrial expansion in the area.

Costco misses holiday-quarter revenue expectations despite online expansion

New York

COSTCO on Thursday missed Wall Street's revenue expectations for its holiday quarter, despite reporting year-over-year sales growth and strong e-commerce gains.

Shares of the retailer fell about 4 percent in aftermarket trading. The company's stock had hit a 52-week high earlier in the day.

Here's what Costco reported for its fiscal second quarter of 2024 compared with what Wall Street was expecting, based on a survey of analysts by LSEG, formerly known as Refinitiv.

In the three-month period that ended Feb. 18, Costco's net income rose to \$1.74 billion, or \$3.92 per share, compared with \$1.47 billion, or \$3.30 per share, a year earlier.

Costco's revenue for the quarter increased from \$55.27 billion in the year-ago period.

Comparable sales for the company increased

5.6 percent year over year and 4.3 percent in the US. Excluding changes in gas prices and foreign currency, the metric increased 5.8 percent overall and 4.8 percent in the US.

Sales of food and sundries, a category that includes snack foods and beverages, were up by mid-single digits in the quarter, CFO Richard Galanti said on the company's earnings call. Fresh foods were up high single digits and nonfoods were up mid-single digits.

Ancillary businesses, which includes more service-related purchases like travel, were up by low single digits, he said. Costco's food court, pharmacy and optical centers were top performers in the quarter and gas was down low single digits as the price per gallon fell. More shoppers came to Costco, and they spent more on their shopping trips during the quarter. Traffic increased 5.3 percent across the globe and 4.3 percent in the US, Galanti said on the



Interior view of a Costco store in the US. Photo: File

earnings call. The average ticket increased in the US and worldwide, he said.

Inflation was roughly flat year over year in the quarter, which allowed the retailer to reduce prices for some items, Galanti said. For example, he said, it's been able to cut the price of reading glasses from \$18.99 to \$16.99 and slash the price of a 48 count of Kirkland Signature batteries from \$17.99 to \$15.99. In the prior quarter, he said inflation was as much as 1 percent year over year.

Galanti said many new items in categories like sporting goods and lawn and garden will also have lower prices compared with a year ago because of falling freight and commodity costs. Costco has 875 warehouses, including 603 in the U.S. and Puerto Rico. It also has clubs in about a dozen other countries, including Canada, Mexico, Japan and China.

In the second quarter, Costco opened four new clubs, including three in the US and one in Shenz-

hen, China. That marked its sixth club to open in China, Galanti said. Two of the three new US locations were Costco Business Centers, which are specifically geared toward small business owners like restaurant operators.

As of Thursday's close, Costco shares have risen nearly 19 percent since the start of the year. The stock touched a 52-week high of \$787.08 earlier in the day and closed at \$785.59, bringing the company's market value to

nearly \$350 billion. Costco has made changes to its website to improve the experience for online shoppers, Galanti said Thursday. It's also tweaked its business to be more digitally savvy. E-commerce sales grew 18.4 percent in the quarter compared with the year earlier. For example, Costco rolled out a new mobile app homepage in February, which loads in less than two seconds compared with eight seconds previously, a move he said was crucial since about 60 percent of its e-commerce business is done through its mobile app and mobile browser.

It rolled out Apple Pay last week to all members online. And it's adding more merchandise to Costco Next, a seller platform that allows members to buy directly from some of the retailer's suppliers at a discounted price. The marketplace carries a wide variety of items, including electronics, bicycles and apparel, he said.

CBNC

Tanzania's gas firm gets recognised for its role in clean cooking

By Guardian Reporter

TAIFA Gas Tanzania Limited has been acclaimed for its significant contributions to advancing the clean cooking initiative within the country.

At yesterday's International Women's Day celebrations in Iringa, Iringa Regional Commissioner Halima Dendego praised Taifa Gas Tanzania Limited for its dedication to supporting President Samia Suluhu Hassan's clean cooking agenda.

During the official launch of the campaign to promote clean cooking and reduce reliance on firewood and charcoal among Iringa women, the RC expressed gratitude to Taifa Gas for their unwavering commitment to transitioning to clean energy sources as called for by the President.

Dendego emphasized that the campaign's kickoff is just the beginning, with the goal of ensuring that every household in Iringa chooses clean cooking energy for a sustainable future.

According to Taifa Gas, the company's initiatives are focused on supporting the government's efforts to ensure that the Tanzanian population has access to LPG, a globally recognized clean cooking fuel.

Angellah Bhoke, the firm's Corporate Affairs Manager, spoke to reporters about Taifa Gas' commitment to empowering women through the use of LPG as a clean energy source.

Recognizing the important role that women play in household decision-making, she emphasized the company's programs targeting women in society.

"We acknowledge the critical role women play in determining the cooking energy they prefer, which is why our initiatives are tailored to empower women in our communities," said Ms. Bhoke.

She highlighted the importance for women to explore Taifa Gas' range of products, available in various sizes from 3 kg to 38 kg, to demonstrate the cleanliness and safety of their offerings.

"Our cylinders are available in different sizes to enable consumers make decisions depending on the amount of money they have at hand. We are available across all regions of Tanzania while in Dar es Salaam and other cities, we deliver free of charge" She added.

Taifa Gas she said understands the government's agenda that intends to make Tanzania among the clean energy using countries in the world. Also, the government plan is to have its citizens be able to access clean energy by the year 2030 and meet the sustainable development goals.

Taifa Gas pledged to continue working with the Regional Commissioners in the country to ensure the government meets its set plans of a clean cooking country.

“We acknowledge the critical role women play in determining the cooking energy they prefer, which is why our initiatives ...”

Steven Mnuchin leads \$1 billion attempt to rescue NYCB

New York

NEW YORK Community Bank (NYCB) made a dramatic attempt to regain investor confidence by announcing a new CEO and a \$1 billion infusion from a group that includes former Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin.

The moves on Wednesday came after the stock of the \$114 billion lender fell as much as 45 percent following a report that NYCB was on the hunt for investors willing to buy stock in the company.

After the \$1 billion deal was announced, the stock rebounded as much as 18 percent. It closed the day up more than 7 percent.

The firms that lined up to provide the infusion include Liberty Strategic Capital, a firm founded by Mnuchin in 2021, as well as Hudson Bay Capital, Reverence Capital Partners, and

Citadel Global Equities.

They and some bank managers will purchase common and convertible-preferred stock, effectively taking control of the Hicksville, N.Y.-based company.

The deal also comes with a new change at the top. Former Comptroller of the Currency Joseph Otting will become NYCB's new CEO, the third person to hold that title in just the last few weeks.

The transaction is scheduled to close by March 11 and is still subject to regulatory approvals.

"In evaluating this investment, we were mindful of the bank's credit risk profile," Mnuchin said in a press release. His firm is expected to contribute \$450 million, more than the other investors.

"With the over \$1 billion of capital invested in the bank, we believe we now have sufficient capital should



Steven Mnuchin, founder of Liberty Strategic Capital and former Treasury Secretary. Photo: David Swanson/Reuters

reserves need to be increased in the future to be consistent with or above the coverage ratio of NYCB's large bank peers."

Mnuchin, who served as Treasury secretary under President Donald Trump and previously was a Gold-

man Sachs partner, has past experience with another troubled bank.

In 2009, he was part of an investor group that acquired California mortgage lender IndyMac Bank for roughly \$1.5 billion after it had been seized by the federal government during the 2008 financial crisis.

He and the group renamed that lender OneWest and hired Otting to help turn it around. OneWest was eventually sold to CIT Bank for more than \$3 billion, and Otting later served as acting Comptroller of the Currency during the Trump administration.

This new rescue of NYCB comes with several changes to NYCB's leadership. Otting, in becoming CEO, replaces Alessandro DiNello, who had been acting as the bank's true boss since Feb. 6 and officially became CEO last week following the exit of longtime CEO Thomas Cangemi.

DiNello will become non-executive chair on a smaller nine-person board that includes a number of new faces, including Mnuchin, Otting, Allen Puwalski from Hudson Bay, and Milton Berlinski from Reverence Capital.

"We welcome the approach that Liberty and its partners took in its evaluation of the bank and look forward to incorporating their insights going forward," DiNello said. It is "a positive endorsement of the turnaround that is underway and allows us to execute on our strategy from a position of strength."

NYCB's stock first began falling on Jan. 31 when it surprised analysts by slashing its dividend and setting aside more for loan losses.

The turmoil intensified again last week after it disclosed the exit of Cangemi, weaknesses in its internal controls, and a tenfold increase in its

fourth quarter loss to \$2.7 billion.

The dilemma facing New York Community Bancorp comes roughly one year after the fall of Silicon Valley Bank and Signature Bank, seizures that triggered widespread panic among depositors.

Now there are new fears that mounting commercial real estate weaknesses could ripple through other banks, causing a new set of problems.

Fed Chair Jerome Powell said Wednesday that the commercial real estate exposures banks face are "manageable" but that "there will be losses" among some lenders.

The Fed, he told lawmakers during a hearing in Washington, is in touch with banks to make sure they have enough liquidity and capital to absorb any losses.

Agencies

Eli Lilly says FDA delays approval of Alzheimer's drug in surprise move

Indiana

ELI Lilly said Friday that the Food and Drug Administration has pushed back its approval decision deadline for the drugmaker's experimental Alzheimer's treatment donanemab in a surprise move.

