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158M TONNES OF FORAGE NEEDED ANNUALLY PAGE 5



LHRC wants alterations to rights bill on Diaspora

There is similarly a provision for the revocation of special status for alleged misconduct, plus revocation of special status for making statements that are disloyal to the state

By Correspondent Zuwena Shame

THE Legal and Human Rights Centre (LHRC) has urged the law reform institutions to repeal Section 37 of the Constitution Act, which relates to amending citizenship law and its procedures.

Dr Anna Henga, the LHRC executive director, said at a press conference yesterday that the section was nullified by the High Court of Tanzania last year in the case of Prisca Chogero versus the Attorney General, case number 17 of 2023, on the premise that using the provision violates court orders and undermines the rule of law.

She said that the court observed that the provision is at variance with Article 107A (1) of the 1977 Constitution, where the judiciary "is the sole authority for final decisions in the administration of justice."

This appeal is aimed at helping the public understand the bill and LHRC's views, facilitating citizen participation in law making and providing recommendations to the government, she stated.



Independent National Electoral Commission chairman Judge Jacobs Mwambegele opens a one-day meeting for electoral stakeholders, including leaders of political parties, religious leaders, media practitioners and representatives of CSOs, youth, people with disabilities, women and the elderly. Photo courtesy of INEC



INEC ending second step zonal voter upgrading

By Guardian Reporter

THE Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) is preparing to launch a seven-day voter registration campaign in Mwanza and Shinyanga regions to register more than 400,000 new voters.

INEC chairman Judge Jacobs Mwambegele presided at a preparatory session in Mwanza, yesterday while vice chairman Judge (rt) Mbarouk Salim Mbarouk, opened a similar session in Shinyanga.

The meetings brought together election stakeholders, given the week-long campaign to update the Permanent Voters' Register that will run from August 21 to 27, they said.

It will highlight important information to prepare the residents to exercise their rights in the upcoming local government elections, with the top officials urging stakeholders to seek out other residents to update their voter-related information for the election process to run smoothly, to put in place the most eligible voters.

Kailima Ramadhani, the director of elections, outlined that in Shinyanga a total of 209,951 new voters are expected to be registered, while in Mwanza the update targets up to 190,131 new voters.

The Mwanza new voters represent a 10.3 percent increase over 1,845,816 voters already in the register, making a total of 2,035,947

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The Tanzanite Card should not have a time limit...

Section 23 of the reform bill proposes to amend Section 37 of the Act, which sets out procedure for appealing to the responsible minister. "However, the proposed amendments set limits to the right of appeal for individuals dissatisfied with the minister's decision on their application," the director affirmed.

"LHRC is shocked by the ongoing efforts to amend this section without making fundamental changes by repealing it, as was decided by the High Court of Tanzania. Continuing with this section is disregard for court orders and creates a negative image for the rule of law," she elaborated.

She was explicit that LHRC has analysed the proposed amendments in the Written Laws (Miscellaneous Amendments Act) No. 2 of 2024, presented to Parliament on February 15th, which aims to amend the Immigration Act, Chapter 54 of the laws, and the Land Act.

The bill fails to recognize and protect the birth right, "which must be preserved

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PM acts on CCM appeals on accessing NIDA cards

By Henry Mwangonde, Kagera

PRIME Minister Kassim Majaliwa has acted on an appeal from CCM Secretary-General Dr Emmanuel Nchimbi, instructing Home Affairs deputy minister Daniel Sillo to visit Kagera Region to address bottlenecks in acquiring national identification cards.

Dr Nchimbi had directed the Ministry of Home Affairs on the issue, with the deputy minister instructed to travel to various districts in the region and other Lake Zone regions to sort out the problem.

The matter came up as residents made

I have issued directives to improve and expedite the process of acquiring NIDA cards

complaints to the party executive while on a tour, with residents of Kagera and Kigoma reportedly being compelled to use the identification numbers of other persons to access mobile phone line registration.

During a meeting at Changarawe grounds in Karagwe District, the party executive acknowledged that following his directive, premier Majaliwa had dispatched the deputy minister to address the issue.

"There is concern regarding NIDA cards which has been raised. Follow-

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MPs: Govt shares in EACOP all paid for

These skills will be handy as their inclusion is likely as the country builds other pipeline construction projects, this time ferrying natural gas to Kenya and Zambia

By Guardian Reporter, Tanga

THE Tanzania government has fully contributed its capital share as a shareholder in the East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP) project, with the government con-

tributing \$308m to date, equalling 15 percent of shareholding.

Oran Njeza (Mbeya Rural), chairman of the parliamentary standing committee on the national budget, made this assertion yesterday after inspecting the implemen-

tation of the EACOP project at the Chongoleani site for building an oil export port terminal in Tanga, designated to receive, store and offload crude oil from Uganda for export overseas.

Land acquisition for the EACOP operational excluded area was 99.2 percent complete, with small plots of land held up due to inheritance and powers of disposal issues, he said, noting that the exercise is progressing well in Uganda, he stated.

Profiling the committee's work which oversees the country's planning and economy, he stressed the economic importance of the EACOP project, urging the relevant authorities to provide substantial support to ensure its timely completion.

"A major project like EACOP was not

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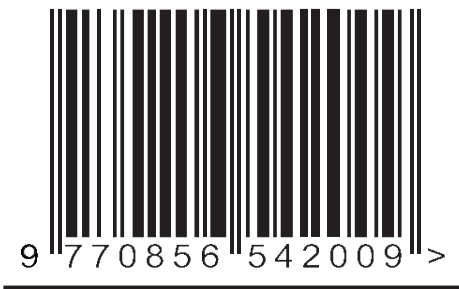


David's laments penalty denial in Simba's defeat to Yanga

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Coastal Union coach disappointed but unbowed after heavy defeat



LHRC wants Diaspora rights bill vastly altered

FROM PAGE 1

and acknowledged as an inherent right that cannot be lost, and it reflects the government's reluctance to grant dual citizenship," she asserted.

Despite various efforts including the establishment of a presidential task force to review the multiparty democracy system and the criminal justice system, which both emphasized the rule of law, the response is inadequate.

There is persistent deliberate violation of this principle, including the continued use of laws invalidated by the courts and the enactment of laws that contradict the 1977 Constitution, the director underlined.

She referred to other challenges in the bill, like using varying or contrasting criteria for granting special status and invoking the measure of good conduct as a qualification for obtaining special status as symptomatic of the challenges.

There is similarly a provision for the revocation of special status for alleged misconduct, plus revocation of special status for making statements that are disloyal to the state, she specified.

"Due to the challenges in this bill, we urge the government and Parliament to amend the powers of the Commissioner General of Immigration to prevent the possibility of revoking special status once it has been granted, and to remove discretionary powers. The court should be the final authority in delivering justice," the activist intoned.

LHRC also calls on the government to reduce extensive powers

granted to the Commissioner of Immigration in granting and revoking special status and to establish a legal procedure to be followed when intention arises to revoke special status, placing this responsibility under the judiciary.

The bill should establish equal criteria for granting special status to avoid bias and discrimination against certain groups or individuals, and remove the criteria of good conduct, loyalty and misconduct as conditions for granting special status, she further demanded.

"The Tanzanite Card should not have a time limit. The Tanzanian origin and Diaspora status should not be stripped, and the Diaspora should have the same rights to own land as any other Tanzanian citizen, as they have the same origin as natives," she further noted.

The requirement for owning a company by having minority Tanzanian citizen stakeholders should be removed as it diminishes the significance of special status for those of Tanzanian origin, she specified.

The bill proposes to amend 17 sections of the Immigration Act, some of which aim to establish special citizenship status, and after reviewing the bill, LHRC has identified that its purpose is to provide a solution and compromise to long-standing complaints from the Diaspora community.

These complaints relate to the right to citizenship, the right to own property, along with the right to recognition of origin for people of Tanzanian descent who hold citizenship of other countries, she added.

MPs: Govt shares in EACOP all paid for

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expected to be carried out in Africa, but the vision of the Heads of State made this project possible," he stated, underlining that allowing oil to be transported through pipelines also helps in environmental protection.

The committee urged the Ministry of Energy to prioritize the construction of pipelines for transporting natural gas and crude oil, thus positioning Tanzania as a regional energy transportation hub.

The committee asked the Tanzania Petroleum Development Corporation (TPDC) to increase efforts in promoting the project so that residents of Tanga and elsewhere become aware of how the government is advancing its projects.

Dr Batilda Buriani, the Tanga regional commissioner, stated that the EACOP project brings various benefits to the region, including creating upwards of 900 jobs, increasing money circulation, enhancing business opportunities at the port project site by selling products such as cement, and generating tax revenues.

She emphasised workplace health and safety issues at the site,

praising the project managers for effectively addressing these issues. There are over two million working hours recorded by the project already, and there have been no accidents at work sites, the top administrator underlined.

Dr James Mataragio, the Energy Ministry's deputy permanent secretary, said the EACOP project is unique in its benefits, including increasing national revenue in the construction and operational phases, billed at 2.3trn/- for project outlays. It also has 7,584 people employed up to now, and the number is expected to rise, he stated.

So far 146 Tanzanian companies have been involved in providing various services for the project, earning a total of \$246mm as procurements for the project have facilitated purchases amounting to \$462m, with local youth being trained in various technologies.

These skills will be handy as their inclusion is likely as the country builds other pipeline construction projects, this time ferrying natural gas to Kenya and Zambia.

It also has 7,584 people employed up to now, and the number is expected to rise

PM acts on CCM appeals on accessing NIDA cards

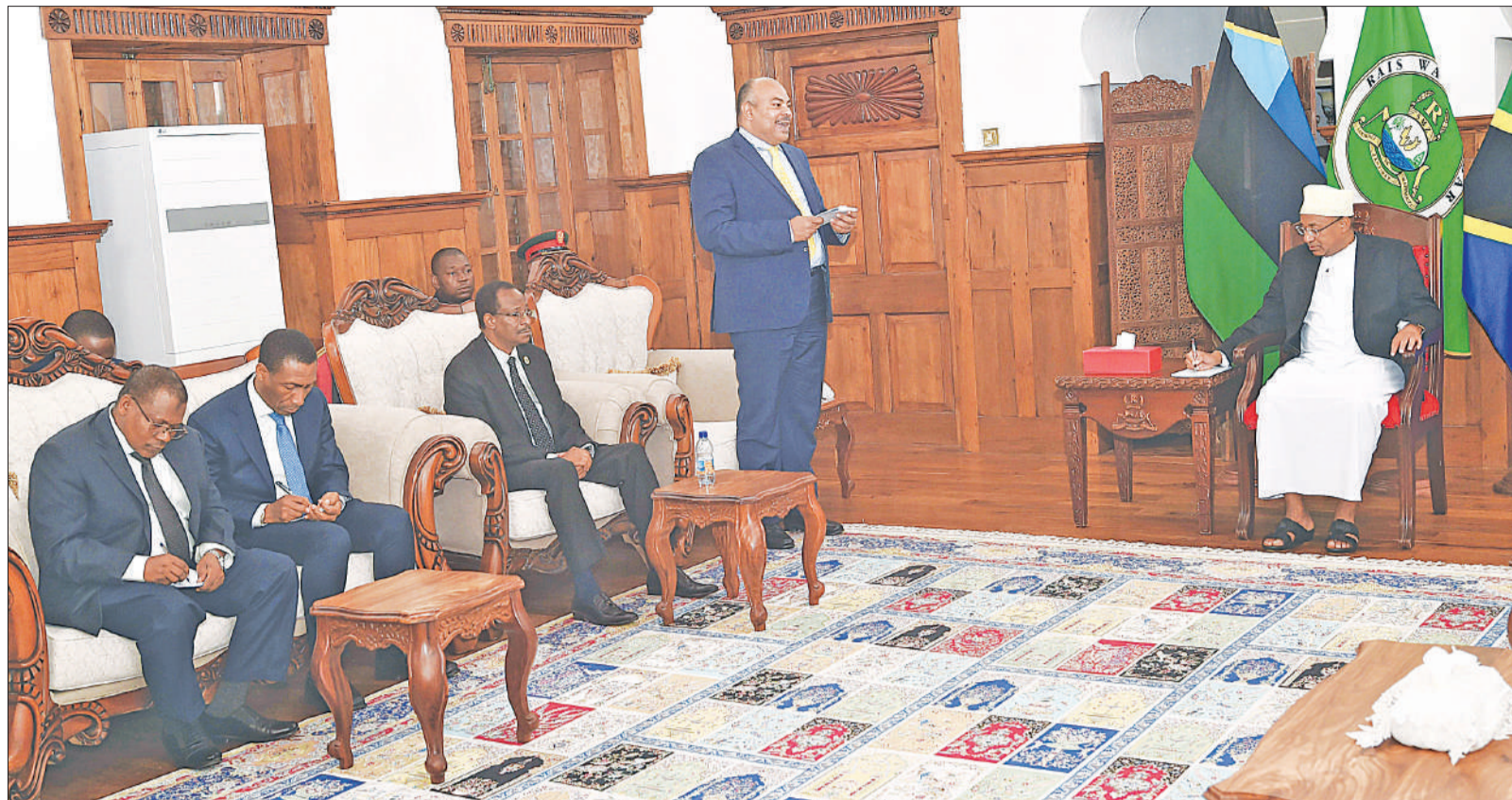
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"I have issued directives to improve and expedite the process of acquiring NIDA cards, he stated, alluding to the impression that citizens' demand for these cards reflects their love for their country.

"Through this meeting, I request that the Minister of Home Affairs or his deputy join us to clarify the citizens' complaints about citizenship cards," he had declared during the visit aimed at inspecting the implementation of the CCM Election Manifesto.

He was also concerned about promoting the party's vitality and listening to the people, accompanied by Amos Makalla, the NEC secretary for Ideology, Propaganda and Training, Issa Ussi Gavu, the NEC secretary for Organization, and Rabia Hamid Abdalla, the NEC secretary for Politics and International Relations.

"Since beginning my tour in the Kigoma Region and now here in Kagera, people have complained about acquiring NIDA cards," he said, noting that the issue was also raised by the Kyerwa MP, Innocent Bilakwate.



Mahmoud Thabit Kombo, recently appointed Tanzania's Foreign Affairs and East African Cooperation minister, introduces himself to Zanzibar President Dr Hussein Ali Mwinyi at Zanzibar State House yesterday. Photo: Zanzibar State House

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voters, he said, noting that the new voters in Shinyanga marking a 21 percent increase over 995,918 voters already in the register. This will bring Shinyanga Region to 1,205,869 prospective voters, he stated.

The provisional figures are based on the 2022 Population and Housing Census, he said, remarking that the voter register updating exercise was launched in Kigoma on July 20.

It includes the first phase in Kigoma, Tabora and Katavi regions, while the second phase covering Geita and Kagera regions is being concluded, on August 11.

Recently, INEC granted permits to 191 civil society organisations to

INEC ending second zonal voter upgrading

provide voter education and monitor the upgrading of the register, with 157 civic organisations tasked with the provision of voter education during the exercise, while 34 organisations are engaged as observers.

The permits were issued on June 22 and 24 under Article 10(1) (g) and (h) of the NEC Act No. 2 updated 2024, read together with Regulation 46(4) of the PVR Improvement Regulations similarly updated 2024.

Notable organisations included are the Legal and Human Rights Centre (LHRC), the Tunu Pinda Foundation, the Tanzania Bora Initiative, the Women's Legal Aid Centre (WLAC), Tanzania Women Lawyers Association (TAWLA) and the United Nations Association of Tanzania (UNA Tanzania).

Yet others are Save the Community Tanzania, Yiaga Africa, Songwe Paralegal Service Centre, Sumbawanga Legal Aid Centre (SULAC), the Iringa Development

of Youths, Disabled and Children Care (IDYDC), the Tanzania Gender Networking Programme (TGNP), HakiElimu and the Kibondo Paralegal Foundation (KIPAFO).

Still others cited are ActionAid Tanzania, Window for Justice and Peace Organisation, Sheria Poa, Makangarawe Youth Information and Development Centre, Zanzibar Fighting Against Youth Challenges Organisation, NGOs Network for Dodoma and People with Disabilities Can Make It.



Works minister and Karagwe constituency legislator Innocent Bashungwa (L) updates his information in the national Permanent Voters' Register at the Ahakishaka Primary School centre in Nyabiyonza Ward, Karagwe District, yesterday under the oversight of registration officer Fidelis Makata. Photo courtesy of Works ministry

UN agency raises 20 pct of needed African drought aid

HARARE

The UN World Food Program has faced challenges in raising \$400 million for its Southern Africa drought response, collecting just one-fifth of what it needs to help seven countries in the region, a WFP spokesperson said on Tuesday.

The funding environment had become increasingly difficult as drought has dramatically raised the region's food needs, said Thomson Phiri.

Southern Africa is experiencing

its worst drought in decades, forcing Zambia, Malawi and Zimbabwe to declare states of disaster. The drought was a result of the El Nino climate phenomenon, which can change world weather patterns, bring extreme seasonal temperatures, rainfall or dry spells and hurt crop yields.

About 70 percent of the Southern African population that relies on rain-fed agriculture had their harvests "wiped out" by lack of rains, said Phiri.

The WFP aims to use the proceeds

raised so far to feed 5.9 million out of 27 million in the region who are food-insecure until the next harvest season in 2025, and had started sourcing white grain from Tanzania, South Africa and Latin America to feed regional communities.

Despite notable donor support, current food needs were "exceptionally high and outpacing available resources," during a historical drought, Phiri said.

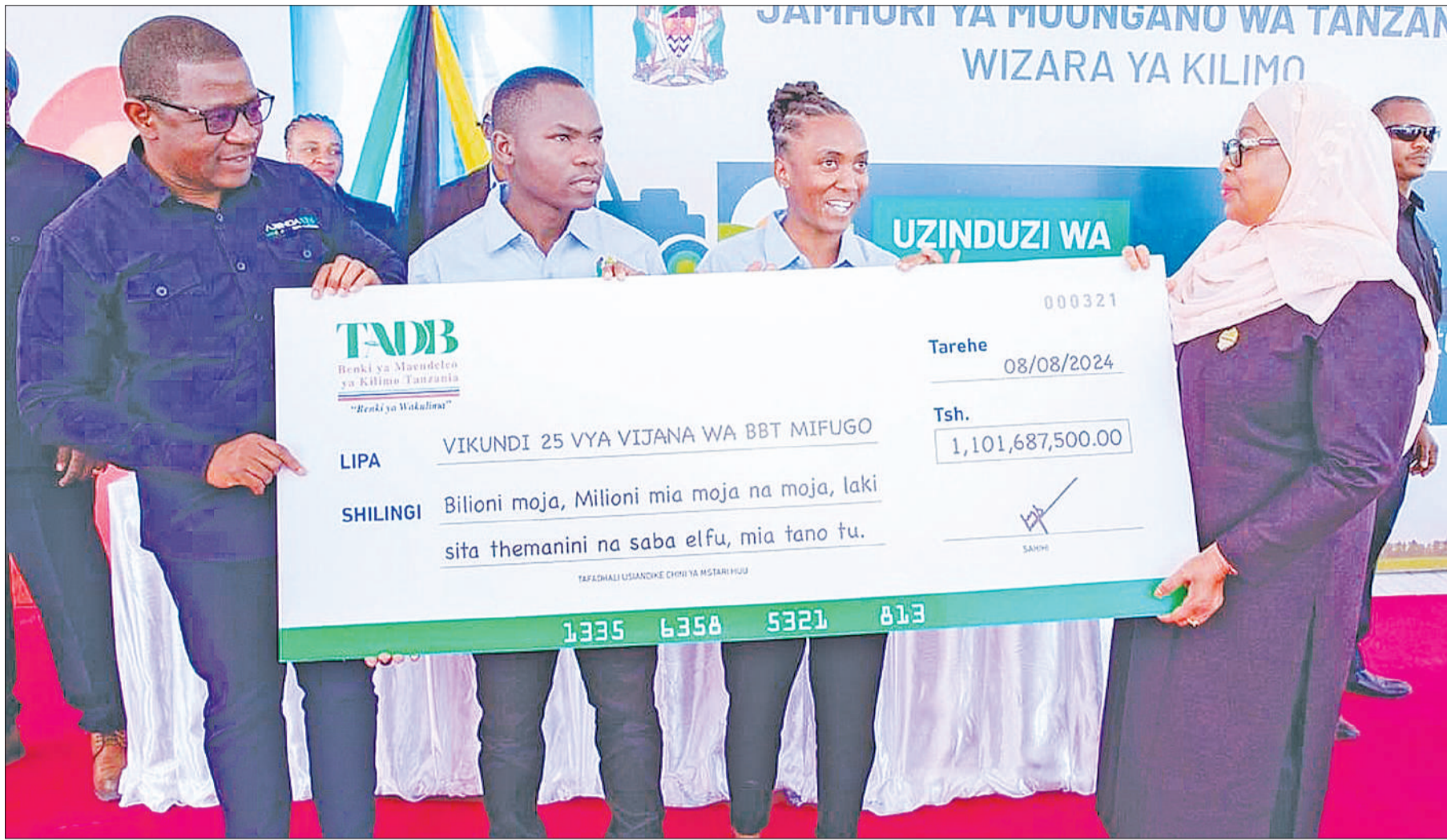
Some donors have had to trim their aid budgets, and "people in places such as Southern Africa

are now facing a double whammy where they are reeling both from the historic drought and severe funding cuts," he said.

The UN's climate crisis coordinator for the El Nino response, Reena Ghelani, called for urgent action.

"We are very worried," Ghelani told Reuters last week. "In fact, we are seeing an increase in the number of people going hungry."

Ghelani warned of a prolonged dry spell and frequent droughts across the region in coming years due to climate change.



President Samia Suluhu Hassan pictured at the just-ended Nane Nane (Farmers' Day) agricultural exhibition held at Nzuguni grounds in Dodoma Urban District on Thursday presenting a dummy cheque for over 1.1bn/- to 25 groups operating under the 'Build a Better Tomorrow' programme. The money was meant to boost the groups' agricultural and other projects. Left is Livestock and Fisheries minister Abdallah Ulega. Photo: State House

Inflation falls to 3pc in July

By Polycarp Machira, Dodoma

THE annual headline inflation rate for July 2024 has decreased to 3.0 percent from the 3.1 percent that was recorded in June 2024, the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) has stated.

In a statement issued yesterday, the bureau noted that the decrease in the headline inflation explains that, the speed of price change for commodities for the year ended July 2024 has decreased compared to the speed that was recorded for the year ended June 2024.

The overall index went up from 112.67 recorded in July 2023 to 116.04 recorded in July 2024. The food and non-alcoholic beverages inflation rate for July 2024 has slightly increased to 1.0 percent from 0.9 percent which was recorded in June 2024.

On the other hand, the annual inflation rate for all items without food and non-alcoholic beverages for July 2024 has decreased to 3.8 percent from the 4.0 percent that was recorded in June 2024.

"The national consumer price index between June 2024 and July 2024 has also decreased by 0.2 percent" reads the statement.

The decrease of the overall index, according to the statement is attributed to a price decrease for some food and non-food items.

Some food items that contributed to a decrease in the index include; wheat grains by 0.9 percent; rice by 4.3 percent; finger millet grains by 1.7 percent; maize grains by 2.9 percent; wheat flour by 0.3 percent; maize flour by 0.5 percent; vegetables by 2.4 percent and round potatoes by 0.2 percent.

Others include fresh cassava by 0.7 percent, dried beans by 1.5 percent, dried lentils by 0.4 percent; dried cowpeas by 2.3 percent, and flour of cassava by 2.4 percent.

Some non-food items that contributed to a decrease in the index include clothing materials by 0.3 percent, footwear for men by 0.1 percent, materials for the maintenance repair of the dwelling by 0.1 percent, charcoal by 1.3 percent; parts for personal transport equipment by 1.4 percent, petrol by 1.6 percent and mobile telephone handsets by 0.1 percent.

In comparison with other East African countries of Kenya and Uganda, the former recorded a decrease in the inflation rate of 4.3 percent in July 2024 up from 4.6 percent recorded in June 2024.

Uganda recorded a slight increase in the inflation rate from 3.9 percent recorded in June 2024 to 4.0 percent in July 2024.

3000 youth to attend IYD festivities in Dodoma city

By Polycarp Machira, Dodoma

TANZANIA to join the rest of the world in commemorating International Youth Day 2024 to be held nationally in Dodoma on 12th August 2024, bringing together over 3000 youth.

Deputy Minister of State, Prime Minister's Office, Labour, Youth, Employment and Disabled, Patrobas Katambi said this year's IYD commemoration will take place in Dodoma, considering that there will be a representation of all young people in Tanzania, so having it in Dodoma it will ease the coordination since the geographical position of the city will make it comfortable for all the participants.

He said the national theme, "Youth and Digital Technology Use for Sustainable Development" emphasizes the international community to link youth with digital opportunities because the world is under full use of technology like phones and artificial intelligence, among others.

Addressing a press conference in Dodoma yesterday, Katambi expressed the government's commitment to supporting youth in the country through different opportunities.

He said the event will be preceded by a youth conference today, 10th August 2024, and tomorrow at the Jakaya Kikwete Convention Centre whereby at least 3000 youths from Zanzibar and the mainland are expected to attend.

"Through the conference, youth shall get the opportunity to discuss different topics including giving their views on National Vision 2050, youth, and the use of digital technology, mental health, and youth psychology.

He added that on 12th August 2024, the IYD, youth, and different stakeholders will participate in the event to be officiated by Prime Minister Kassim Majaliwa.

According to the United Nations, young people are leading the charge in digital adoption and innovation, with three-quarters of those aged 15 to 24 using the internet in 2022, a rate higher than other age groups.

However, disparities persist, particularly in low-income countries and among young women, who often have less access to the internet and digital skills compared to their male counterparts.

While there is an urgent need to enhance digital inclusion, youth are largely recognized as "digital natives," using technology to drive change and create solutions. As the 2030 deadline for the SDGs approaches, the role of young people in digital innovation is essential for addressing global issues.