The agency plans to call a last-minute meeting of its outside advisors to further review the treatment's safety and efficacy in a late-stage trial, Eli Lilly said. The FDA has not disclosed the date of that meeting, so a potential approval would likely come after this month.

The FDA was expected to decide whether to greenlight the medicine by the end of the first quarter. That deadline was already delayed from an expected approval last year.

Eli Lilly's drug significantly slowed Alzheimer's progression in a late-stage trial. But the treatment, along with similar drugs, carries safety concerns related to brain swelling and bleeding.

The agency's decision to call for an advisory meeting reflects the high stakes of developing treatments for Alzheimer's. The condition affects more than six million Americans and currently has no cure, leaving patients who have it with few effective care options.

It's another setback for Eli Lilly, which is racing to compete with Biogen and Eisai. Their treatment Leqembi won approval last year, becoming the first medicine proven to slow the progression of Alzheimer's in people at the early stages of the memory-robbing disease.

Both Leqembi and Eli Lilly's drug are



Eli Lilly headquarters in Indianapolis, Indiana, US. Photo: AJ Mast/ Bloomberg/ Getty images

monoclonal antibodies that target buildups of a protein in the brain called amyloid plaque, which is considered a hallmark of the disease.

Eli Lilly called the delay "unex-

pected," but said it is confident in donanemab's "potential to offer very meaningful benefits to people with early symptomatic Alzheimer's disease," according to a release.

"We will work with the FDA and the stakeholders in the community to make that presentation and answer all questions," said Anne White, president of neuroscience at Eli Lilly, in a release.

Eli Lilly noted that while it is unusual for the FDA to hold an advisory panel meeting after a set action date, the agency has convened similar meetings for two other amyloid plaque-targeting

therapies that it previously approved. The FDA often turns to an advisory panel for advice on whether an unapproved product is safe and effective.

The agency usually follows the recommendations of its advisors, but isn't required to. In 2021, the FDA approved an earlier, ill-fated Alzheimer's drug called Aduhelm from Biogen and Eisai, despite a negative recommendation from the agency's advisory panel.

The FDA will examine an 18-month phase three trial, which followed more than 1,700 patients in the early stages of Alzheimer's who had a confirmed presence of amyloid plaque. The agency is interested in understanding the safety results and how the trial's "unique" design affected efficacy.

Eli Lilly's study allowed patients to stop taking the drug once the amyloid plaques were shown to be cleared from the brain. Alzheimer's drugs, including Leqembi, don't have designated stopping points for patients.

Eli Lilly's drug showed positive results in that trial. Patients who received the drug demonstrated a 35 percent slower decline in memory, thinking and their ability to perform daily activities compared with those who did not receive the treatment, data shows.

But 37 percent of people who took donanemab had brain swelling or bleeding, including three who died, according to the trial. That compares with around 15 percent of people who received a placebo.

Those side effects have also been observed in Leqembi.

Why does fuel cost more in California?

California

CALIFORNIA ranks among the states with some of the highest gas prices in the United States, as reported by American Automobile Association (AAA).

The national average for a gallon of regular unleaded was \$3.40 as of Thursday, according to the organization's data. In California, the average was \$4.87, more than any other state.

Several factors go into what drivers pay for gas, including refining costs, taxes, distribution and marketing, and crude oil prices, according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration.

High taxes are partly to blame in California. The state has the highest gasoline taxes in the nation, according to EIA.

But there's more to the story.

California requires a special blend of gasoline that reduces pollution and costs more money.

"California also has seen a drop of 66 percent in the amount of refineries in operation from where we were 40 years ago," said Patrick De Haan, head of petroleum analysis for GasBuddy. "So there are fewer refineries producing this special blend of gasoline."

California has an isolated refinery market. The special fuel blend that is consumed in California is produced by 11 major refineries within the state, according to the California Energy Commission.

"Not many other states use the same blend of fuel, which limits California's supply when there's an outage, when there's an issue at one of our refineries," Anllely Venegas, a senior public affairs specialist at AAA, told CNBC.

The isolated market means that any outages will lead to volatility in prices at the pump.

"Part of the reason why prices have been so high is that California has really restricted the ability for refineries to expand and grow," said De Haan. "California has been rather hostile to refinery expansions or oil industry investments, trying to push them away and transition California to more electric vehicles."

California plans to ban the sale of new gas-powered cars by 2035 as it transitions to cleaner vehicles. A quarter of new cars sold in California in 2023 were zero-emission vehicles, according to the California Energy Commission.

"The high price of gasoline does encourage more EV adoption," De Haan said. "Americans getting hit with \$5 and \$6 [per] gallon prices in California is likely accelerating the shift away."

In 2023, California Gov. Gavin Newsom signed a new law to combat alleged price gouging at the pump. The law aims to increase transparency in the oil and gas industry and created an independent watchdog called the Division of Petroleum Market Oversight.

"There hasn't really been much impact," De Haan said. "But I do believe that in the months ahead, there probably will be more ... talk on this subject."

Families are spending thousands of dollars on gasoline each year. In 2022, the average annual spending per consumer unit on gasoline and other fuels was \$3,120, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. That tally was up 45.3 percent from 2021, as more people resumed commuting after the pandemic and fuel prices rose.

"Adopting new and improved driving behaviors can contribute to significant savings," Venegas said.



ITV PGM SCHEDULE

Time	Program	Time	Program	Time	Program	Time	Program	Time	Program
5:30	Uwajia wa Mazoezi	6:00	HABARI	6:40	Kumekucha	7:00	Habari	8:00	Al Jazeera
8:55	Habari za saa	9:00	Kumekucha kishindo	9:30	Soap: Laws of love rpt	10:00	Watoto wetu	11:00	ITV Top Ten rpt
10:05	Shika Bamba 5	10:35	Mjuzi Zaidi rpt	11:15	Chetu ni chetu rpt	11:50	Habari za saa	12:00	Al Jazeera
12:30	Jungu kuu	12:30	Mjuzi Zaidi rpt	12:30	Mjuzi Zaidi rpt	12:30	Mjuzi Zaidi rpt	12:30	Mjuzi Zaidi rpt
13:00	Al Jazeera	13:00	Al Jazeera	13:00	Al Jazeera	13:00	Al Jazeera	13:00	Al Jazeera
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CNBC



External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar meets the Secretary-General of Japan's ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), Toshimitsu Motegi, in Tokyo yesterday. ANI

India-Japan ties will draw strength from our larger activities together, especially from Quad, says EAM Jaishankar

TOKYO

EXTERNAL Affairs Minister S Jaishankar yesterday emphasised that India-Japan ties will both draw strength from larger activities together, especially from the Quad.

Speaking at Nikkei Forum on the India-Japan Special Strategic Partnership, EAM said that solutions for India and Japan nationally, as well as regionally and globally, lie there.

"My argument is that India-Japan ties will both draw strength from our larger activities together, especially from the quad, but also contribute to its effectiveness and its breadth," he said.

Jaishankar added, "The bottom line is that the world is changing, the Indo-Pacific is changing, and India and Japan are changing, but in our relationship, many solutions for us nationally, as well as region and for the world lie there."

Jaishankar is on a visit to Japan from March 6-8 for the 16th India-Japan Foreign Minister's Strategic Dialogue with his Japanese counterpart, Yoko Kamikawa.

He further stressed that India-Japan relationships need to be continuously tended at various levels.

"They also need to be constantly refreshed," he added.

EAM highlighted that there will always be new complexities but equally fresh opportunities will also be there. "This is how India and Japan should approach each other today," he said.

After holding discussions with his Japanese counterpart, he said, "We are convergent on the big picture and the key concerns."

He stressed that our inclination and ability to respond in a more coordinated manner have also improved.

Highlighting the defence sector, Jaishankar noted that a bilateral military exercise is going on between India and Japan as of now.

Moving further to investment, he said, "It is much better in invest-

ment, though trade remains flatter than we would wish."

India and Japan are also having an active conversation on emerging technologies that hold much promise, he said.

"Creating new supply chains and building a stronger digital connection are priorities for both of us," EAM said.

Moreover, he also emphasised that both nations are working well together in world politics, including, of late, in multilateral organisations.

However, people-to-people linkages, lag behind and clearly need more attention, he stressed.

When asked about whether China is part of the Global South or not, as it was not part of the Global South Summit, Jaishankar said, "At the two summits (Global South Summit), which we conveyed, I don't believe China was present."

Earlier on Thursday, addressing the Raisina Roundtable in Tokyo, Jaishankar, citing the turbulence in India's relationship with China amid the border standoff, said that it is a cause of concern if a country doesn't observe written agreements with its neighbours and also raises a question on the said country's intentions.

India's foreign minister also said that when big power shifts take place in the Indo-Pacific region, there are accompanying and strategic consequences.

He further said that although countries intend to keep relationships stable despite changing dynamics but that has not been the case with China.

"It's not an issue whether you like or not like it, there is a reality out there and you have to deal with that. Ideally, we would assume 'Everybody would say okay, things are changing but let's keep it as stable as we can'. Unfortunately, that's not what we have seen in the last decade," Jaishankar said. ANI

EAM highlighted that there will always be new complexities but equally fresh opportunities will also be there. "This is how India and Japan should approach each other today

Medvedev calls Biden a US' disgrace

MOSCOW

US President Joe Biden should not have mentioned his predecessor Franklin Delano Roosevelt, because, unlike Roosevelt, he only disgraces the US, Russian Security Council Deputy Chairman Dmitry Medvedev said, commenting on the State of the Union address.

"In the State of the Union address, Biden compared himself with Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

That's a so-so comparison. Obviously, not in his favour," Medvedev said on his X page. "He is the United States' disgrace!"

Medvedev pointed out that, even though the 32nd US President was an infirm man in a wheelchair, "he raised America



from the Depression," while Biden is a "mad, mentally disabled individual who set his mind on dragging humanity to hell."

In addition, the official continued, Roosevelt fought for peace together with allies, including the USSR, while "Biden is actively and persistently trying to start WWII."

Finally, Roosevelt "was fighting against fascists, but Biden is fighting for them," Medvedev concluded. Agencies

Sweden joins NATO as Ukraine crisis prompts security rethink

WASHINGTON/
STOCKHOLM

SWEDEN joined NATO in Washington on Thursday, two years after Russia's military operation in Ukraine forced it to rethink its national security policy and conclude that support for the alliance was the Scandinavian nation's best guarantee of safety.

Swedish Prime Minister Ulf Kristersson handed over the final documentation to the US government on Thursday, the last step in a drawn-out process to secure the backing of all members to join the military alliance.

"Good things come to those who wait," US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said as he received Sweden's accession documents from Kristersson.

For NATO, the accessions of Sweden and Finland - which shares a 1,340-km border with Russia - are the most significant additions in decades.

"Sweden is a safer country today than we were yesterday. We have allies. We have backing," Kristersson said in an address to the Swedish nation from Washington. "We have taken out an insurance in the Western defence alliance."

US President Joe Biden,



Swedish Prime Minister Ulf Kristersson speaks after a presentation of Sweden's NATO Instruments of Accession in the Benjamin Franklin Room at the State Department on Thursday, in Washington. AP

in a statement, said the addition of Sweden made NATO "more united, determined, and dynamic than ever," adding that the accession of Sweden and Finland to the alliance meant the addition of "two highly capable militaries."

Sweden adds cutting-edge submarines and a sizable fleet of domestically produced Gripen fighter jets to NATO forces, and is a crucial link between the Atlantic and Baltic.

"Sweden's accession makes NATO stronger, Sweden safer and the whole Alliance more secure," NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg said in a statement.

"Joining NATO is really like buying insurance, at least as long as the United States is actually willing to be the insurance provider," said Barbara Kunz, a researcher at defense think tank SIPRI.

While Stockholm has been drawing ever closer to NATO over the last two decades, membership

marks a clear break with the past, when for more than 200 years, Sweden avoided military alliances and adopted a neutral stance in times of war.

As recently as 2021, its defense minister had rejected NATO membership, only for the then-Social Democrat government to apply, alongside neighbor Finland, just a few months later.

While Finland joined the alliance last year, Sweden was kept waiting as Türkiye and Hungary, which both have cordial relations with Russia, delayed ratifying Sweden's accession.

Türkiye approved Sweden's application in January.

Hungary delayed its decision on Sweden's accession until Kristersson made a goodwill visit to Budapest on Feb. 23, where the two countries agreed a fighter jet deal. Agencies

Hamas says no hostage release without meeting its conditions

GAZA/CAIRO

A Hamas official said on Thursday that Israel aimed to secure the release of its hostages without agreeing to the conditions set by the movement, a demand Hamas deemed "impossible."

The official, who spoke anonymously, told Xinhua that during the ceasefire negotiation, the Israeli side prioritized its captives' issue, while refusing the conditions set by Palestinian factions to proceed with the ceasefire negotiations.

Hamas's delegation left the Egyptian capital of Cairo on

Thursday to consult with the movement's leadership regarding the negotiations.

Egypt's Al-Qahera News quoted a high-level Egyptian source as saying that negotiations will resume next week in Cairo, noting that consultations are still ongoing among all parties to reach a ceasefire before Ramadan. Ramadan begins this year around March 10.

Egypt has been hosting a new round of talks since Sunday to reach a ceasefire in Gaza, with the participation of delegations from Qatar, the United States, and the Hamas movement.

As of Thursday, the Israeli offensives in Gaza have killed 30,800 Palestinians and injured 72,298 others, according to Gaza's health ministry.

The Israeli escalation followed an attack by Gaza-ruling Hamas on Israeli towns on Oct 7 last year, killing about 1,200 Israelis and taking over 200 as hostages.

Egypt, Qatar, and the United States mediated a week-long truce between Israel and Hamas that ended in late November 2023, which included a swap between Palestinian prisoners and Israeli hostages and more humanitarian aid delivery to Gaza.

China, US should meet each other halfway, turn 'San Francisco vision' into reality

IN recent times, both China and the United States have been working together to implement the consensus reached by the two heads of state at the San Francisco meeting.

They have engaged in dialogues and exchanges in various fields and at different levels, which has helped stabilize the China-U.S. relationship from deterioration and sent a positive signal to the world.

The international community has positively evaluated the constructive interaction between China and the United States. It is believed that both countries are taking concrete actions to effectively implement the "San Francisco vision," which is beneficial for the well-being of their respective peoples and also contributes to global peace, stability, and prosperity.

Last November, Chinese President Xi Jinping and U.S. President Joe Biden held a summit meeting in San Francisco. The two heads of state had in-depth exchange of views on strategic and overarching issues critical to the direction of China-U.S. relations.

The two sides reached more than 20 deliverables in such areas as political affairs and foreign policy, trade and finance, people-to-people exchange, global governance, and military and security, and embraced a future-oriented San Francisco vision. These efforts have pointed the way forward and drawn a blueprint for the development of China-U.S. relations.

These important deliverables are further proof of the broad common interests of China and the United States and the mutu-

ally beneficial nature of China-U.S. relations. They demonstrate that dialogue and cooperation is the only right choice for the two countries.

The most important task for both China and the United States at present is to follow the strategic guidance of the two heads of state and make the San Francisco vision a reality, so as to promote the healthy, stable and sustainable development of the bilateral relationship.

The two sides decided to resume military-to-military communication, and launched working groups on economy, finance, trade, climate actions, and counternarcotics cooperation. The Chinese side also invited young Americans to China on exchange and study programs, and government talks on artificial intelligence have been

initiated. The dialogues and exchanges between China and the United States have received wide attention.

To turn the San Francisco vision into reality, the right approach for the two sides is to respect each other, coexist in peace and pursue win-win cooperation. The two sides should jointly develop a right perception, manage disagreements effectively and advance mutually beneficial cooperation.

In the past 45 years since establishing diplomatic relations, China and the United States have experienced ups and downs in their relationship, which has maintained a positive momentum in general. The two sides have achieved fruitful results in their cooperation, bringing tangible benefits to the people of both countries.

China and the United States have engaged in beneficial cooperation on various regional hotspots and global issues, promoting world peace, stability, and prosperity.

This year marks the 45th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and the United States. The two sides should take this opportunity to sum up experience and draw lessons, treat each other as equals instead of in a condescending way, build common ground and shelving instead of highlighting differences, and respect instead of undermining each other's core interests. Both sides should work together toward mutual respect, peaceful coexistence, and win-win cooperation, finding the right way for China and the United States to get along with each other. This

is a natural requirement of historical evolution and a universal expectation of the international community.

David Lampton, professor emeritus of China studies at Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies, believes that currently, the relationship between the United States and China is in a state of dynamic evolution. Both countries need to steer this evolution towards a better rather than worse direction and strive to find common ground.

To turn the San Francisco vision into reality, the United States should view China's development in an objective and rational way, pursue a positive and pragmatic China policy, and honor commitments with concrete actions.

The China-U.S. relationship is

France's envoy to UN extends support for candidacy of G4 countries as permanent members of UNSC

PARIS

THE Permanent Representative of France to the UN, Ambassador Nicolas de Riviere, extended support for the candidacy of the G4 countries -- India, Brazil, Germany and Japan, as permanent members of the United Nations Security Council, stressing that France is in favour of a reform of the UNSC.

Ambassador Nicolas de Riviere further supported the strengthened participation of African countries as permanent and non-permanent members of the UNSC.

"France is in favor of a reform of the UN Security Council to make it more representative of today's world. We support the candidacy of G4 as permanent members, and a strengthened participation of African countries as permanent and non-permanent members," Ambassador Riviere posted on social media X.

Earlier today, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar, while speaking at the Nikkei Forum in Japan, highlighted that if the most populous countries in the world and some of the biggest resource providers for the UN are kept out, it is not good for the United Nations Security Council.

He emphasised the need for the realization to give India and Japan the kind of seats or positions they deserve in the council.

"If the most populous countries in the world are kept out, or if some of the biggest resource providers for the UN are kept out, that's not good for the organization. So we want that realization to really grow," he said.

EAM Jaishankar stressed that most of us actually understand that there is a great need to reform the United Nations because, when the United Nations was founded, there were roughly 50 countries that were members. Meanwhile, today, there are almost 200 countries that are members.

He further said that today, on many of the key issues in the world, the UN is not playing the role that it should be playing.

He added that these discussions are going on. However, in many ways, the discussions have not progressed because those who are opposed to any change have found ways of delaying it.