International Youth Day is celebrated annually on 12 August. Since 1999 when the United Nations General Assembly endorsed the recommendation by the World Conference of Ministers of Youth to declare this day, it has served as a powerful reminder of the significant role young people play in shaping a sustainable future.

This year, the theme is "From Clicks to Progress: Youth Digital Pathways for Sustainable Development," focusing on how young people drive digital technologies to advance progress toward achieving the SDGs.

Samia hands over 1.1bn/- to 25 agricultural groups

By Guardian Reporter, Dodoma

PRESIDENT Samia Suluhu Hassan has handed over 1.1bn/- to 25 groups under the "Build a Better Tomorrow" (BBT) programme to bolster productive farming.

President Samia presented a symbolic cheque to some of the beneficiaries during the Agriculture Exhibitions (Nane Nane) at the Nzuguni grounds in Dodoma.

She expressed satisfaction with the benefits seen by the youth in the livestock and fisheries sectors following her visit to the Ministry of Livestock and

Fisheries' pavilion.

President Samia urged the youth to seize the opportunities to improve their economic status and educate peers who have not yet taken advantage of these opportunities, particularly in livestock and fisheries.

At the funding handover from the Agricultural Development Bank (TADB), Minister for Livestock and Fisheries Abdallah Ulega announced that the funds are a concessional loan and that the government plans to continue providing loans in the 2024/25 financial year.

Addressing the exhibition participants,

President Samia reaffirmed the government's commitment to fostering an inclusive economy that benefits all citizens from investments in agriculture, livestock, and fisheries.

She highlighted increased budget allocations to these sectors aimed at expanding irrigation, improving fertilizer use, seed production and distribution, strengthening extension services, and upgrading livestock service infrastructure.

Additionally, she noted ongoing efforts to build and refurbish livestock processing industries, fishing infrastructure, and aquatic species

development, as well as providing concessional loans to fishermen and livestock keepers.

Minister Abdallah Ulega reported that the ministry's budget for the 2024/25 financial year has been increased to 465bn/-, doubling the previous budget and enabling better support for livestock keepers and fishermen.

He also announced a major national vaccination campaign for livestock and plans to provide concessional loans for 450 fishing boats and 900 fish cages to enhance the sector and contribute to both individual and national income.



Maj Gen Rajabu Mabele (R), Chief of the National Service, briefs journalists on Thursday shortly after the force's pavilion emerged overall winner at the just-ended Nane Nane (Farmers' Day) agricultural exhibition held at Nzuguni grounds in Dodoma Urban District. Photo: Correspondent Peter Mkwavila

By Guardian Reporter, Zanzibar

Z'bar's VP2 to farmers: Venture into technology use to bolster production

ZANZIBAR Second Vice President, Hemed Suleiman Abdulla has highlighted that the growth in agricultural technology use in the country has brought significant changes to the agriculture and livestock sectors.

He made the remarks here at the just-ended Farmers Exhibition, at the Dole Grounds in the West "A" District, Unguja, inspecting various agricultural and livestock products showcased at the event.

He emphasised that the Farmers' Exhibition offers a valuable opportunity for the public to learn modern farming and livestock techniques which help produce higher yields in a shorter time.

He further noted that agriculture, livestock and the environment are crucial

to daily life, therefore, it is essential for farmers and herders to adopt modern technologies to stay competitive in the global market.

The Second VP reaffirmed the government's commitment to improve infrastructure at the exhibition infrastructure to provide better services to both farmers and the public.

He encouraged citizens to visit the exhibition to learn about modern, effective farming practices.

Agriculture, Irrigation, Natural Resources and Livestock Minister Shamata Shaame Khamis reported

a significant increase in business enthusiasm at the exhibition, exceeding the Ministry's target of registering 500 entrepreneurs.

Shamata also noted that the increased interest from entrepreneurs in agriculture and livestock has led to a rise in domestic production, particularly of vegetables, reducing the need to import these products into Zanzibar.

The Minister also said the ministry plans to further expand and improve the exhibition's infrastructure to provide businesspeople with a better platform to showcase their products effectively.

He praised the 8th phase government under President Dr Hussein Ali Mwinyi for great efforts to promote agriculture as it also plays a major role in economic growth and food security and supply.

"We need to produce enough at home for ourselves, booming tourists' hotels and reducing importing from abroad," he said.

Participants at the exhibition hailed proper coordination, reporting significant benefits, including access to business development loans and education on modern, efficient farming and livestock techniques.

Dar residents to benefit from knee, hip surgeries

By Correspondent Joseph Mwendapole

OVER 2,300 Dar es Salaam residents are expected to benefit from the knee, and hip surgeries, expected to take place between August 26 and 28, this year, organizers confirmed.

Abdulmalik Mollel, executive director of Global Medicare, who is also one of the medical camp organisers told reporters in Dar es Salaam yesterday that Dr Ram Mohan Reddy and his team from Yashoda Hospital in India a knee and hip surgeon who will team up with local specialists at the Muhimbili National Hospital (MNH)-Mloganzila branch.

Mollel said that the specialized treatment will take place at the Mloganzila in Dar es Salaam, noting that Dr Reddy and his delegation will work with local specialists to build the capacity of Tanzanian doctors by sharing experiences.

According to him, the collaboration aims to provide additional training that will enable local doctors to perform these surgeries independently in the future.

"Last year, we held a similar surgical camp, which was highly successful. Over 2,300 people needed this service, and our doctors did an excellent job working alongside foreign specialists. We anticipate that these experts in hip and knee surgery will provide treatment to many attendees who will undergo preliminary examinations," he said.

He noted that for a long time, Tanzanians with health issues had to travel abroad for treatment. However, with significant government investment in the health sector, many Tanzanians are now receiving treatment domestically.

Mollel highlighted that the government has invested heavily in modern medical equipment and has trained numerous super-specialists in various fields.

"Tanzania is now equipped with state-of-the-art technology and qualified specialists on par with those in India and other countries. Therefore, it is an opportune time for foreign-qualified doctors to come to Tanzania and collaborate with local experts who have been performing admirably," said Mollel.

He mentioned that the availability of high-quality medical services in Tanzania has attracted people from neighboring countries who prefer to seek treatment here rather than travel abroad, which is often more time-consuming and costly.

"The arrival of these medical doctors is a tremendous opportunity. Our doctors will benefit from their expertise, and if we possess the skills they lack, they will learn from our local practitioners. With the government's investment in the health sector, Tanzania is becoming a hub for medical tourism in East Africa and beyond the Sahara Desert," Mollel added.

"Yashoda is one of the largest hospitals in the world, with 4,000 beds, and is renowned for its high standards. In May 2023, a delegation of Tanzanian doctors visited Yashoda to understand what sets them apart from other institutions. We learned why patients worldwide prefer to seek treatment in India," he said.

Mollel also mentioned that the delegation's goal is to gain insights into what has made YASHODA a global leader in medical tourism and to implement similar practices to enhance Tanzania's reputation as a center for medical tourism.

"One of the successes of our visit to India last year was the arrival of doctors from Yashoda, a hospital known for its first-class quality and standards and its extensive global network due to its expertise," he added.

"Global Medicare manages top-tier health services for those needing treatment abroad and for international patients coming to Tanzania. All preparations for the camp are complete, and our doctors are ready," Mollel concluded.

He emphasized that the ultimate goal is to establish Tanzania as a premier destination for medical tourism, supported by President Samia Suluhu Hassan's significant investments in medical equipment and local doctor training through the Samia Scholarship programme.

Tanzania is now equipped with state-of-the-art technology and qualified specialists on par with those in India and other countries...

AU to expand early warning system to improve stability

By Special Correspondent, Nairobi

THE African Union (AU) has said that it is expanding the continent's early warning system in order to improve stability in the region.

Neema Nicholas Chusi, head of the AU Peace and Security Council Secretariat, told journalists in Nairobi, Kenya, that additional investments are earmarked to strengthen the observation and monitoring unit to ensure timely response to crises.

"A well-functioning early warning system will prevent violent conflicts in Africa," Chusi said during the third edition of the stakeholders' data for governance alliance conference.

The five-day event brought together AU officials as well as senior government officials and policymakers from across the continent to enhance the rule of law in Africa.

Chusi revealed that the African Peer Review Mechanism, a voluntary governance self-assessment by African countries, is expected to provide interventions before political crises emerge.

She added that the continent will also strengthen its early warning systems through increased cooperation with international organizations such as the United Nations.

The African Union is a continental union of 55 member states located on the continent of Africa. The bloc was founded on 26 May 2001 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia and launched on 9 July 2002 in Durban, South Africa.



National Housing Corporation director general Hamad Abdallah explains a point on the firm's operations to Lands, Housing and Human Settlements Development minister Deogratius Ndejemi (L), who visited the NHC offices in Dar es Salaam yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Joseph Mwendapole

By Correspondent Joseph Mwendapole

Ndejemi tasks NHC to build houses for low-income people

THE Minister for Land and Human Settlement, Deogratius Ndejemi, has called on the National Housing Corporation (NHC), to put in place solid strategies that will enable it to build affordable houses that many Tanzanians with low incomes can afford to buy.

He said this yesterday when he visited the corporation's offices in Dar es Salaam where he talked with the corporation management and employees about strategic plans to make it continue to make profits.

"The corporation is doing well, it is making good profits and the director has maintained the good status of the corporation, but let's not forget the goal of its establishment in 1962 was to provide affordable housing for Tanzanians, so we should not forget them in our strategic plans," he said.

"The vision of the father of the nation, the late Mwalimu Julius Nyerere was to make sure that we enable Tanzanians to achieve their dreams of owning a house by building them houses that they can

afford to buy and to make sure that the houses themselves have good standards and are located in accessible areas and not outside the cities," he said.

The Minister said that NHC should ensure that projects have value for money by adding quality to the implementation of their daily activities, including the establishment of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) systems.

Ndejemi said that even when they buy land, they should make sure they buy it at the current value and avoid brokers who can sell it to them at a price that is not in the market and cause loss to the corporation.

"There should be a real cost in the purchase of land so you don't find that you are being sold at a very high cost because there are people who can raise

the cost for their own interests, but you have worked hard and I congratulate you for many projects like that of Samia Housing in Kawe, five thousand houses is not a joke," he said.

He also asked the NHC to continue building houses for rent and sale in many areas of the country, especially in areas where they see that they will benefit from the investment they will make.

The Director General of NHC, Hamad Abdallah, said that NHC's capital has continued to grow and has now reached 5.16trn/- compared to last year's 5.04trn/-.

He mentioned one of the reasons for capital growth as the completion of construction projects and the value of the company's assets increasing the profit of 28.6bn/- while the funds collected from the sale of new houses

reached 13.1bn/-.

Abdallah said that for the fiscal year 2023/24, NHC planned to earn a profit before tax of 28bn/- and in the period of July 2023 to June 2024, the corporation had earned a profit before tax of 42.2bn/-, equal to 147 percent of the goals.

He said the corporation has successfully paid various government taxes amounting to 30.2b/- in July 2023 and June 2024.

Abdallah said the corporation continues to search for low-cost land in various areas of the country and uses technology that reduces the cost of construction materials.

He said NHC continues to communicate with water, electricity, and road authorities to put infrastructure in construction areas as a strategy to reduce construction costs.



CCM youth wing members led by Deputy Secretary General (Zanzibar) Abdi Mahmoud participate in a bicycle tour while inspecting road infrastructure across Zanzibar city on Thursday. Photo: Rahma Suleiman

Brewer now engages more farmers to get new markets

By Guardian Correspondent, Dodoma

THE Farmers' exhibitions (Nanane) organized annually by the government, have proven to be an invaluable platform for enhancing farmers' access to new market opportunities and fostering collaboration among stakeholders.

The exhibitions, which bring together a diverse array of stakeholders, including farmers, agricultural companies, government officials and international organizations, serve as a dynamic venue for showcasing innovations as well as sharing best practices within the agriculture sector.

Key exhibitors and stakeholders in the agriculture sector, such as Serengeti

Breweries Limited (SBL), have responded to the opportunity by engaging with the farming community, sharing valuable knowledge, and exploring new market avenues for local farmers. Speaking during the showcase recently, Aloyce Kimaro, SBL's agribusiness extension officer, emphasized the company's commitment to supporting 400 farmers through agribusiness education and material support, including free seeds.

Kimaro noted that SBL serves farmers of all sizes—small, medium, and large—by offering contracts that ensure a reliable market for their produce.

"We take care of farmers of all sizes. Each receives contracts from us," he said. He said SBL's engagement spans

multiple regions, including Central, Lake Zone, Northern, and Southern Highlands, covering 16 regions which are Singida, Dodoma, Manyara, Moshi, Arusha, Morogoro, Iringa, Mbeya, Rukwa, Kagera, Njombe, Ruvuma, Tabora, Mwanza, Mara and Tanga.

Kimaro further said that SBL is working to expand its sourcing capacity to include red sorghum farmers, in addition to the white sorghum farmers they currently support across the country.

The company is committed to connecting its farmers with institutions that provide inputs and credit, offering comprehensive support beyond just purchasing their produce. This holistic

approach ensures that farmers are well-prepared to meet market demands and improve their livelihoods.