In September last year, the Foreign Ministers of the G4 countries met on the margins of the 78th Session of the United Nations General Assembly and discussed the reform of the UN Security Council.

The ministers underscored that multilateralism is under significant strain due to multiple and complex crises. Moreover, they concurred that the UN Security Council's inability to effectively and timely address contemporary global challenges reinforces the urgent need for its comprehensive reform so that it better reflects contemporary geopolitical realities.

They further reiterated that the expansion of the UNSC into both permanent and non-permanent categories of membership is essential to making the body more representative, legitimate, effective and efficient. ANI

the most important and complex bilateral relationship in the world. To responsibly manage the relationship, the U.S. side must form the right perception of China, and reflect on the fundamental and overarching issue of whether the two sides are adversaries or partners.

There is but one China in the world, and Taiwan is part of China's territory. This is the true status quo of the Taiwan question. It is the "Taiwan independence" separatist activities and the connivance and support of external forces that are trying to change this status quo. The United States should abide by the one-China principle and the stipulations of the three China-U.S. joint communiques, and follow through on its commitment of not supporting "Taiwan independence". People's Daily

State of the Union: Biden touts economy, immigration progress

WASHINGTON

IN a highly partisan State of the Union address on Thursday night, US President Joe Biden launched a scorching attack on Donald Trump, his presumptive rival in the November election, and touted his achievements on issues such as inflation and immigration.

With Biden's approval ratings lingering below 40 percent for months, his remarks likely won't resonate with most Americans, who are dismayed by still high prices, an uncertain economy, a border crisis, and geopolitical conflicts, among others.

"I inherited an economy that was on the brink. Now our economy is the envy of the world!" Biden said in his third State of the Union address at the House Chamber. "Wages keep going up and inflation keeps coming down!"

But a recent Gallop poll showed that 45 percent of Americans rate current economic conditions in the country as poor, while just over one-quarter describe conditions as excellent (5 percent) or good (22 percent) and another 29 percent believe they are only fair.

The poll also showed that inflation continues to affect a majority of Americans, with 17 percent saying it is a "severe" hardship affecting their



US President Joe Biden delivers the State of the Union address to a joint session of Congress at the Capitol, on Thursday, in Washington. AP

ability to maintain their standard of living and 46 percent reporting it is a "moderate" hardship.

In his speech, Biden said his team negotiated with a bipartisan group of Senators, leading to a bipartisan bill with the "toughest" set of border security reforms. His remark was loudly booed by Republican lawmakers present. Republicans recently rejected the border deal, saying it wasn't

tough enough.

Republican Senator Katie Britt from Alabama gave Republicans' formal response to Biden's speech Thursday night, saying that the president created the border crisis and has "coddled criminals."

Six in 10 swing-state voters say Biden bears responsibility for a surge in migrants at the US-Mexico border, a recent Bloomberg News/Morning Consult poll found,

which means immigration has become a tough issue for Biden as he aims for reelection.

Biden delivered the speech amid the protracted conflict between Ukraine and Russia that saw lawmakers get increasingly frustrated with relentless U.S. military aid to Ukraine, as well as the continued Israeli air and ground offensive in Gaza that makes the humanitarian crisis suffered by Palestinian civilians more dire day by day.

Polls have revealed that voters generally disapprove of Biden's management of the conflict between Israelis and Palestinians. Younger Americans are particularly critical, expressing dissatisfaction with both Israel's actions and the administration's handling of the Gaza conflict.

During his State of the Union address, Biden tried to convince voters that his policies have been successful, and forcefully advocated for a second term in the White House while assuaging concerns about his age.

He consistently criticized Trump without mentioning his name. Instead, he used the term "my predecessor" over 10 times.

"Attacking his opponent directly in the first minutes of his speech is unprecedented and perhaps the most partisan start to a State of the Union address in modern memory," said Marc Thiessen, former speech writer in President George W. Bush's administration, calling it "an utter disgrace." *Xinhua*

PM Modi's call for 'Create on India' movement, asks digital creators to engage global audience

NEW DELHI

PRIME Minister Narendra Modi yesterday urged digital content creators to create content on the country, showcasing its culture and heritage.



Addressing the 'National Creators Award' at Bharat Mandapam in the national capital on Friday, the PM also asked the digital creators to engage the world audience with their content.

"...Let's come together to start a 'Create on India' movement. Let's share the story of India to the world. Let's create content on India and create it for the world. Create such content that would help your country to get likes along with you and for this, you have to engage with a global audience," the PM said.

Calling the content creators 'digital ambassadors of India representing it on the global stage', the PM said, "You can reach out to any corner of the world in a fraction of a second. You are brand ambassadors of the vocal for local innovation"

PM Modi also lauded the creative works of digital creators regarding various topics and issues in the country and the world.

"From the data revolution to cheap mobile phones have created a new world for the content creators...The credit for this award show goes to the youth of this country and every digital content creator..." he added.

PM Modi further said that the National Creators Awards will have an important place in future.

"People ask me what is the secret of my success. But I do not reply to everyone...will any restaurant owner show you the kitchen? By God's grace, I can sense ahead of time. That is why I can say that this award (National Creators Awards) will have an important place in future," the PM said.

PM Modi congratulated all the creators, especially women who were conferred with awards.

"Today, those who have been conferred with the National Creators Award, I congratulate them...Today is International Women's Day, but for the first time, I am seeing men present here also clapping. I congratulate all the daughters who have been conferred with an award today. I am very proud of all of you. I extend my best wishes to the women of the country and the world. Today I have reduced the price of gas cylinders by Rs 100..." he said. *ANI*

Ex-UK PM Theresa May to stand down at next election

LONDON

FORMER British Prime Minister Theresa May will not stand for re-election to parliament, she said yesterday, becoming the latest member of the governing Conservative Party to signal their departure from frontline politics later this year.

May became prime minister in 2016 after then-leader David Cameron quit in the wake of Britain's shock vote to leave

the European Union. She was selected by her Conservative Party peers to implement the unprecedented decision, for which her predecessor had left no blueprint.

May told her local newspaper, the Maidenhead Advertiser, that since stepping down as prime minister she had spent an increasing amount of time on global issues, such as seeking to tackle modern slavery and human trafficking.



"Because of this, after much careful thought and consideration, I have realized that, looking ahead, I would no longer be able to do my job as an MP (Member of Parliament) in the way I believe is right and my constituents deserve," she said.

May's tenure was dominated by Brexit, overseeing one of the most tumultuous periods in recent British political history as she grappled to hold together a party, and a country, that was

deeply divided over what Britain's withdrawal from the EU meant for the nation's future.

Ultimately, she tearfully resigned as prime minister in failure in 2019 having been unable to deliver Brexit on schedule or find a way to get parliament to approve her exit plan.

Since leaving office she has remained a member of parliament for her constituency in south-east England.

Agencies

WASHINGTON

THE US military will build a temporary port on Gaza's Mediterranean coast to receive humanitarian aid by sea, US President Joe Biden said in his State of the Union speech on Thursday.

Planning for the operation, initially based on the island of Cyprus, does not envision deployment of US military personnel in Gaza.

Biden's announcement came as he seeks to cool anger among many in his Democratic Party over his support for Israel in its offensive in Gaza since Oct 7, given the steep toll on civilians in the Palestinian enclave.

Senior administration officials who had briefed reporters on the plan before the speech also said Hamas was delaying a new deal with Israel on a six-week ceasefire and the release of hostages because the Islamists who rule Gaza have not agreed to free sick and elderly captives.

The deal "is on the table now and has been for more than the past week," said an official, referring to stalled negotiations in Egypt, adding that the temporary ceasefire was needed "to bring immediate relief to the people of Gaza."

US to build temporary port to deliver Gaza aid

Sea deliveries to Gaza

Biden told Congress he was directing the US military to lead an emergency mission to set up a "temporary pier" on the Gaza coast to receive ships carrying food, water, medicine and temporary shelters.

"No US boots will be on the ground," he added.

Washington will work with European and regional partners and allies to build an international coalition of countries that would contribute capabilities and funds, the officials said.

An Israeli official said Israel "fully supports the deployment of a temporary dock" on Gaza's coast and the operation would be carried out "with full coordination between the two parties."

Sigrid Kaag, the UN humanitarian and reconstruction co-ordinator for Gaza, welcomed Washington joining the initiative developed by Cyprus to create a maritime corridor to deliver goods to Gaza.

"We welcome this. At the same time I cannot but repeat - air and sea is not a substitute for land and no-



Palestinians line up for a free meal in Rafah, Gaza Strip, Dec 21, 2023. AP

body says otherwise," Kaag told reporters earlier on Thursday after briefing the UN Security Council behind closed doors.

Although Israel is increasing the number of aid-bearing trucks allowed into Gaza and the United

States and other countries have been airdropping supplies, the assistance getting in it still insufficient, one of the US officials said.

"We're not waiting for the Israelis" to let in more aid, the official added. "This is a moment for American leadership."

The temporary port would increase humanitarian assistance to Palestinians and officials there would work with UN and humanitarian aid organizations that "understand the distribution of assistance within Gaza," the official said.

The operation would "take a number of weeks to plan and execute", the official said, adding that the required US forces are in the region or would soon begin moving there.

The operation would build on a Cypriot initiative that calls for gathering humanitarian aid in the island's port city of Larnaca, 210 nautical miles from Gaza, officials have said.