SBL asserts that the foundation of its high-quality products starts on the farm. The company visits farmers, acknowledges their efforts, conducts soil testing, and provides premium seeds. To maintain product quality, SBL utilizes state-of-the-art laboratories for soil testing, ensuring the best seeds and practices are used from field to glass.

Currently, SBL is expanding its sourcing from 400 farmers, obtaining 80 percent of its beer-making cereals including barley, sorghum, and maize, provided the quality and quantity meet the company's standards.

Africa CDC pleads for urgent action against concerning spread of mpox

By Special Correspondent

THE Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC) has called on for urgent action to avert the “concerning spread” of mpox across the continent.

Africa CDC Director-General Jean Kaseya, addressing a media briefing on the multi-country mpox outbreak in Africa on Thursday, said at least 16 countries across all five regions of Africa have been affected by mpox.

He said some 38,465 cases and 1,456 deaths have been reported in Africa since January 2022, including 887 cases and five deaths during the last week.

Data from the Africa CDC show that six new African countries have been affected by mpox during the past 10 days alone, while 18 other African countries are at high risk of being affected by the disease.

Calling for urgent action against the rapid spread of mpox in Africa, the Africa CDC chief said mpox was declared a public health emergency of international concern by the World Health Organization from July 2022 to May 2023.

Noting that the number of new mpox cases reported this year represented a 160 percent increase compared to the same period in 2023, Kaseya underscored the need to take strong actions against the current spread of mpox in Africa.

“When we had the public health emergency of international concern and if we compare it with where we are today, we saw a huge increase justifying the action that we are taking,” he said.

He further expressed concern over the disease’s mode of transmission, which he said is mostly driven by cross-border spread linked to sexual transmission.

“What we are doing in Africa CDC today is to understand the number of factors, especially to understand

why there is this increase of mpox cases. This increase is due, first, to how the virus is mutated to the new moods of transmission,” Kaseya said.

“We know initially it was just the contact with animals and human beings. But today it’s mostly through sexual transmission. This one is explaining the increase of cases,” he added.

Kaseya noted the late detection and management of mpox cases in affected countries as a major issue behind the rapid spread of the disease. He further highlighted the social and political crisis as well as climate change as other contributing factors.

Mpox, also known as monkeypox, was first detected in laboratory monkeys in 1958, assumed to transmit from wild animals such as rodents to people, or from human to human. It is a rare viral disease usually transmitted through body fluids, respiratory droplets, and other contaminated materials. The infection usually results in fever, rash, and swollen lymph nodes.



We know initially it was just the contact with animals and human beings. But today it’s mostly through sexual transmission. This one is explaining the increase of cases



Livestock and Fisheries minister Abdallah Ulega (C) explains a point to Earle Courtenay Rattray (to his left), a special assistant to the United Nations Secretary General, who was on a tour of the government-run forage seed farm at Vikuge in Kibaha District yesterday. Second right is Coast regional commissioner Abubakar Kunenge. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

By Correspondent Mary Geoffroy

TANZANIA needs approximately 158 million tonnes of forage annually to ensure sustainable livestock management, according to Livestock and Fisheries Minister Abdallah Ulega.

During a visit to Juncao farms in Kibaha, Coast Region yesterday, Ulega highlighted that current forage production stands at only 109 million tonnes per year, resulting in a deficit of 49 million tonnes.

To address this, the government is focusing on the cultivation of Juncao grass as a key solution.

“Among the various pasture species under consideration, Juncao grass has emerged as a crucial focus. Tanzania has adopted Juncao technology to tackle agricultural challenges and promote sustainable development, particularly in the livestock sector,” he said.

He said following successful

Dar needs 158m tonnes of forage annually to manage livestock well

research projects by the Sokoine University of Agriculture (SUA) in Simiyu, Kagera, Morogoro, and Coast regions, the government has begun cultivating Juncao grass at farms including Vikuge, Langwira, and Kongwa Ranch.

The farms act as Juncao grass multiplication centers where farmers can obtain cuttings for their own cultivation.

Ulega said following the success of research projects initiated by Sokoine University of Agriculture (SUA) in Simiyu, Kagera, Morogoro, and Coast regions, the Government has started cultivating Juncao grass in its farms such as Vikuge, Langwira, and Kongwa Ranch.

The farms serve as Juncao grass multiplication centers where farmers can obtain cuttings for cultivation on their farms.

Ulega emphasized the importance of the livestock sector in Tanzania’s agricultural industry, which encompasses approximately 46 million livestock units.

He expressed gratitude for the support from the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA) and the National Engineering Research Centre for Juncao Technology of Fujian Agriculture and Forestry University in China.

Their collaboration has significantly contributed to the project’s success, facilitating knowledge transfer and capacity building through international study tours, workshops, and online training.

He said the efforts have effectively advanced the utilization of Juncao technology in various areas such

as agriculture, animal husbandry, environmental protection, and rural revitalisation.

Despite the advancements, Ulega acknowledged challenges in using Juncao grass, such as the lack of machinery for processing it into various forage products.

“We lack the necessary equipment for chopping and baling Juncao grass to make silage. While a few farmers have started producing silage, most do not have the required farm implements and technology,” he said.

During the tour, Ulega was accompanied by the Permanent Representative of China to the United Nations, Ambassador Fu Cong, and Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA) Li Junhua.

Uganda launches mega solar project

By Special Correspondent

WITH the price of solar declining drastically in recent years, it appears to be the most appropriate solution for developing Africa’s electricity access.

Uganda has become the latest country to join Africa’s solar revolution as Dubai-based renewables developer AMEA Power begins construction of the country’s 24MWp (megawatt peak) solar project.

The \$19m Ituka solar photovoltaic (PV) project spans 52 hectares and is located in Ombachi Village, 450km from Kampala.

Once commissioned, the project will be the first and largest utility-scale grid-connected solar PV project in the West Nile region of Uganda.

Power from the site will be distributed through the newly constructed Lira-Gulu-Nebbi-Arua 132kV transmission line operated by the Uganda Electricity Transmission Company.

Like most African countries, Uganda suffers from electricity blackouts, among other issues with its energy infrastructure.

The Ituka solar project is a significant step in resolving such challenges in the West Nile region, contributing to much-needed energy infrastructure development in the continent.

In 2022, the International Energy Agency reported that despite having 60 percent of the world’s solar resources, Africa only accounted for 1 percent of global installed solar PV capacity.

Power Technology’s parent company GlobalData reported that the Middle East and Africa combined registered the lowest percentage share of global cumulative installed solar PV capacity (2.41 percent in 2023) and generation (2.83 percent in 2023).

Despite registering these figures, 2023 saw a record number of solar modules being installed across Africa.

With the price of solar modules declining by 99 percent in the past 40 years, solar power was deemed the most appropriate solution to the continent’s struggles with electricity accessibility.

Robin Mills, a non-resident fellow at the Centre on Global Energy Policy, told the Telegraph: “In Africa, the electricity supply is very poor. So, if solar can fix that, that is enormously helpful. It could be the basis for industrialisation and manufacturing because that is what Africa really needs.”

The Emerging Africa Infrastructure fund has been incredibly influential in supporting solar development across Africa. It is the sole lender for the Ituka solar project as well as the \$20m Cuamba solar project in Mozambique and the \$35m Kesses solar project in Kenya.

The implications of the solar revolution in Africa are notable. Projects like the Ituka solar power station will connect remote regions to the grid for the very first time.

Various solar technologies are also being deployed across the continent to support agriculture, as farmers will be able to carry out their tasks without power outages and increase the country’s food security.

However, the solar revolution must be paired with other energy developments. It will be difficult to integrate renewable technologies into the existing infrastructure, given the lack of reliable, extensive electricity grids across the continent. An established reliance on conventional fossil fuel sources could also deter investment away from renewable development.

Nevertheless, with the development of solar projects in Cameroon, Kenya, Mozambique and Uganda, among others, and African governments’ pledges to move from fossil fuel-based electricity to renewables, Africa is on the right path to unlocking its full potential for clean energy.



A roadside vendor dealing in the small-time exchange of money, mainly offering Tanzanian coins to small traders and commuter bus conductors with banknotes, in an eager wait for customers at Dar es Salaam’s Mbezi Mwisho bus stand yesterday. A note of 1,000/- was exchanged for between 700/- and 800/- in coins. Photo: Correspondent Sabato Kasika

Discrimination drives gender inequality in Africa, says report

By Special Correspondent

DESPITE progress in policy and legislation intended to end gender inequality in most African countries, the continent is still far from achieving gender equality, according to recent research by the polling organization Gallup.

A Gallup report, Gender Power in Africa, examined gender equality in Kenya, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda and Zimbabwe. It found women still face discrimination.

“There are a number of factors at play, including social expectations that are placed on women in these countries, and those remain barriers to participation in education and the labor market,” said Julie Ray,

managing editor for world news at Gallup.

Wanjiru Gikonyo, a governance expert in Nairobi, said the inequalities are rooted in social and cultural norms and traditions that can be traced to the colonial era.

“Yes, women and girls still lag behind male counterparts in this regard,” she said. “Our traditional, cultural societal structures were disrupted during the colonial period, which was a period of a very coercive use of force. And that really accentuated the marginalization that has then been imprinted into our post-colonial governments. And this marginalization then shows itself as inequality.”

Wanjiru said most constitutions

in Africa have provisions for gender equality, but adherence remains a challenge.

“When it comes to power, we’re very patrimonial,” she said. “So we are still dealing with a lot of patrimonialism that is very undemocratic and allows a lot of undemocratic practices to continue, and a lot of injustice to go unspoken.”

Gallup’s Ray said the imbalances act as barriers to social and economic development of women, which affects Africa’s overall development.

“Generally, access to education and participation in the labor market still remains limited compared to men,” she said. “And

more women participating in the workforce, more jobs, is of course a bonus for economic growth.”

The U.N. Development Programme ranks sub-Saharan Africa as the worst-performing region in the Gender Inequality Index - a composite measure reflecting the disparity between women’s and men’s achievements in reproductive health, empowerment and the labor market.

Ibbo Mandaza, a Zimbabwean author and governance analyst in Harare, said it would take time to change attitudes on the continent and attain gender balance. He urged women’s groups in Africa to keep leading the struggle for gender equality.

Vaccination and innovation leading the battle against Hepatitis in Africa

By Special Correspondent

THE global health community has made significant strides in the fight against hepatitis, yet the journey towards its elimination remains fraught with challenges, particularly in regions such as Africa.

This is according to Bada Pharasi, CEO at the Innovative Pharmaceutical Association of South Africa, and Professor Wendy Spearman, recently retired Head of the Division of Hepatology at the Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Cape Town.

Viral hepatitis is one of the most pressing global health challenges today. This silent epidemic, often overshadowed by more visible health crises, affects millions worldwide, causing significant morbidity and mortality. Worryingly, an estimated 354 million people globally are living with hepatitis B or C, yet the majority lack access to the necessary testing and treatment.

To address the plight, World Hepatitis Day, observed annually on 28 July, serves as a pivotal opportunity to raise awareness about viral hepatitis and its devastating impact on millions of lives. This day not only highlights the urgent need for improved prevention, diagnosis and treatment strategies, but also galvanises public health efforts and policy actions worldwide.

The World Health Organization (WHO) has committed to eliminating the threat of viral hepatitis as a public health threat by 2030. Ambitions are high, with the WHO intending to achieve a 90 percent reduction in new cases of chronic hepatitis B and C, and reduce mortality due to hepatitis B and C by 65 percent.

While WHO's intentions are admirable, many regions across the globe remain vulnerable, with limited disease awareness evident, particularly across the African continent.

According to the WHO Global Hepatitis 2024 report, the WHO Africa region accounted for 63 percent of all new viral hepatitis infections in 2022.

Only 4.2 percent of people living with Hepatitis B have been diagnosed and only 0.2 percent have been treated in African region. Similarly, for people living with Hepatitis C, only 13 percent have been diagnosed and 3 percent have been treated. Intervention is thus urgently needed to enhance awareness of viral hepatitis and bring healthcare prosperity to the African continent.

While several interventions exist to combat the threat of viral hepatitis, the most effective and transformative approach is through comprehensive vaccination efforts.

Vaccination against hepatitis B, in particular, offers nearly 100 percent protection and serves as a powerful tool to prevent the transmission of the virus, especially from mother to child during birth. This is vital for regions such as Africa, where perinatal hepatitis B infection is associated with an increased risk of liver cirrhosis and liver cancer in adulthood. To date, there is no vaccine for Hepatitis C.

With innovation being the bedrock of vaccine development, it is paramount to advance the frontiers of scientific knowledge and pave the way for new medicines and vaccines that can drastically

alter public health outcomes.

Despite the inherent challenges of vaccine development - where, for every compound identified, one in 5,000 to 10,000 screened compounds make it through the research process and can take up to 10 to 15 years to come to fruition and bring a viable vaccine to market - the process fosters scientific ingenuity and resilience, ultimately leading to groundbreaking advancements that save lives and protect public health on a global scale.