That would permit Israeli officials to screen shipments before they head to Gaza.

While the temporary port will initially be military-run, Washington envisions it becoming a commercial-run facility, the official said. *Agencies*

China's govt departments handle 12,480 suggestions, proposals last year

GOVERNMENT departments under China's State Council handled 12,480 suggestions and proposals submitted by deputies to the National People's Congress (NPC) and members of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) in 2023, a spokesperson for the State Council Information Office said recently.

In particular, the departments handled 7,955 suggestions, accounting for 95.7 per cent of all suggestions submitted, and 4,525 proposals, 96.5 per cent of all proposals submitted, said the spokesperson Xing Huina.

Xing said that the departments rolled out over 2,000 policy measures based on some 4,700 suggestions and proposals last year. This has helped solve a series of problems concerning reform and development and pressing concerns of the people. Progress has been made in the promotion of high-quality economic development, and ensuring and improving people's livelihoods.

China's Ministry of Industry and Information Technology (MIIT) received 1,888 suggestions and proposals in 2023,

and took lead in handling 602 of them, said Xin Guobin, vice minister of the MIIT, adding that all of the suggestions and proposals had been handled as scheduled.

The ministry issued about 96 policies based on the suggestions and proposals, which promoted the development of major technologies and equipment, as well as the development of specialized and sophisticated small and medium-sized enterprises that produce novel and unique products.

Paying high attention to green industrial development, NPC deputies and CPPCC members gave advice on optimizing industrial structure, promoting green development of industrial parks and improving energy efficiency in major industries, Xin added.

China's Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security handled 962 suggestions and proposals last year. The ministry has introduced more than 40 policies and measures, striving to transform the suggestions and proposals into a sense of fulfillment, happiness, and security for the people, said Li Zhong, vice minister of the ministry.

According to him, the poli-



Staff members offer medical insurance services for citizens at Jinhua Municipal Central Hospital in Jinhua, east China's Zhejiang province. Photo: Hu Xiaofei/ People's Daily Online)

cies and measures to stabilize employment have been continuously optimized, and the nationwide pooling of basic pension funds for enterprise employees has been steadily promoted. A series of policies and measures to protect the rights and interests of workers in new forms of employment have been introduced, Li added.

The social security card is a fundamental carrier of livelihood services across the country, Li noted, adding that NPC deputies and CPPCC members have shown great concern for

the "one-card-for-all-services" of the social security card.

They have put forward excellent suggestions and proposals regarding enriching application scenarios and developing distinctive services, Li said.

As of the end of January this year, 1.38 billion Chinese, or 97.9 percent of the country's population, had social security cards. Among them, 970 million had an electronic version of the card, which provided services to cardholders 15.1 billion times last year.

Vice Minister of Transport Wang Gang noted that the

ministry handled 775 suggestions and proposals in 2023, covering various aspects such as comprehensive transportation network planning, transportation infrastructure construction, development of new transportation formats, and green development of rural roads and water transportation. All of these suggestions and proposals have been addressed and responded to ahead of schedule.

In recent years, the construction of supporting infrastructure for new energy vehicles has been a focus of NPC depu-

ties and CPPCC members.

"We are accelerating the development of charging infrastructure along highways. By the end of last year, we had already built a total of 21,000 charging piles, and the network of charging infrastructure along expressways has been further improved," said Wang.

He disclosed that this year, the ministry plans to add 3,000 charging piles and 5,000 parking spaces with charging poles at service areas of highways. The ministry encourages construction of ultra-fast charging and high-power charging facilities at service areas.

Additionally, based on the traffic characteristics during different holidays and in different regions, guidance will be provided to local authorities to offer targeted support measures, aiming to facilitate more convenient and efficient public transportation, Wang said.

"The National Health Commission handled a total of 1,470 suggestions and proposals in 2023, of which approximately 1/10 were related to primary-level healthcare. These suggestions and proposals mainly focused on strengthening investment and support for primary-level healthcare, the

construction of county-level medical consortia, the development of primary-level healthcare workforce, and the enhancement of primary-level healthcare service capabilities," said Li Bin, deputy head of the National Health Commission.

The National Health Commission has made significant progress in handling related matters by fully absorbing and adopting the suggestions and proposals.

For instance, it issued a guideline on comprehensively promoting the construction of county-level medical and health consortia, transitioning the construction of county-level medical and health consortia from a 4-year pilot phase to a comprehensive promotion stage. The commission has also established a task force for the construction of rural doctor teams, recruiting over 6,700 university graduates as rural doctors in 2023.

Starting from 2023, a three-year action plan has been implemented to promote the construction of a number of health centers, addressing deficiencies in medical emergency response, infectious disease control, and pediatrics, among others. *People's Daily*

Is Jamhuri Stadium a blessing or burden for Simba's title pursuit?

By Correspondent Seth Mapoli

SIMBA SC, a titan in Tanzania's football, has long been synonymous with excellence and dominance on the pitch.

However, the recent decision by Simba SC to relocate the club's home ground from the prestigious Benjamin Mkapa Stadium in Dar es Salaam to the less favoured Jamhuri Stadium in Morogoro has sparked debates among the outfit's fans and the rest of the domestic football stakeholders.

It has moreover raised questions about the team's strategic direction and its implications for the pursuit of this season's NBC Premier League title.

In the 20th round match of the NBC Premier League pitting the Msimbazi Street-based outfit against Tanzania Prisons, held at Jamhuri Stadium, the former suffered a disappointing 2-1 defeat to the warders.

This outcome served as a stark reminder of the challenges posed by Simba SC's new home ground, particularly its subpar pitch and infrastructure compared to the Benjamin Mkapa Stadium, which had been a fortress for the team.

The catalyst for this move was the Tanzania Football Federation (TFF)'s announcement of renovations of the Benjamin Mkapa Stadium in preparation for the 2027 AFCON tournament, forcing Simba SC and other teams using the venue to seek an alternative venue.

With the goal of innovation and transformation in mind, the federation sought to elevate the standards of football infrastructure in Tanzania, paving the way for a new era of sporting excellence.

However, for Simba SC, this transition presented both opportunities and ob-



Simba SC's midfielder Mzamiru Yassin (R) seeks to get the better of Prisons FC's midfielder, Lambert Sabiyanka, when the two squads faced off in the NBC Premier League encounter, which took place at Jamhuri Stadium in Morogoro on Wednesday and ended in a 2-1 victory for Prisons FC. PHOTO: COURTESY OF SIMBASC

stacles.

While the Benjamin Mkapa Stadium provided a conducive environment for success, with its top-notch facilities and strategic advantages, the shift to Jamhuri Stadium raised concerns among soccer followers and pundits.

The inferior pitch quality and infrastructure of Jamhuri Stadium mirrored those of other poorly maintained stadiums across the country, such as Sokoine Stadium in Mbeya, CCM Kirumba Stadium in Mwanza, Maji Maji Stadium in Ruvuma, and Mkwakwani Stadium in Tanga.

This prompted skepticism about the wisdom of Simba SC's decision and its potential impact on the outfit's performance.

Tanzania Prisons, accustomed to playing in stadiums with similar conditions to Jamhuri Stadium, appeared unfazed by the challenges posed by the venue.

The Mbeya-based team's familiarity likely contributed to its advantage and eventual victory over Simba SC.

As the league moves on, it becomes increasingly evident that winning the title while playing at Jamhuri Stadium would be a formidable challenge for Simba SC. Simba SC has three remain-

ing games this month, with two scheduled to take place at the Jamhuri Morogoro Stadium and one at Mkwakwani Stadium in Tanga.

The outfit will tomorrow play away against Coastal Union at the Mkwakwani Stadium in Tanga.

On March 12, Simba SC will return to Morogoro to honour the NBC Premier League clash against Singida Fountain Gate FC set to be played at the Jamhuri Stadium.

On March 15, Simba SC will play host to Mashujaa FC at the Jamhuri Morogoro Stadium.

Despite the Jamhuri Stadium being considered a home ground for Simba SC, it poses challenges as it is not up to the standards typically accustomed to by the club due to the venue's poor condition.

History has shown that the squad's title aspirations often falter due to defeats in crucial away matches, reminiscent of the conditions at Jamhuri Stadium.

Despite these setbacks, some members of the football fraternity remain optimistic about Simba SC's prospects.

They view the relocation as an opportunity for the club to adapt, innovate, and overcome adversity.

Moreover, they argue that the decision to use Jamhuri Stadium as the outfit's home ground could catalyze broader discussions about the need for investment in football infrastructure across Tanzania.

By addressing the shortcomings of Jamhuri Stadium and other similar venues, the country could create a more conducive environment for the development and success of its football clubs.

However, other soccer stakeholders are less convinced, expressing concerns about the long-term implications of Simba SC's decision.

They point to the club's storied history and illustrious legacy, built on a foundation of excellence and stability.

Relocating to a stadium with inferior facilities and uncertain prospects could jeopardize the club's standing and reputation, both domestically and internationally.

Moreover, they argue that the lack of a dedicated home ground could hinder the club's ability to attract top talent and maintain a competitive edge in the long run.

In light of these differing perspectives, the question remains—what is the best path forward for Simba SC?

Some suggest that now is the opportune moment for the club to consider constructing its stadium.

By having a dedicated home ground, Simba SC could regain control over its destiny, free from the uncertainties of external factors such as stadium renovations and availability.