The most notable example of this is evidenced in the history of hepatitis C (HCV) research. In the 1970s, cases of transfusion-associated hepatitis that couldn't be attributed to hepatitis A (HAV) or hepatitis B (HBV) baffled clinicians. This condition, known as non-A, non-B hepatitis (NANBH), remained a mystery for nearly two decades until the hepatitis C virus (HCV) was identified as the cause.

This breakthrough not only solved a longstanding medical enigma but also spurred the development of effective treatments and preventive measures, underscoring the transformative impact of pharmaceutical innovation on global health.

Collaborative efforts are required to ramp up vaccination efforts across the African continent. This includes scaling up hepatitis B and C testing, with governments encouraged to implement co-designed testing strategies with individuals who have experienced hepatitis. Furthermore, collaboration between public, private and community-based services is critical, utilising innovative point-of-care screening and diagnostic tools to enhance the effectiveness of these efforts.

Additionally, ensuring access to life-saving treatments and enhancing partnerships with affected communities are crucial steps toward elimination. Integrating viral hepatitis into health systems, particularly in antenatal care, and including hepatitis B birth dose vaccination in routine immunisation programmes can prevent long-term morbidity and mortality from chronic hepatitis B acquired in childhood in Africa. Lastly, significantly increasing domestic financing for hepatitis programmes is necessary to ensure access to vaccination, testing, care and treatment across the continent.

By prioritising Hepatitis B vaccination programmes, particularly targeting newborns, healthcare workers and other high-risk groups, Africa can make significant strides towards eliminating hepatitis B as a public health threat. Increasing vaccination rates will not only reduce new hepatitis B infections and save lives, but also foster greater public awareness and understanding of the disease, ultimately leading to better health outcomes across the continent.



Intervention is thus urgently needed to enhance awareness of viral hepatitis and bring healthcare prosperity to the African continent

By Special Correspondent

CLIMATE resilient, nutritious long beans are unfortunately susceptible to aphids and nematodes. By creating four new pest-resistant varieties of the beans, scientists aim to reduce farmers' reliance on pesticides.

These new varieties, and the methods used to develop them, are detailed in a new paper published in the Journal of Plant Registrations.

Long beans are popular in Asia, Africa, and with Asian immigrant communities in the US. Also called yard-long beans because they can grow to nearly 36 inches in length, these plants can withstand high heat and humidity. What they cannot stand, however, are pests.

Beans varieties resist aphids and nematodes

"All local varieties of long beans, until now, have been susceptible to aphids and root-knot nematodes," said UC Riverside plant geneticist Bao Lam Huynh, first author of the paper.

Aphids attack the leaves of the beans and can kill the entire plant or render the beans unmarketable. Worse still, aphids rarely only attack one type of plant. "It's very difficult to control aphids, as they can move from crop to crop on diversified farms," Huynh said.

Similarly devastating, root-knot nematodes create abnormal growths called galls on the roots in order to extract nutrients. This

reduces the plant's uptake of water as well as nutrients, resulting in fewer beans. These attacks also leave the plants susceptible to rot and other microbial diseases.

To learn about pest management strategies, Huynh and his research team contacted a group of predominantly Hmong long bean growers through the UC Cooperative Extension in Fresno, Calif. The researchers found that long beans required the most pesticide of all their crops.

"Local consumers are aware of how much these beans get sprayed, so they're reluctant to buy the beans. Consequently, the

farmers are struggling to sell this product," Huynh said. "Our idea was to develop resistant varieties not only to minimize the amount of pesticide but to help bring back the market for long beans. Thankfully, the California Department of Food and Agriculture was supportive of this idea."

The CDFR supplied more than \$400,000 for the researchers to develop these new varieties over a 32-month period, in collaboration with the University of California's Cooperative Extension and farmers in Fresno. The team crossed local long beans with African cowpeas known for their resistance to these

pests.

The result is three varieties of long beans that are much more aphid resistant, and one variety that repels root-knot nematodes. "The nematode-resistant variety can be grown in rotations to benefit other crops, as they could help suppress nematode populations in the fields where they are planted," Huynh said. "Without plants like these, farmers would have to use a nematicide to control the worms."

One of these newer bean varieties has shorter stems, so it will not require a trellis when it grows. This makes it much more amenable to mechanical harvesting. The beans

are enshrined in poverty-stricken situations, and only 15 percent of the people in the entire population have medical insurance coverage.

In Tanzania, the programme is being facilitated by Ifakara Health Institute (IHI) in its specific centers located in Ikwiriri, Mikocheni-Dar es Salaam, and Bagamoyo to facilitate activities linked to the testing of malaria disease to the affected people, spraying of deodorants or insecticides in flood-prone areas within Ikwiriri ward, and setting traps that enable to catch mosquito infested insects.

Tanzania is among the top 11 countries globally in terms of malaria infections and deaths and has made progress in reducing malaria cases but achieving eradication by 2050 demands intensified efforts innovation and ongoing collaboration.

"We want growers to see all the benefits of these new varieties, such as cleaner air from fewer pesticides, less expensive production, safer food, and hopefully, increased demand," Huynh said.



Ridhiwan Kikwete (R), Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office (Labour, Youth, Employment and Persons with Disabilities), presents a certificate of achievement and appreciation to Mbeya regional commissioner Juma Homera on Thursday for onward relaying to Mbeya Regional Referral Hospital. This was at the climax of the Nane Nane (Farmers' Day) agricultural exhibition held in Mbeya city at the Southern Highlands zone level. Photo: Correspondent Nebart Msokwa

By Correspondent Emmanuel Onyango

3rd phase malaria control plan yet to kick off in Rufiji District

THE malaria control programme, which is being financed by the Belinda and Bill Gates Foundation and controlled by the Chinese government, is yet to kick off its third phase in Ikwiriri ward, Rufiji District, Coast Region as earlier planned.

Dubbed, "China-Tanzania Malaria Programme" has been jointly conducted between the two countries in every three years' time since 2015 when the first-phase started and ended in 2018 and the second phase resumed in 2019 and ended up in May 2021.

Speaking to a team of Chinese experts recently in Ikwiriri ward, Rufiji District, a medical statistician who works in the district hospital Dr. Sajidu Ismail said: "There has been a low pace of sensitization among community health workers due to lack of money for the third phase".

He revealed that statistics on malaria cases within the ward have increased from 12 percent to

currently 40 percent and this is mainly due to poor sensitization and advocacy that helped reduce the number of malaria cases among the people.

Dr Ismail appealed to the financiers to introduce the third phase to financially empower the community health workers to implement the project effectively to accommodate the increased number of affected persons most of whom are women and children.

Many stagnated water pools have to a greater extent contributed to tedious work bearing in mind the fact that their presence provides breeding places for mosquitoes that cause malaria diseases, and these were formed by recent El-Nino rains.

"To be on the safe side, we are kindly asking for the resumption of the program to culminate the

third phase so that the burden of prevalence should be reduced", he stated and added that, since the second phase ended, they have no longer have any opportunity to take control of contamination.

Exavier Likwembe, Ikwiriri Ward Executive Officer (WEO), who welcomed the Chinese experts, lamented that since May 2021 when the second phase ended, scores of people who were diagnosed were found with severe malaria and thereby admitted at the district hospital.

Most of them had their social activities affected or suspended as many had to spend time and money taking care of their family members bearing in mind the fact that most people do not have insurance for medical treatment.

According to him, the majority of the residents within the ward



Transport deputy minister David Kihenzile (L) has with Tanzania Meteorological Authority acting director general Dr Ladislaus Chang'a (R) and other staff at the TMA pavilion at the climax of the just-ended Nane Nane (Farmers' Day) agricultural exhibition at Nzuguni grounds in Dodoma Urban District on Thursday. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

Kenya erupts in new stream of protests

NAIROBI

ANTI-government protests returned to the streets in Kenya on Thursday, resulting in injuries and more than 170 arrests.

The demonstrations, though smaller in scale than previous ones, were marked by youthful protestors who marched through streets in six of Kenya's 47 counties, chanting anti-government slogans and displaying placards with various messages.

In the Kenyan capital of Nairobi, normal business was disrupted in the central business district (CBD) as shops remained closed, and office workers avoided the area. Public transport was largely halted as minibuses operators, known as matatus, withdrew their vehicles for safety reasons. Security officers engaged in running battles with protestors, using teargas and live ammunition to disperse them.

"We are fighting for a better Kenya. All we want is for our issues to be addressed, including increased unemployment among youth," a protestor said.

Acting Inspector General of Police Gilbert Masengeli cautioned protestors against unlawful activities. "Every Kenyan, as per the law, has the liberty to demonstrate, picket, and assemble according to the law. But where the privilege of one ends is where that of another starts," he said.

Masengeli assured that the government is addressing grievances from previous protests and warned that criminal elements would be dealt with firmly.

To prevent protestors from reaching the CBD, the police set up roadblocks on major routes and inspected passenger vehicles, which caused delays for commuters, as described by Henry Mulei, a resident stuck in traffic for hours due to a roadblock.

"I was heading to town from Ruiru in a public service vehicle, but we found a roadblock along the Thika superhighway. I sat in traffic for hours and had to return home," Mulei said.

Protests also occurred in towns

such as Karatina in central Kenya and Machakos in the southern part of the country. Other major hotspots like Kisumu and Kisii, where violent scenes had been reported in the past, remained calm. Some residents chose not to participate in the protests, expressing satisfaction with President William Ruto's recent Cabinet changes.

In the recent changes, Ruto included opposition members in his newly reconstituted Cabinet, which he swore into office on Thursday morning in Nairobi. This move is part of his efforts to reset his administration following a period of intense public dissatisfaction.

In July, Ruto dismissed nearly the entire Cabinet in response to widespread protests. He now appeals to Kenyans to allow the new Cabinet members the opportunity to fulfill their roles and address the concerns that fueled the unrest, which was sparked by controversial new tax measures introduced in June.

"I am persuaded that this moment in the life of our nation calls on us to build a strong 'team of rivals' to give our transformation agenda the best chance of success and to enhance inclusivity in national development," he said.

Since the protests began on June 18, over 50 people have died and 400 others have been injured, according to the Kenya National Commission on Human Rights. The protests initially focused on tax increases but evolved to address broader issues of governance and government spending.

In response to widespread public outcry, the president dissolved his Cabinet in mid-July following a series of anti-government demonstrations led by young protestors in June. These protests were triggered by the Finance Bill 2024, which aimed to raise an additional 346.7 billion Kenyan shillings (about 2.7 billion U.S. dollars) through new taxes.

The bill, which has since been withdrawn, included provisions that would increase taxes on essential goods and services, such as bread, and on mobile money transfers.

Africa tech festival to display women tech, telecom leaders

CAPE TOWN

WHEN the 27th edition of the Africa Tech Festival kicks off on November 12, 2024, at the Cape Town International Convention Centre in South Africa, the spotlight will be on the exceptional women shaping the future of technology and telecom in Africa.

With August marking the celebration of Women's Month in the host country, the event will proudly showcase many of the women leaders who are driving growth and innovation across the sector.

Taking place from November 12 to 14, Africa Tech Festival 2024 incorporates AfricaCom, AfricaTech, AfricaIgnite and The AI Summit Cape Town, which will welcome a cumulative 15,000 visitors, more than 400 speakers, and over 300 exhibitors as it explores enterprise tech innovation and disruption across key sectors such as artificial intelligence (AI), cybersecurity, cloud and data centers, and green ICT.

As the continent's leading platform for technology innovators, specialists, and thought leaders, Africa Tech Festival 2024's agenda includes several prominent female leaders who are making a significant contribution to the industry.

Their expertise and insights will provide invaluable perspectives on the challenges and opportunities within the sector.

"Africa Tech Festival provides the continent's tech ecosystems with a unique platform from which to collaborate and drive positive change. Building a more inclusive, sustainable world means uniting the world's most inspirational founders, business leaders, policymakers, investors, and rising stars, so we are delighted to see so many inspirational female tech executives featured in this year's speaker line-

up. As we celebrate Women's Month, we look forward to their unique insights and contributions," said Informa's James Williams, Event Director of Africa Tech Festival.

Organizers are confident that the presence of these female industry leaders at Africa Tech Festival will provide impetus to efforts by the industry to be more inclusive, highlighting the opportunities available to women in various sectors, providing insights for women wishing to embark on tech and telecom careers, and showcasing the successes and contributions of women making their mark within the industry.

Africa Tech Festival's 2024 agenda includes several prominent female leaders who are making a significant contribution to the industry. (Source: Africa Tech Festival)

Africa Tech Festival's 2024 agenda includes several prominent female leaders who are making a significant contribution to the industry.

"Events such as Africa Tech Festival provide a platform for women to network and to gain exposure to more accomplished women in tech. These role models provide inspiration to women starting out in their careers that they can break the glass ceiling," said Funke Opeke, CEO of MainOne.

Opeke will be participating in the "Big Tech and Telcos: Collaborating on Digital Infrastructure Investment," keynote panel.

"As a female industry leader, I see mentorship as a necessary reminder of our social responsibility to be empathetic, driven, inclusive, and resilient leaders. I am fortunate to have a female mentor who has significantly influenced my leadership style, thinking, and understanding of corporate dynamics and culture," added Mary Mahuma, CIO for Southern Africa at Philip Morris.



Global Education Link dDirector Abdulmalik Mollel (L) pictured in Dar es Salaam yesterday presenting documents and visas to one of 100 students expected to go for studies abroad next week. Photo: Correspondent Joseph Mwendapole

GENEVA

COVID-19 infections are surging worldwide - including at the Olympics - and are unlikely to decline anytime soon, the World Health Organization (WHO) has warned.

The UN health agency is also concerned that more severe variants of the coronavirus may soon be on the horizon.

"COVID-19 is still very much with us," and circulating in all countries, Dr Maria Van Kerkhove of WHO told journalists in Geneva.

"Data from our sentinel-based surveillance system across 84 countries reports that the percent of positive tests for SARS-CoV-2 has been rising over several weeks," she said. "Overall, test positivity is above 10 percent, but this fluctuates per region. In Europe, percent positivity is above 20 percent," she added.

New waves of infection have been registered in the Americas, Europe and the western Pacific.

COVID-19 making a worrying comeback, WHO cautions, amid summertime surge

Wastewater surveillance suggests the circulation of SARS-CoV-2 is from two to 20 times higher than current figures suggest.

Such high infection circulation rates in the northern hemisphere's summer months are atypical for respiratory viruses, which tend to spread mostly in cold temperatures.

"In recent months, regardless of the season, many countries have experienced surges of COVID-19, including at the Olympics", Dr Van Kerkhove said. WHO reported that at least 40 athletes had tested positive for COVID-19 or other respiratory illnesses.

As the virus continues to evolve and spread, there is a growing risk of a more severe strain of the virus that could potentially evade detection systems and be unresponsive to

medical intervention.

While hospital admissions - including for intensive care - are still much lower than they were during the peak of the pandemic, WHO is urging governments to strengthen vaccination campaigns, making sure that the highest-risk groups get shots at least once every 12 months.

"As individuals, it is important to take measures to reduce the risk of infection and severe disease, including ensuring that you have had a COVID-19 vaccination dose in the last 12 months, especially if you are in an at-risk group," stressed Dr Van Kerkhove.

Vaccine availability has declined substantially over the last 12 to 18 months, WHO admits because the number of producers of COVID-19 vaccines has recently decreased.

"It is very difficult for them to maintain the pace," Dr Van Kerkhove explained. "And certainly, they don't need to maintain the pace that they had in 2021 and 2022. But let's be very clear, there is a market for COVID-19 vaccines that are [already] out there."

Nasal vaccines are still under development but could potentially address transmission, thereby reducing the risk of further variants, infection and severe disease.

"I am concerned", the top WHO COVID specialist said.

"With such low coverage and with such large circulation, if we were to have a variant that would be more severe, then the susceptibility of the at-risk populations to develop severe disease is huge," Dr Van Kerkhove warned.



Raphael Maziku (L), a community development officer with the Vice President's Office (Union and the Environment), sensitises students of Dodoma city's Itega Secondary School on Thursday on various issues related to the Union of Tanganyika and Zanzibar. The students were on a tour of the just-ended Nane Nane (Farmers' Day) agricultural exhibition held at Nzuguni grounds in Dodoma Urban District. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

Global temperatures slightly lower in July as El Nino ebbs

By Special Correspondent

GLOBAL temperatures eased slightly in July, bringing an end to a 13-month streak of heat records as the El Nino weather system ebbs.

However, scientists at the European climate agency, Copernicus, say this is no cause for celebration.

At an average of 16.91 degrees Celsius, it was still the second hottest month on record after July last year.

"Even if we are slightly below what we were a year ago, the global temperature is still at near record levels. So, the global picture is not that much different from where we were a year ago," said Julien Nicolas, a Copernicus climate scientist.

Other records were set in July, including the two hottest days on record, each averaging about 17.16 degrees Celsius.

"So July was also a record month in its own way, even if the average over the whole month is slightly

below that of July 2023," he said.

El Nino, which naturally warms the Pacific Ocean and changes global weather, spurred the streak of record heat. "The global sea surface temperature has been at record or near record levels for the past, more than a year now, has been an important contributing factor," said Nicolas.

Human-caused climate change is driving extreme weather events that are wreaking havoc around the globe, with several examples just in

recent weeks.

In Cape Town, South Africa, thousands were displaced by torrential rain, gale-force winds, and flooding. A fatal landslide hit Indonesia's Sulawesi Island. While Japanese authorities said more than 120 people died in record heat in Tokyo.

Nicolas warned that the consequences of global warming, which have been seen for many years, will not end because this streak of records is ending.

Handling of informal sector traders calls for caution and understanding

THERE are divergent ideas in relation to the sort of tax reforms needed in our country to make the environment all the more welcoming for business generally and foreign investments in particular.

The other aspect is to make sure that the government is not hamstrung in its pursuit of revenues needed for executing current development plans and running the completed ones.

There is no denying that all successful development projects become additional recurrent expenditure when fully in the hands of local governments.

Quite a few development experts will have been surprised at a revelation that the technical working group of the Tanzania National Business Council (TNBC) is not just proposing the use of technology in informal sector tracking based on national identification, ostensibly to widen the tax base, but the hurry with which they went public on the issue.

The council's latest meeting was held recently, in which case this idea has garnered consensus on the ranks of the panel, rather than passing the test of seeking out other stakeholders. That doesn't have to include small traders as such.

This suggestion was sort of echoed other debates or lines of concern, including when President Samia Suluhu Hassan addressed participants of the just-ended annual agro-sector national exhibition.

There were salient remarks directed at the way the government pampers its senior officials, all issued with standard four-wheel drive vehicle models.

Meanwhile, it has never been admitted that this is essential for their sense not really of status but of something deeper.

Critics of reliance on four-wheel drives in our country came fairly late for those who have been watching the civic and political scenario since the consolidation of reforms in the 1990s.

At that time, some isolated critics

could be heard complaining about the four-wheel drives policy to the extent of one daily newspaper once running a gleeful news story headline going thus: "504 not a luxury car, Tanzania's parliament told". To this day, we hear that we need big vehicles to inspect projects.

This is an illustration of what brings fiscal policy decision-making to breaking point and the fact that one doesn't see Europeans on a routine basis taking buses or trains or being with children in school makes the vehicles become a sort of identity.

Those in the government or public corporations can't let go of those prerogatives as to the makes of the vehicles they use.

Now, a working group from among themselves suggests that everyone be tracked on his or her identification number so as to also pay taxes.

The panel had no idea that offloading 350 public firms on the stock exchange with strategic shareholders already in place, liquidating most of the foreign debt, would drastically cut revenue needs. It would go a long way to alleviating the concerns of the business community.

So far, it is not clear what proposals the government has on its sleeves towards lessening the cost effects of intermittent wrangles with the business community.

Much applies as to the answers being awaited from a panel of top-level experts, the idea that thinking the solution is tagging everyone to the tax computer base is somewhat unfortunate.

Carried to its hilt, this leads to much the same scenario seen elsewhere, that is, that of moving from low-level wholesale shop stoppages to radical demands by the unemployed, educated and less educated alike.

Just like we have tax holiday arrangements for investors to set foot in our country and create jobs, experts ought to desist from imagining that it is too much for those without registered frames to trade unnoticed.

Issuing 1.6trn/- agro-sector credits since 2021 uplifting

A leading Tanzanian commercial bank has just described how it has been working with the farming sector, stating out its full support for the government's vision of agricultural transformation.

The bank explained that has played a pivotal role in financing the sector over the years including by showing at the international agricultural exhibition that its loans to farmers surged from 730bn/- in 2021 to 1.6trn.

The bank's top executive declared that 450bn/- in loans out of this lending was extended at an interest rate of nine per cent to farmers, which many critics or activists habitually say is practically impossible.

That implies that agriculture is increasingly meeting the criteria for credit extension on a commercial basis and, with wider reforms, the need for overly extensive government subsidies would hopefully start diminishing.

Excessive expectations of this sort on subsidies in the sector create smouldering fires when businesses can't bear or afford the taxes.

Noticeably, a markedly lower figure was provided in respect of livestock sector lending, where up to now the bank has handed 105bn/- in loans to livestock keepers, primarily for animal fattening to support modern livestock rearing practices.

This emerging facet of what is now known as 'agribusiness' is next

to exceptional as a facet of cattle rearing meeting demands of formal loan issuance. The other aspect could as well be milk processing but, admittedly, the business model here is not as handy and tends to be informal.

As is often the case in emerging market economies, there are niches in the world market where Tanzania seems to be making progress, in this case as an emerging meat producer for the nearby region - notably, the Gulf zone.

When it comes to fisheries, so far the most laudable niche is exports of fillets, and it is unclear how far it can be replicated in major lakes apart from Lake Victoria. Chances of its being repeated for seafood aren't overly bright, as Tanzania has clear challenges with visible comparative advantage there.

As the said CEO observed with regard to the bank's agro-sector lending activities, it is plausible that bank financing of farming, livestock and fisheries value chains could diminish the violence and other forms unacceptable 'traits' embedded in these activities.

Modern livestock keeping would be settled on irrigated land with cattle dips and other facilities just like farms with considerable investments don't expand haphazardly into conservation areas.

However, if the scale remains low, trouble will still be brewing, as the majority of players will find the situations near impossible.

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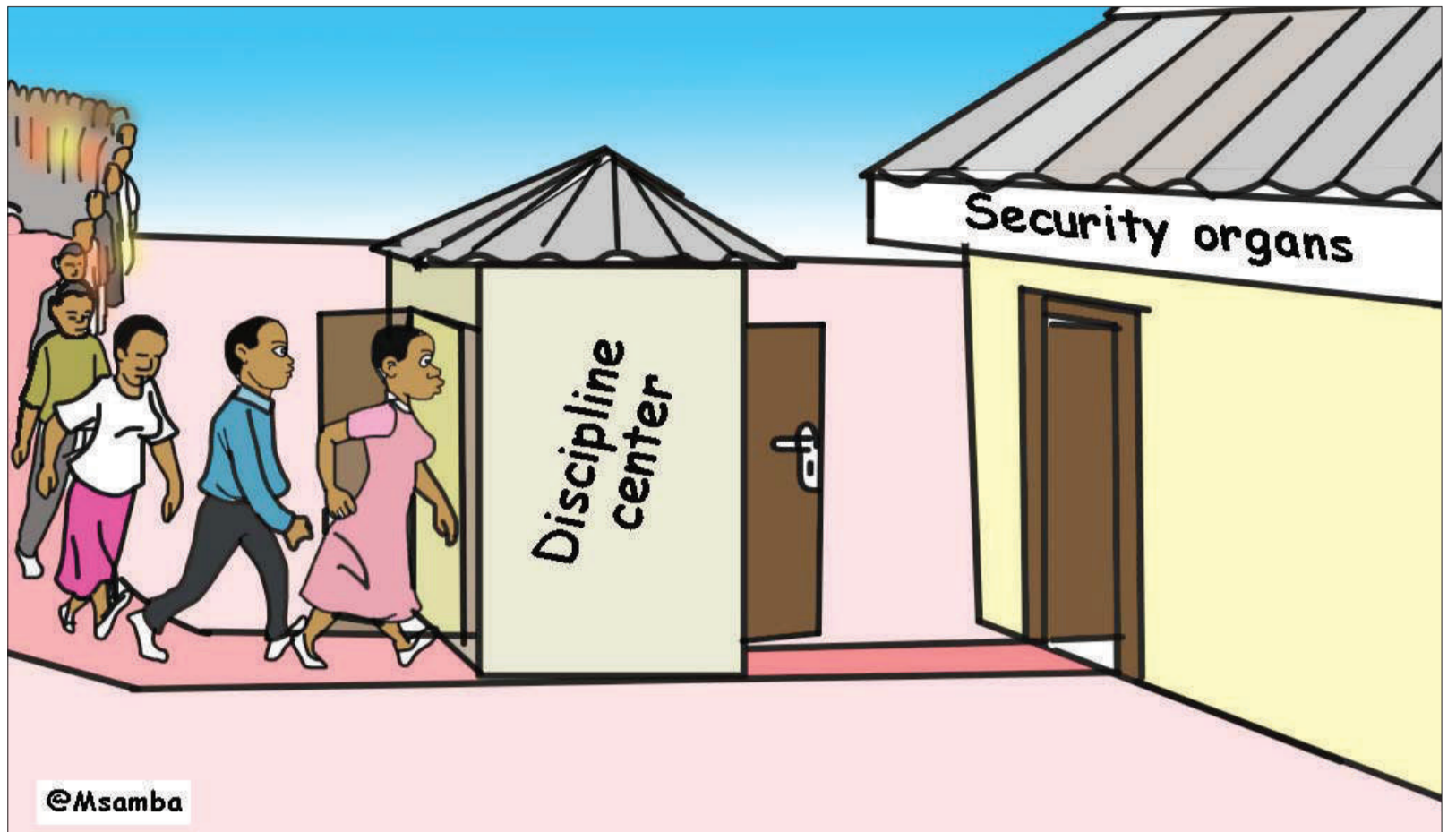
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By Jamison Ervin and Anna Giulia

Medri

THIS year's Equator Prize winners are the antidote we need in a world of crisis. Earlier this year, the World Economic Forum released its annual Risk Report. The key findings highlighted the inescapable trend over the past decade that we are facing a global polycrisis, in which problems of biodiversity loss, climate change, inequality, water scarcity and conflict are increasingly indivisible, simultaneous, and systemic.