This would not only enhance the team's performance on the pitch but also solidify its legacy as one of Africa's premier football clubs.

Indeed, the success gained by Tanzania's other clubs such as Azam FC, Namungo FC, and JKT Tanzania, which have stadiums, serves as a testament to the feasibility and benefits of such a venture.



Tabora United FC's head coach, Goran Kopunovic. PHOTO: COURTESY OF TABORA UNITED FC

Kopunovic reflects on Tabora United's defeat in Premier League

By Correspondent Seth Mapoli

DODOMA Jiji FC clinched a crucial 1-0 victory against Tabora United at the Jamhuri Stadium in Dodoma, marking the former's sole triumph in the last four matches.

While Dodoma Jiji FC celebrates this much-needed win, Tabora United faces a contrasting trajectory, having recently snapped an eight-game winless streak with a 1-0 victory over Coastal Union before succumbing to defeat in this encounter.

The match unfolded with both teams fiercely contesting each other's defenses in the first half.

However, Dodoma Jiji FC intensified their offensive efforts in the second half, culminating in a relentless assault on Tabora United's goal in the final 20 minutes.

The decisive moment arrived in the second minute of the added-on time when attacker Hassan Mwaterema found the back of the net, securing victory for Dodoma Jiji FC.

Reflecting on the defeat, Tabora United FC's head coach Goran Kopunovic expressed the growing pain of losing this game.

The tactician disclosed: "It was a captivating match, particularly dynamic in the first half where we demonstrated commendable performance, notably in transition."

"However, as the game progressed, particularly in the second half, especially the final 20 minutes, we encountered difficulties."

In dissecting the performance, Kopunovic acknowledged the shortcomings, remarking: "Unfortunately, things didn't unfold favorably for us, particularly due to lapses in concentration among my players, particularly evident in the latter part of the game."

"They squandered opportunities presented to them. However, in football, mistakes are inevitable."

"Failing to capitalize on chances opens the door for your opponent to capitalize, which is precisely what transpired."

Despite the setback, Kopunovic expressed pride in his team's resilience, noting: "I am immensely proud of my boys' relentless effort, both on the field and during training sessions."

"Their dedication is palpable, and I firmly believe in their ability to bounce back. Looking ahead to our next fixture against KMC FC, I am op-

timistic that we will deliver a strong performance and secure a positive result."

"We will return to the training ground, meticulously analyzing our errors, and diligently working to rectify them."

In essence, Kopunovic emphasized the importance of learning from mistakes and remaining focused on improvement, echoing the sentiment that setbacks pave the way for future success.

Tabora United is set to face KMC FC in the next match scheduled for March 10 at the Azam Complex Stadium, Chamazi in Dar es Salaam.

Following Tabora United's recent defeat against Dodoma Jiji FC, the former is lately sitting 13th in the NBC Premier League standings, accumulating a total of 21 points.

With 20 matches played thus far, they have secured victory in four games, drawn in nine, and suffered defeat in seven.

After securing victory in the game, Dodoma Jiji FC's assistant coach, Kasim Lyogope, expressed elation, remarking on the challenges faced.

Lyogope noted: "The game proved to be highly demanding, with both teams strategically aiming for a favorable outcome."

"This strategic approach led to numerous saves by the goalkeepers from both sides. Our victory holds immense significance, especially considering our previous struggles in securing wins."

"It was imperative for us to triumph, particularly when playing at home, given our history of missed opportunities in past matches."

"Relentless pursuit of success was evident throughout the game, as we focused on excelling in the attacking zone."

"Despite some teammates being content with a draw from the 70th minute onward, our determination to secure three crucial points remained unwavering."

For Dodoma Jiji FC, this recent win elevates the squad to the ninth position in the NBC Premier League standings.

With a total of 19 games played, the outfit has won six matches, drawn five, and lost eight.

Meanwhile, Dodoma Jiji FC is gearing up to host Geita Gold FC at Jamhuri Stadium in Dodoma on March 9.

Matola: Simba SC will learn from setback vs Tanzania Prisons FC

By Correspondent Seth Mapoli

SIMBA SC's assistant coach Selemeni Matola has embarked on a thorough analysis of his team's 2-1 defeat to Tanzania Prisons FC in a hard-fought NBC Premier League tie at Jamhuri Stadium, Morogoro on Wednesday.

With meticulous attention to detail, Matola's insights delved into the reasons behind the team's loss and the valuable lessons gleaned for upcoming fixtures.

Simba SC suffered their second defeat of the season, falling 2-1 to Tanzania Prisons in the 20th-round clash held at Jamhuri Stadium in Morogoro on Wednesday.

Despite their efforts, the Msimbazi Street squad struggled to capitalize on the opportunities presented during the match.

Samson Mbangula's brace secured a two-goal advantage for Tanzania Prisons, with Fabrice Ngoma's late goal from a corner kick offering a glimmer of hope for Simba SC in the 89th minute.

However, Simba SC's comeback bid fell short, much as there was Prisons' midfielder Mussa Haji's expulsion after receiving a second yellow card in the 87th minute.

"Our defensive structure faltered today," Matola began, his tone measured whilst being resolute.

"Despite a commendable performance in the first half, where we controlled the game with authority, our inability to trans-

late possession into meaningful opportunities ultimately cost us dearly."

"It was a lapse in concentration during a counterattack that allowed Tanzania Prisons to breach our defense and find the back of the net."

As he delved deeper into the intricacies of the game, Matola's expression revealed a mixture of disappointment and determination.

Matola noted: "The second half presented us with opportunities to turn the tide in our favour."

"We initiated promising attacks and created openings, but our failure to capitalize on these chances proved to be our Achilles' heel."

"Conceding a second goal further compounded our challenges, making it an uphill battle to salvage a result against a resolute Tanzania Prisons."

The halftime discussions with the players were etched vividly in Matola's memory.

"We reiterated the importance of clinical finishing and capitalizing on every opportunity that comes our way."

"We reminded the players that in football, as in life, chances are fleeting and must be seized with conviction."

"Despite the setback, we emphasized the need to learn from our mistakes and adapt for future encounters."

As the conversation shifted towards the upcoming fixtures, Matola's resolve remained un-

wavering.

"The road ahead is fraught with challenges, but adversity is the catalyst for growth. Our next assignment against Coastal Union in Tanga presents another stern test, but I have unwavering faith in the abilities of our squad."

"We must approach each game with a sense of purpose and determination, knowing that our collective efforts will ultimately yield positive results."

Throughout his discourse, Matola's passion for the game and unwavering commitment to his team shone brightly.

His words were not merely a recounting of events but a testament to the resilience and fortitude required to succeed in the unforgiving world of professional football.

As he concluded his analysis, Matola's gaze shifted towards the training ground, where his players were preparing for their next challenge.

"In the face of adversity, we must remain steadfast and resolute," he declared, his voice resonating with conviction.

"For it is through perseverance and determination that we will overcome the obstacles that lie ahead and emerge stronger, both as individuals and as a team."

And with that, Matola left no doubt that despite the setback, their journey towards success was far from over.

With each defeat came an opportunity for growth, and with

each challenge, an opportunity to triumph.

For in the game of football, as in life, the greatest victories often emerge from the depths of defeat.

In a post-match analysis, Tanzania Prisons' head coach, Ahmad Ally, shed light on the weaknesses of Simba SC and the factors that led to the warders' victory.

"Playing against Simba SC and securing a win is no easy feat," he began, expressing his admiration for the opposition.

"However, I must commend my players for their unwavering commitment and adherence to my instructions."

"We approached the game with a deep understanding of Simba SC's tactics and style of play."

Discussing the tactical adjustments made for the match against Simba SC, Ally explained: "We devised a strategic plan focused on exploiting their vulnerabilities and scoring goals."

"We recognized that Simba SC's strength lies primarily in the middle of the field, so we capitalized on that by instructing our players to launch quick counterattacks whenever we regained possession."

"Our training sessions were also crucial in honing our skills both on and off the ball. Looking ahead, I am confident that we will continue to perform well, especially in our upcoming fixture against Mtwara Sugar FC at Manungu Stadium," Ahmad said.

Messi and Suarez on target as Miami fight back for draw in Nashville

NEW YORK

LUIS Suarez grabbed a stoppage-time equaliser after Lionel Messi had reduced the deficit as Inter Miami fought back from two goals down to draw 2-2 in the first leg of their CONCACAF Champions Cup round-of-16 tie on Thursday.

Canadian winger Jacob Shaffelburg had put Nashville 2-0 up with a pair of superbly taken goals before Miami's comeback.

The goals from the former Barcelona forwards, who had scored a brace each in the 5-0 win over Orlando on Saturday, make Miami favourites for Wednesday's return in South Florida with a place in the quarter-finals on the line.

Miami had beaten Nashville on penalties in the final of the Leagues Cup last season and returned for the debuts in regional competition of Messi, Busquets and Suarez.

Coach Gerardo 'Tata' Martino handed a debut to new Argentine signing Federico Redondo in midfield but was without Spaniard Jordi Alba, suffering from illness.

But Miami were soon reeling after Nashville's Shaq Moore broke through from midfield and fed Shaffelburg who blasted past Drake Callender with a left-foot drive from the edge of the box.

The Canadian, with the distinctive mullet haircut, doubled the lead two minutes after the interval with an even better finish, cutting in from the left before unleashing an unstoppable shot with his right foot high into the far top corner.