The term polycrisis is increasingly starting to show up in global discourse. The Financial Times cited "polycrisis" as the 'year in a word' for 2023.

The linkages between nature and climate are particularly intertwined. If protected, restored and well-managed, nature can provide more than a third of our climate mitigation needs, and is essential to be able to adapt to climate impacts.

On the other hand, current practices of forestry, land conversion and conventional agriculture are responsible for up to a quarter of all greenhouse gas emissions. Simply put, there is no chance of achieving a 1.5C degree future without a reset in how we think about, value, and manage nature.

To tackle our nature and climate crisis, we need integrated, multi-faceted solutions that restore our planet, tackle climate change, and help people thrive. We need signposts - practical examples - to show how we can implement integrated solutions that protect and restore nature, keep carbon in the ground, buffer communities, and sustain livelihoods, water security and wellbeing.

Integrated solutions for nature and climate are especially critical for the more than three billion people who depend on nature directly for their livelihoods and daily needs, who are at the frontlines facing the impacts of climate change and biodiversity loss, and who are best positioned to effect local solutions.

The theme of this year's Equator Prize was "Nature for Climate Action." The 11 winners, selected from more than 600 nominations, exemplify the transformative potential of Indigenous and locally-led nature-based solutions in combating the climate crisis.

Hailing from Brazil, Bangladesh, Colombia, Iran, Kenya, Morocco, Senegal, and Zambia, they champion initiatives that not only protect, conserve, and restore ecosystems but also integrate nature into planning frameworks, enhance resilience to the impacts of climate change, and promote a fair, inclusive, and circular green

Can indigenous peoples be an antidote in a world of crisis?



Indigenous Livelihoods Enhancement Partners, a 2024 Equator Prize winner, fosters sustainable livelihoods and climate resilience in Kenya's Maasai pastoral community through programmes such as tree nurseries, beekeeping, and hay production, all while integrating Indigenous knowledge. Credit: UNDP Equator Initiative/Francisco Galeazzi

economy.

In Brazil, the União dos Povos Indígenas do Vale do Javari, an Indigenous-led non-profit organization representing Brazil's second largest Indigenous territory in the 8.5-million-hectare Javari Valley, is working to defend constitutional rights, preserve traditional knowledge, and safeguard their shared territory.

In Colombia, the Federación Mesa Nacional del Café (FEMNCAFÉ) comprises 28 coffee associations, championing the economic, social, and community reintegration of signatories of the Colombian peace agreement alongside local communities.

By reducing inequality among coffee farmers, democratizing technical knowledge, and promoting climate-resilient agriculture, they tackle agrarian disparity, stimulating rural economies, and confronting the challenges of climate change head-

on.

In Kenya, the Indigenous Livelihoods Enhancement Partners (ILEPA) focuses on environmental conservation and sustainable development for the Maasai community, expanding land rights advocacy, addressing climate change and biodiversity loss, and promoting nature-based livelihoods.

And in Bangladesh, the Sundarbans Eco Village in Bangladesh, is restoring mangrove forests, securing fisheries livelihoods, expanding ecotourism and strengthening climate resilience.

The Equator Prize winners show the world how to implement integrated solutions that deliver on nature protection, restoration, and management, tackle our climate crisis, and attain local sustainable development goals. But we also have an unprecedented global opportunity to follow their lead.

Over the next 18 months, nearly every country will be refining both their national biodiversity plans and their national climate plans, with the opportunity to align these plans and make bold advances in both nature and climate.

If the 'word in a year' for 2023 was polycrisis, let's hope that the 'word in a year' for 2025 is "polysolutions," where at every level, from local to national to global, the world recognizes, champions and implements solutions, plans, commitments and actions that are integrated, multi-faceted and aligned, delivering on nature, climate and people.

This year's Equator Prize winners are already showing us the way forward!

Jamison Ervin is Manager, Global Programme on Nature for Development, UNDP; Anna Giulia Medri is Senior Programme Officer, Equator Initiative, UNDP.

The small African country with the world's highest suicide rate

It is a steep climb from the main road to 79-year-old Matlohang Moloji's home, through the mountains that make Lesotho one of the highest countries in the world.

The mother of 10 welcomes me to her neat house, showing me photos of her large family. I am here to talk about one of her children - her firstborn son, Tlohang.

At 38 he became part of a grim statistic. Lesotho, the kingdom in the sky, is home to the world's highest suicide rate.

"Tlohang was a good son. He had told me about his mental health struggles," Moloji (pictured) says.

"Even that day he took his own life, he came to me and said, 'Mother, one day you will hear that I have taken my life.'"

"His death hurt me a lot. I really wish he could have explained in more detail what was troubling him in his mind. He was worried if he told people they'd think he's a weak person who can't solve his own problems."

According to the World Health Organization, 87.5 people per 100,000 of the population take their own life every year in Lesotho.

By contrast that is more than double the next country on the list, Guyana in South America, where the figure is just more than 40.

It is also almost 10 times the global average, which stands at nine suicides per 100,000 people.

That is a statistic that NGOs - such as HelpLesotho - are determined to change, by equipping young people with the skills to manage their mental health.

In the town of Hlotse, about two hours' drive from the capital, Maseru, I sit in on one of the regular group therapy sessions for young women, run by social worker Lineo Raphoka.

"People think it's against our African principles, our cultural experiences, against our spirituality as Africans, and as a community at large," 24-year-old Patience tells the group.

"But we are also shying away from the fact that it is happening. I'm talking from a perspective where I've lost three friends from suicide, I've personally attempted."

Everyone here has experienced suicidal thoughts, or know someone who has died by suicide.

Thirty-five-year-old Ntsoaki becomes emotional, as she tells the group her story of being raped in hospital.

"The doctor told me I was too attractive. Then he took out a gun and told me he wanted to have pleasure with me, and if I didn't he would kill me."

"Every time with suicide, I always thought it was the only solution. I couldn't do it, I had no strength to do it. The only thing that kept me moving or alive were the faces of my brothers. They believe I'm strong, but I'm weak."

The group reassures her she is strong for sharing her feelings.

As the session finishes, all the women are chatting and smiling, saying they feel better for sharing their stories.

The reasons people take their own lives are often



complicated, and it is difficult to isolate a single cause.

Despite that, Ms Raphoka says she sees patterns that explain why Lesotho has such a high suicide rate. "Mostly they go through situations such as rape, unemployment, loss because of death. They abuse drugs and alcohol."

According to a World Population Review report in 2022, 86% of women in Lesotho have experienced gender-based violence.

Meanwhile the World Bank says two in five young

people are not in employment or education.

"They're not getting enough support from their families, friends or any kind of relationships that they have," Ms Raphoka continues.

It is something you often hear in Lesotho. People say time and again that they do not feel comfortable talking about their mental health - and that others might judge them.

Sitting in a bar in Hlotse one evening, where the male clientele drink local beer and chat politics while

football plays on the TV, I steer the conversation towards mental health.

"We do talk about it, we say let's open up," Khosi Mpti tells me.

Some are afraid that if they reveal too much they could be gossiped about. Despite this, he says things are getting better.

"As a group [of friends] we're very supportive. If I'm having a problem I tell the group, and we support each other."

When people do seek help though, they are confronted with a struggling public health system.

The country's only psychiatric unit was last year criticised by the ombudsman - an official whose job it is to look after the public's interests - for not having had a psychiatrist since 2017.

She also highlighted widespread abuses, including "living conditions that violate human rights". There was previously also no national mental health policy to deal with the crisis, although the government - elected in October 2022 - says it is in the process of drafting one.

"Mental health has become a pandemic," admits Mokhothu Makhwanyane, an MP who leads a parliamentary committee that deals with health issues.

"We are making sure that advocacy is intensified, from primary school, to high schools, to places where young people gather, such as football tournaments," he tells the BBC.

"The policy will also be specific in terms of treatment, and will allow those affected to go for rehabilitation." He also says Lesotho can learn from its battle against HIV/Aids.

In 2016 it became the first country to introduce a "test-and-treat" strategy, meaning people can start treatment as soon as they are diagnosed. Rates of infection have consistently fallen.

"The experience that we had is that talking openly, and not blaming or criticising the people for their situation, helped turn things around."

Back up in the mountains, Ms Moloji takes the short walk to tend to Tlohang's grave.

His final resting place is a plot with a stunning vista, dotted with streams, greenery and small houses.

Ms Moloji is one of many people living in Lesotho who are dealing with the grief of death by suicide.

As we take in the view, she says she has a message for those who find themselves in the same headspace as her son.

"I would tell people that taking your own life is never a solution. What you have to do is to talk to people around you so they can help you." **BBC**

Robotics technicians in emerging profession boosting industrial efficiency

By Hong Qiuting

At a demonstration area of robot applications of Guangdong Cuifeng Robotics Technology Co., Ltd. in south China's Guangdong province, Zhuang Yongchun was standing in front of a row of spinning robotic arms. After he made a few taps on a teach pendant, these robotic arms moved accordingly. Zhuang carefully inspected whether the gripping and rotating actions of the robotic arms were accurate and smoothly transitioned.

"It's not easy to make robots screw in screws and fetch screws from a box using their mechanical arms smoothly," said Zhuang, who's a robotics technician. "Our profession has emerged as a result of the rise of intelligent manufacturing."

In simple terms, Zhuang's daily work involves the development and application of industrial robots. He is primarily responsible for providing industrial robots to companies with specific needs and designing robot production lines for factories undergoing industrial automation upgrades.

A factory that produces medical sheet metal parts hoped to upgrade its production line for automation. Upon learning the news, Zhuang visited the factory.

"First, we need to assess the condition of the press brake and determine if it is compatible with our equipment. We also need to evaluate the bending bed and molds to ensure they meet the production requirements," Zhuang added.

After noting down the key technical specifications, Zhuang returned to his office and discussed with colleagues, designing solutions, simulating movements, and conducting 3D design.

"After multiple rounds of discussions and approval of the plan, we signed an agreement, and once the customer places the purchase order, we would start with drawing, procurement, assembly, and conduct action, signal, and hardware testing," Zhuang said. He added that the automation upgrade of a production line, from design to installation of 10 robotic arms, for example, can be successfully put into production in 5-10 days.

"For the factory, using robots can save labor costs. Previously, it required two or more people for bending, but now only one bending robot is needed," Zhuang told People's Daily, adding that this significantly improves production efficiency.

In fact, bending technique is closely related to people's daily lives. Televisions, refrigerators, computer cases, vending machines, data center servers, and many other electrical products on the market rely on the technique.

Previously, during his visits to enterprises along the industrial chain, Zhuang discovered that many factories in Dongguan, Guangdong province were employing the



Zhuang Yongchun debugs a robotic arm. (Photo provided by Zhuang Yongchun)

bending technique. Before the development of bending robots, products had to be manually produced, which often resulted in deviations and the production of defective goods.

"Can we develop a robot to alleviate the burden on workers and improve efficiency?" This question lingered in the mind of Zhuang and his team.

The challenge with bending robots lies in keeping sheet metal products securely attached to the robot's suction cups while

the robot performs bending actions. "At that time, no one in the world had tackled this challenge," Zhuang said.

Zhuang diligently studied various comprehensive technologies related to robots, such as machine programming, circuits, machine tools, and engineering design. He continuously updated his knowledge system and devoted himself to the research and development of robot projects.

"After a year of efforts, we finally developed a bending robot and introduced this

technology to the sheet metal industry nationwide, promoting the industry's transition towards intelligent manufacturing," Zhuang said. So far, this robot has been employed by more than 60 companies from over 10 provinces and municipalities, according to him.

While working on projects, Zhuang has also focused on talent training. He said that over the years, he has trained hundreds of robotics technicians, who are now working in various manufacturing

companies and operating various production line robots.

"As the industry continues to develop, technology is constantly advancing, and we must keep pace with the times and make continuous progress," Zhuang said. He hopes that while China works to make its industries intelligent, more people will take on the jobs of robotics technician and other emerging professions.

People's Daily

By Thandekile Moyo

Optics and reality - the Zimbabwean government's struggle to whitewash its image about 'unleashing violence on civilians'

THE contradictions in the behaviour of the government of Zimbabwe, in the lead-up to the Southern African Development Community summit on 17 August, as it goes all out to make itself look good, are indicative of a state struggling in the game of optics.

On the one hand, the state has spared no expense to give Harare a facelift before the summit. Roads are being refurbished, villas built, and hotels renovated. There is no doubt that come 17 August the city of Harare will, at least at face value, look good.

On the other hand, with the same passion and same attitude of "no expense spared", the government has launched a vicious crackdown on dissenters they suspect might be planning to hold protests during the summit. In its mind, the Zanu-PF government believes it has the power to silence the masses by intimidating them out of any plans to hold protests during the summit.