Miami responded strongly though and six minutes later Messi had pulled a goal back with a trademark left-footed curler.

Suarez set him up on the edge of the box and despite having four defenders in close proximity, the Argentine World Cup-winner found space to work the ball on to his left foot and then find the corner.

Miami had an effort from Diego Gomez disallowed for offside but Nashville weren't ready to set their backs against the wall just yet.

Moore cut in from the right and beat Callender to send the 26,000 crowd wild but a VAR review found that Moore had been narrowly offside from earlier in the move and the goal was disallowed.

But then deep in stoppage time, the ball was fed out to Busquets on the right and the Spanish veteran floated in a cross which was headed home by Suarez.

AFP

Benitez returns to Bernabeu as Liga leaders Madrid face Celta

MADRID

LA Liga leaders Real Madrid face former coach Rafa Benitez and his struggling Celta Vigo side on Sunday as they bid to get back on track after last weekend's draw at Valencia.

Los Blancos not only dropped two points but had key player Jude Bellingham sent off and he will miss two league games, including Celta's visit to the Santiago Bernabeu.

Madrid also played badly in a 1-1 draw against RB Leipzig in the Champions League on Wednesday, but it was enough to see them through to the quarter-finals 2-1 on aggregate.

Despite the Valencia draw, Madrid's closest title challengers Girona could not capitalise and fell to a 1-0 defeat by Copa del Rey finalists Real Mallorca.

The Catalans have run out of steam in recent weeks, suffering three defeats and a draw in their last five matches.

Madrid's traditional title rivals Barcelona, third, host Real Mallorca on Friday and can overtake Girona before they play Osasuna on Saturday.

Carlo Ancelotti's side are still without long-term absentees Thibaut Courtois, David Alaba and Eder Militao, along with the suspended Bellingham.

Brahim Diaz replaced the England international in the first-leg win against Leipzig when he had an ankle injury and the playmaker scored, while Joselu has also been in good form for Los Blancos.

Ancelotti did not select either in the second leg and admitted he got his line-up wrong by loading the midfield.

"Maybe I made a mistake, I was trying to put energy in, but that was what we didn't have," said the coach.

He will likely select a far more attacking side against Benitez's Celta, fighting for their lives after a difficult start to the season. They cannot afford to roll over for the Spanish giants.

The Galicians are 17th, five points clear of the relegation zone and held their own against Barcelona in February, denied a point only by a 97th-minute Robert Lewandowski penalty.

Despite some decent performances, pressure has been mounting on Benitez with some Celta fans calling for his removal.

AFP

Liverpool, Man City face defining moment in title race

LONDON

LIVERPOOL host Manchester City in a defining moment in the Premier League title race as Jurgen Klopp and Pep Guardiola conclude their top-flight rivalry tomorrow.

Free-scoring Arsenal can go top for at least a day when they host Brentford, while Aston Villa face Tottenham in a vital showdown in the battle for a top-four finish.

AFP Sport looks at three talking points ahead of the weekend's action:

*One more sleepless night for Guardiola

Manchester City boss Pep Guardiola faces one last sleepless night as he wrestles with the problems posed by his great rival Jurgen Klopp.

Klopp's bombshell revelation that he will quit as Liverpool manager at the end of this season has given extra gravitas to tomorrow's crucial clash with City at Anfield.

Although Guardiola has won five of the last six Premier League crowns, Klopp has been a constant thorn in his side, with Liverpool's 2020 title the only break in City's dynastic reign.

Guardiola revealed the depth of his respect for Klopp when he admitted the German's departure would make it easier for him to relax before meetings with Liverpool.

"I will sleep better. The games against Liverpool have almost been a nightmare," said Guardiola, whose second placed team are one point behind



Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp (L) and Manchester City boss Pep Guardiola. Agencies

leaders Liverpool with 11 games remaining.

Although Klopp and Guardiola also faced off during spells with Borussia Dortmund and Bayern Munich respectively, their time in the Premier League elevated their battle for supremacy to new heights.

The pair have met 15 times in the Premier League since 2016, with Klopp earning four victories and Guardiola claiming five wins.

However, beating Liverpool at Anfield in front of a crowd is one of the few feats still to elude Guardiola as City boss.

The English champions only victory away to Liverpool since 2003 came behind closed doors three years ago.

With so much at stake this weekend, Guardiola will have been shifting restlessly under his duvet this week as he plots one more memorable moment at Klopp's expense.

"Arsenal have no margin for error

Declan Rice has warned Arsenal they have no margin for error in the chase to win a first Premier League title since 2004.

After finishing 2023 with damaging defeats against West Ham and Fulham, Mikel Arteta's men have responded with seven successive league victories.

Sheffield United were crushed 6-0 at Bramall Lane on Monday, moving Mikel Arteta's third placed side back

within two points of Liverpool.

With Liverpool and City meeting tomorrow, Arsenal can temporarily seize pole position if they beat Brentford at the Emirates Stadium 24 hours earlier.

"It has been a hell of a comeback since the Christmas period, when we lost two in a row," Arsenal midfielder Rice said.

"But it is the Premier League, you need to be on it every single game. You can't have any slip-ups.

"If you look at the two other teams at the top, they don't look like they are going to slip up anytime soon."

*Villa fuelled by European dreams

Aston Villa face top four

rivals Tottenham tomorrow bidding to take a huge step towards playing in the Champions League for the first time in 41 years.

Villa's unexpectedly impressive campaign has raised hopes of a return to Europe's elite club competition, a level they last played at as holders in 1982-83 after Tony Barton's team won the tournament the previous year.

Over four decades later, Unai Emery's fourth-placed side are five points ahead of Tottenham in fifth and a victory at Villa Park would put them firmly on track to finish in the top four.

"The Premier League is 38 matches and we are now in the fourth position and it is a very good opportunity to try to compete," Emery said.

"If we want to raise our levels, playing important games, it is important to play matches like this week."

Fixtures:
Today (1500 GMT unless stated)

Manchester United v Everton (1230), Bournemouth v Sheffield United, Crystal Palace v Luton, Wolves v Fulham, Arsenal v Brentford (1730)

Tomorrow (1400 GMT unless stated)

Aston Villa v Tottenham (1300), Brighton v Nottingham Forest, West Ham v Burnley, Liverpool v Manchester City (1545)

Monday
Chelsea v Newcastle (2000)

Five-star Liverpool stroll past Sparta, Roma thrash Brighton

LONDON

LIVERPOOL surged towards the Europa League quarter-finals with a 5-1 win at Sparta Prague on Thursday, as Roma thrashed Brighton 4-0 in the Italian capital.

AC Milan beat 10-man Slavia Prague 4-2, but Xabi Alonso's Bayer Leverkusen had to come from 2-0 down to preserve their unbeaten season in a 2-2 draw against Qarabag.

Liverpool remain on course to send Jurgen Klopp off with a quadruple of trophies as the Reds were not distracted by Sunday's mammoth Premier League showdown against Manchester City.

Klopp named a strong side and got what he wanted by killing off the tie in the first leg, even if there was a price to pay in further injury problems as centre-back Ibrahima Konate limped off.

Alexis Mac Allister got the visitors off to the perfect start in the Czech capital as he won and converted a penalty after just seven minutes.

Sparta had dumped out Galatasaray in the previous round and created plenty of chances against a makeshift Liverpool defence.

But the difference in quality between the sides showed in the final third.

Darwin Nunez's dipping shot from long range outfoxed Peter Jensen to make it 2-0, before the Uruguayan smashed home Mac Allister's through ball in first-half stoppage time.

"He has the most important attitude a striker needs to have in these chances," Klopp said of Nunez.

"He's just a constant



AS Roma's Bryan Cristante scores their fourth goal. Agencies

threat and he gives us some spaces and areas and options."

Conor Bradley replaced Joe Gomez at half-time and his first act was to fire into the top corner of his own goal one minute into the second half.

But Luis Diaz's deflected effort quickly restored Liverpool's three-goal cushion.

Mohamed Salah made his comeback from a hamstring injury as a substitute and thought he had marked his return with a goal, but a VAR review disallowed his strike for offside.

Instead, it was another substitute Dominik Szoboszlai who fired in the fifth in stoppage time.

- Ruthless Roma -

Brighton's first foray into European football looks over at the last-16 stage after the Seagulls were thrashed by inform Roma.

The Italian giants have only lost once in 10 games since legendary former player Daniele De Rossi replaced the sacked Jose Mourinho in January.

"I'm not doing any-

thing out of the ordinary," said De Rossi. "I'm very happy but they're really good players. They're winning matches that they should be winning."

Paulo Dybala was perfectly picked out by Leandro Paredes to open the scoring before Romelu Lukaku pounced on an error by Brighton captain Lewis Dunk to double Roma's lead before the break.

Gianluca Mancini and Bryan Cristante struck in the second

half to round off a miserable trip for the visitors.

Two Brighton fans were stabbed in a robbery the night before the game.

Leverkusen are well on course to win their first-ever Bundesliga title but have work to do to reach the Europa League quarter-finals.

Yassine Benzia and a brilliant piece of skill from Juninho had Azeri champions Qarabag in dreamland just before the break.

Alonso had rested a

number of his key players and the Germans improved with a series of changes after the break.

Two of the Spaniards substitutes Florian Wirtz and Patrik Schick scored in the final 20 minutes to preserve Leverkusen's unbeaten record in 35 games in all competitions this season.

- Milan on track -

Milan were given a helping hand at the San Siro by an early red card for Slavia defender Malick Diouf.

Olivier Giroud, Tijjani Reijnders, Ruben Loftus-Cheek and Christian Pulisic were on target for the Italian giants.

But David Doudera's stunning volley and Ivan Schranz's strike gave Slavia hope.

Benfica twice came from behind but Rangers have the upper hand going into the second leg at Ibrox after a 2-2 draw in Lisbon.

However, West Ham have work to do after losing 1-0 to Freiburg.

The Hammers had beaten the Germans twice in the group stages but Michael Gregoritsch scored the only goal nine minutes from time to give Freiburg a slender first leg lead.

Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang scored twice in Marseille's 4-0 humiliation of 10-man Villarreal.

Jordan Veretout and Yerson Mosquera's own goal had already put the French side in front before Aubameyang's double either side of half-time took his tally for the season to 21, nine of which have come in the Europa League.

AFP

Gwiji by David Chikoko



SPORT

Liverpool, Man City face defining moment in title race

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TONIGHT @ 9:00

EATV MONDAY

11:00 DADAZ
12:00 KIPENGA XTRA
13:00 Zote Kuntu
13:30 Kall Za Wana
13:55 Dondoo Za Michzo
14:00 SKONGA (r)
14:30 Planet Bongo (r)
15:00 Funguka
15:30 Akili & Me
15:55 Dondoo Za Michzo
16:00 Zote Kuntu
16:55 Dondoo Za Michzo
17:00 SSELEKT
17:55 Kurasa
18:00 Kall Za Wana
18:30 #HASHTAG
19:00 EATV SAA 1
20:00 DADAZ (r)
21:00 SPORTS
22:00 Zote Kuntu
23:00 Kurasa
23:05 EATV SAA1 (r)

5Sports
The week's local and international sporting events as well as in-depth analysis of the biggest sporting highlights of the week are covered on 5Sports.

eastAfrica RADIO

05:00 Supa Breakfast
09:00 MAMAMIA
12:00 Kipenga Xtra
13:00 Planet Bongo
16:00 EA Drive
19:00 Kipenga
21:00 The Cruise

88.1FM DAR ES SALAAM

Dodoma Jiji FC out to compound Geita Gold FC's woes in PL

By Guardian Correspondent

DODOMA Jiji FC will be bidding to make it back-to-back wins in the NBC Premier League for the second time this season when they welcome relegation-threatened Geita Gold FC to Jamhuri Stadium in Dodoma this evening, with kick-off slated for 8:15 pm.

The capital city boys will enter the contest off the back of a 1-0 home victory over Tabora United on Wednesday to end their five-game winless run.

Currently sitting ninth in the table, maximum points against Geita Gold FC will put Dodoma Jiji FC back in contention for a top-four finish.

They are just four points off fourth-placed Coastal Union with the same number of games to play.

Head coach Francis Baraza will be targeting to register his second victory since taking over from Melis Medo in January.

With Geita Gold FC desperately out of form, Baraza will be determined to motivate his players to seize the moment and keep alive their top-four finish ambitions.

Geita Gold FC, meanwhile, are on a six-game winless run in the league now after Saturday's 1-1 away draw with Kinondoni Municipal Council FC at Azam Complex Stadium in Dar es Salaam.

This does mean a winless league run since the start of the year so far, as Valentino Mashaka was the last hero to score a winning goal at home to Singida Fountain Gate FC in December.

They have dropped back into the relegation zone, as they find themselves second bottom and four points from safety.

Their away form is a major concern for head coach Denis Kitambi. The Miners have picked up just one win from eight matches on the road this season, with their last four away results two draws and back-to-back defeats in the hands of Coastal Union and Azam FC.

It is also worth noting that Geita Gold FC possesses the joint-worst offensive record and a poor defensive record in the division, giving them a dismal goal difference of -10.

In head-to-head stats, Dodoma Jiji FC and Geita Gold FC have met in five league matches since 2021/22.

Geita Gold FC have claimed two wins compared to one for Dodoma Jiji FC while two matches have been drawn.

In head-to-head stats, Dodoma Jiji FC and Geita Gold FC have met in five league matches since the 2021/22 season. There is nothing to separate them with each side winning two games and drawing once.

Their clash which took place in Geita earlier this season saw the two sides settle for a pulsating 2-2 draw - thanks to a late equalizer by Hassan Mahamud.

Simba SC under pressure to bounce back, comes up against Coastal Union



Simba SC players are pictured participating in training in Morogoro recently in preparation for the 2023/24 NBC Premier League and other tournaments. PHOTO: COURTESY OF SIMBA SC

By Correspondent Michael Mwebe

SIMBA SC will be under pressure to bounce back to winning form in the NBC Premier League when they take on hosts Coastal Union at Mkwakwani Stadium in the evening, with kick-off scheduled for 6 pm.

The title race is not yet over in the NBC Premier League but analysis shows there can be no more dropped points for the teams chasing defending champion, Young Africans SC.

Abdelhak Benchikha-coached Simba SC dropped further behind in the title race as they suffered a shocking league loss when they were beaten 2-1 by a 10-man Tanzania Prisons at Jamhuri Stadium, Morogoro on Wednesday.

The results leave them seven points adrift of defending champions Young Africans SC, popularly known as Yanga.

With 14 games left to play in the NBC Premier League, Simba SC are running out of time if they plan to overthrow Yanga at the end of the season.

Next in line is an away match against Coastal Union, nicknamed 'Wagosi wa Kaya', a side that Simba SC have dominated in past encounters, winning 14

times, losing just once, and drawing six in the 21 previous league meetings between them.

If the Msimbazi Street squad picks up a positive

result in Tanga, the outfit will extend their unbeaten away league run to 21 matches.

They have claimed 13

points from eight away

matches this season, with their last result on the road a 1-0 win at JKT Tanzania earlier this month.

Benchikha is unavailable on the touchline after traveling back home to Algeria to attend a refresher coaching course.

His assistants Selemani Matola and Farid Zemit will take charge of the game.

As for Coastal Union, this is unquestionably their best season in recent years in the league.

There is now a genuine chance of the club getting into the CAF Confederation Cup for next season, should form continue for them.

They held the title-chasing Azam FC to a 1-1 draw last time out after losing 1-0 to hosts Tabora United in the previous game.

As a result, they managed to hold on to their fourth spot for one more round of matches.

'Wagosi wa Kaya's home form this season has seen them pick up five wins, two draws, and two defeats in nine games for a haul of 17 points as hosts.

They have won all their four recent games at Mkwakwani Stadium under head coach David Ouma.

Coastal Union's defensive stats are also hugely impressive, with trends showing that Ouma's side have kept six clean sheets in their last 10 league encounters.

Ouma has no new injury issues. He will have a full list of first-team players available to pick from.

Mtibwa Sugar, Prisons look to build momentum in NBC Premier League

By Correspondent Michael Mwebe

TWO sides at opposing ends of the NBC Premier League face off this afternoon as Mtibwa Sugar welcomes Tanzania Prisons to the Manungu Stadium in Turiani, Morogoro.

The hosts are currently rock bottom in the league standings with 11 points after 18 games, while the visitors are fifth with 27 points and only separated from fourth-placed Coastal Union by goal difference.

Hosts Mtibwa Sugar claimed their third win of the season when they defeated Singida Fountain Gate 2-0 at CCM Kirumba Stadium in Mwanza, thanks to goals from Abdul Hillary and Omar Marungu.

Despite the victory, they are still in deep trouble, currently nine points from safety of 12th place.

Zubeir Katwila-coached Mtibwa Sugar have the joint worst home record in the league this term, picking up just eight points from nine matches, and they will be hosting a Prisons side with the sixth-best record on their travels.

Their last result at home was a frustrating goalless draw with Dodoma Jiji FC last week.



Mtibwa Sugar players celebrate one of the goals the squad grabbed in a 2023/24 NBC Premier League duel against Singida Fountain Gate FC which took place in Mwanza on March 1. PHOTO: COURTESY OF MTIBWA SUGAR

However, having picked four points from their last two games, Katwila and his charges will feel this is their best opportunity to close the gap on fellow relegation strugglers to three

points. As for Prisons, they are in fine form ahead of this encounter. The Mbeya-based warders are on a two-game winning streak and will be confident

of making it three against Mtibwa Sugar as they look to climb up to fourth place.

They will enter the match off the back of a 2-1 win over Simba SC, featuring a brace of goals from the in-form Samson Mbangula.

The win over Simba SC means Prisons are undefeated in their four most recent fixtures, all of which have been played in the league.

There have been wins over Tabora United and Singida Fountain Gate FC at home and Simba SC away plus a 1-1 draw with Azam FC in their most recent league matches.

Prisons have not finished fourth in Spain's top flight since the 2015/16 campaign, but they are firmly in the mix for a CAF Confederation Cup spot at this stage, and it would go down as a very successful season if the Mbeya outfit were able to claim a top-four position.

14 of the total 23 league clashes between the two since 2010/11 ended in draws.

However, when the two teams met earlier this season, Prisons triumphed 3-2 at Sokoine Stadium in September last year.

Flexibles by David Chikoko