With international attention on Zimbabwe, any protest would destroy the image President Emmerson Mnangagwa is hoping to present to the world - that of a functioning country that has improved economically and politically under his leadership. He hopes to present a beautiful Harare (infra-structurally) and a peaceful Zimbabwe (politically).

In terms of what the city will look like physically, I believe the government will win the optics game. However, with regards to the political optics, the government seems to be inadvertently scoring a series of own goals.

Reputational damage: the cost of repression

Despite their efforts to beautify the city, the government's actions in the lead-up to the summit have severely damaged its reputation. In trying to silence dissenters and prevent protests, the government has aired its dirty linen by exposing its harsh methods, unwittingly bringing the international spotlight back on Zimbabwe.

On Wednesday, 1 August 2024, four individuals - Vusumuzi Moyo (artist), Namatai Kwekweza (human rights defender), Robson Chere (rural teachers trade union leader), and Samuel Gwenzi (Harare Ward 5 councillor) - were forcibly removed from a Fastjet plane at Robert Mugabe International Airport in Harare. They were headed to Victoria Falls for the 5th African Philanthropy Conference, but were ordered off the plane by people in civilian clothes. After being "disappeared" and held incommunicado for more than eight hours, they were handed over to the police.

Upon being produced, the story they told was one of un-

imaginable torture: waterboarding, beatings with iron bars, and psychological torment. Each of them was interrogated separately at the airport, with Moyo being questioned about his family and income, leaving him confused after hours of torture. Gwenzi faced threats of rape against his wife, and Chere was left so severely injured that his lawyer fears for his kidney function if he does not receive urgent medical attention.

Kwekweza, the only woman in the group, was interrogated by an all-male team and subjected to brutal treatment, including an iron bar being inserted into her mouth to cause maximum pain after a recent dental procedure. The African Initiative of Women Human Rights Defenders published a statement detailing how Kwekweza was also forced to watch part of Robson Chere's torture, and was made to falsely believe she had witnessed the murder of Chere after the torturers left him lying motionless in a pool of water.

The abduction, forced disappearance, and subsequent torture of these four individuals have only further damaged Zimbabwe's reputation and that of Mnangagwa's government. Instead of being on their best behaviour in the lead-up to the summit, Zanu-PF resorted to violence, revealing its belief that coercion is the only way it can maintain power. This violence has also shone a spotlight on the extent of State Capture in Zimbabwe.

Clear collusion between state institutions

Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights reported that the unidentified men who removed the four from the plane appeared to have badges from the Airports Company of Zimbabwe. This signals the deep entrenchment of Zanu-PF operatives within state institutions. After torturing the victims, these men handed them over to the police, demonstrating clear collusion between state institutions that are supposed to be independent.

This raises important questions about accountability: to what extent should individuals within state institutions be held liable for their role in human rights violations?

On 2 August, the four were brought before Magistrate Ruth Moyo and charged with disorderly conduct. Despite their injuries, including Chere's diagnosis of looming renal failure,



Zimbabwe's President Emmerson Mnangagwa

they remain in custody, with their bail hearing set for Monday, 4 August. Moyo is now facing accusations of enabling state-sponsored human rights violations.

The Mirror newspaper reported that Jessie Majome, who was appointed Chairperson of the Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission by President Mnangagwa earlier this year, defended magistrates' rights to make errors in their rulings and accused online users of cyberbullying magistrates who wrongfully convict political prisoners.

Civilians warned against 'civil disobedience'

For weeks, the state has preemptively issued threats through all forms of media - digital, print, social, radio, and

television - warning that any plans for protests will not be tolerated. From the day the summit was announced, the government seemed certain that Zimbabweans would plan to hold protests during the summit. It warned citizens against any plans for "civil disobedience" and "reputational damage".

The arrests of Moyo, Kwekweza, Chere and Gwenzi clearly reveal the extent of the government's paranoia as they were all interrogated about potential protest plans. They were severely tortured to try to extract information on these imagined protests. More than 21 activists across the country have since been arrested and questioned, with the crackdown still ongoing.

The government's paranoia begs the question: why is it so afraid? The an-

swer is clear to anyone familiar with the dictatorship in Zimbabwe. The government knows that many Zimbabweans do not view it as a legitimate authority. At the core of its fear is the open secret that it maintains power only through force and violence. The government also understands that Zimbabweans are afraid to protest, a fear rooted in the state's long history of coercion dating back to the 1980s.

What happened to the "Airport Four" is just one incident in a series of "acts the government commits as part of a widespread and systematic attack directed against Zimbabwe's civilian population". These acts constitute crimes against humanity. The government knows that the people do not do it because of these crimes, but it also knows that Zimbabweans feel powerless to resist due to the fear of violence.

The violence unleashed on civilians by the government in the build-up to the Southern African Development Community summit leaves a bitter taste in the mouth. Why must Zimbabweans suffer like this for a meeting of a commission that seems to hold no value for ordinary citizens? If the Southern African Development Community is comfortable coming to Zimbabwe to "celebrate" while we mourn our loved ones who have been brutalised, killed, imprisoned, and disappeared by the state, can they really claim to be an organisation of any value to us as repressed, unarmed citizens?

DM

Chang is finally convicted in Mozambique Hidden Debt scandal

FORMER Mozambican finance minister Manuel Chang was convicted in a Brooklyn, New York court on Thursday, 8 August 2024, for his role in the \$2-billion "hidden debts" fraud, bribery and money laundering scheme in his country in 2013 and 2014.

A federal jury found him guilty of one count of conspiracy to commit wire fraud and one count of conspiracy to commit money laundering. He faces a maximum penalty of 20 years in prison on each count. A federal district court judge will determine his sentence. It is not yet clear if he intends to appeal.

The jury reached its verdict after three weeks of trial and three days of deliberation.

"Today's verdict is an inspiring victory for justice and for the people of Mozambique, who were betrayed by a corrupt high-level public official whose greed and self-interest sold out one of the poorest countries in the world," said Breon Peace, US Attorney for the Eastern District of New York.

"Chang (pictured) now stands convicted of pocketing millions in bribes to approve projects that ultimately failed, laundering the money and leaving investors and Mozambique stuck with the bill."

Chang's conviction has also been hailed as a victory for South African justice - but also an indictment of the executive - as it was the climax of a protracted legal process which began with his arrest at Johannesburg's OR Tambo International Airport in December 2018 and wound through the South Af-

rican courts for almost five years.

The Gauteng Division of the High Court in Johannesburg twice overturned orders by two different South African justice ministers that he should be extradited to Mozambique. But advocates representing the Mozambican NGO Fórum de Monitoria do Orçamento (FMO) - Forum for Monitoring the Budget - argued that he would very likely escape justice in Mozambique, and so in November 2021 the Johannesburg court ordered him to be extradited to the US. This decision was later confirmed by the Supreme Court of Appeal and the Constitutional Court, and Chang was finally extradited to the US in July 2023.

"While serving as finance minister of Mozambique, Manuel Chang obtained \$7-million in bribe payments in exchange for signing guarantees to secure more than \$2-billion in loans," said principal deputy assistant attorney-general Nicole Argentieri, head of the US Justice Department's criminal division.

The loans were supposed to finance the purchase of tuna-fishing vessels and maritime patrol boats as well as maintenance facilities supplied by the Privinvest Group, a United Arab Emirates-based shipbuilding company, to three Mozambique state-owned companies, Proindicus, Ematum and MAM. But the New York court heard that Chang and his co-conspirators at Privinvest and in Credit Suisse and VTB banks, which loaned the US\$2-billion, diverted more than US\$200-million of the loans to pay bribes to Chang and



others.

"Not only did Chang's abuse of authority betray the trust of the Mozambican people, but his corrupt bargain also caused investors - including US investors - to suffer substantial losses on those loans," Argentieri said. Prosecutors said investors lost money because the loans from Credit Suisse and VTB bank were sold onto investors including some Americans. It was this defrauding of US citizens which decided the US on prosecuting Chang and seeking his extradition from South Africa.

"Chang now stands convicted of pocketing millions in bribes to approve projects that ultimately failed, laundering the money and leaving investors and Mozambique stuck with the bill," Argentieri said.

The New York court heard that of the US\$200-million in bribes, Privinvest paid Chang and other Mozambican government officials more than US\$150-million to ensure that the Mozambican state-owned companies Proindicus, Ematum and MAM entered into the loan arrangements and

that the government of Mozambique guaranteed those loans.

"The loans were subsequently sold in whole or in part to investors worldwide, including in the United States. In so doing, the participants defrauded these investors by misrepresenting how the loan proceeds would be used," the US Justice Department said. "Ultimately, Proindicus, Ematum and MAM each defaulted on their loans and proceeded to miss more than \$700-million in loan payments, causing substantial losses to investors."

The jury convicted Chang on one count of conspiracy to commit wire fraud and one count of conspiracy to commit money laundering. He faces a maximum penalty of 20 years in prison on each count. "A federal district court judge will determine any sentence after considering the US Sentencing Guidelines and other statutory factors," the US Justice Department said in a statement.

It also noted that in a separate case in October 2021, Credit Suisse AG and CSSEL (together, Credit Suisse) had admitted to defrauding US and international investors in the financing of an \$850-million loan for the Ematum project.

"CSSEL pleaded guilty to conspiracy to commit wire fraud and Credit Suisse AG entered into a deferred prosecution agreement with the criminal division's fraud section and money laundering and asset recovery section (MLARS), and the US Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of New York.

"As a part of the resolution, Credit Suisse paid approximately \$475-million in penalties, fines and disgorgement as part of coordinated resolutions with criminal and civil authorities in the United States and the United Kingdom."

The case acquired the moniker of "hidden debts" because the Mozambique government concealed the US\$2-billion in loans from parliament and international creditors, including the

IMF, which withdrew its support when it found out.

Nicole Fritz, former head of the Southern Africa Litigation Centre and of the Helen Suzman Foundation - which joined the litigation to have Chang extradited to the US - hailed his conviction.

"The US verdict can't stand as anything but an indictment of the SA justice system. It is true that SA ultimately extradited Mr Chang to the US, but this was only after much to-ing and fro-ing about whether to do so," she told Daily Maverick. "At different points, the SA government indicated that they would choose instead to extradite him to Mozambique where he would almost certainly have been guaranteed immunity. It was only the intervention of Mozambican civil society, and the solidarity of SA civil society, through the courts that ensured he was transferred to the US."

"It is worth noting that the period between his arrest in Johannesburg in 2018 and his extradition to the US in 2023 far, far exceeds the time in which it took the US to mount a jury trial and secure a conviction. "Whatever else that tells us, it should shame our criminal justice system for the endless delays we suffer in securing any relatively high-profile convictions."

"It should also be noted that while Chang's conviction is an important outcome in the fight against impunity for political leaders in southern Africa, his conviction and corresponding actions - such as that against Credit Suisse - do much more to set to rest US investors than the primary victims of this scheme - the people of Mozambique who are made that much more impecunious by having to shoulder the repayments of this criminal, fraudulently obtained loan."

"Again, it is to SA's discredit that we looked initially to stifle what little possibility of justice existed for the people of Mozambique by seeking to facilitate Chang's return to Mozambique. But that is entirely in keeping with the ethos of the Zuma administration and Michael Masutha, his minister of justice."

Mozambique NGO the Centre for Public Integrity also welcomed Chang's conviction, noting: "Chang becomes the first former member of the Mozambican government to be convicted abroad for corrupt practices while a member of the government."

DM

CAPITAL RADIO

RATIBA YA VIPINDI JUMATATU - JUMAPILI

MONDAY TIME PROGRAMME	TUESDAY TIME PROGRAMME	WEDNESDAY TIME PROGRAMME	THURSDAY TIME PROGRAMME	FRIDAY TIME PROGRAMME	SATURDAY TIME PROGRAMME	SUNDAY TIME PROGRAMME
05:00-09:00HRS MORNING JAM 09:00-13:00HRS LETE RAHA 13:00-14:00HRS DW-RADIO 14:00-16:00HRS CLUB 101 16:00-18:00HRS DALA DALA 18:00-18:10HRS HABARI 18:10-20:00HRS BOZOUK TIME 20:00-21:00HRS HALI HALISI 21:00-22:00HRS SPORTS 22:00-05:00HRS MUZIKI MCHAGANGANYIKO)	05:00-09:00HRS MORNING JAM 09:00-13:00HRS LETE RAHA 13:00-14:00HRS DW-RADIO 14:00-16:00HRS CLUB 101 16:00-18:00HRS DALA DALA 18:00-18:10HRS HABARI 18:10-21:00HRS BOZOUK TIME 21:00-22:00HRS SPORTS 22:00-05:00HRS MUZIKI MCHAGANGANYIKO)	05:00-09:00HRS MORNING JAM 09:00-13:00HRS LETE RAHA 13:00-14:00HRS DW-RADIO 14:00-16:00HRS CLUB 101 16:00-18:00HRS DALA DALA 18:00-18:10HRS HABARI 18:10-21:00HRS BOZOUK TIME 21:00-22:00HRS SPORTS 22:00-05:00HRS MUZIKI MCHAGANGANYIKO)	05:00-09:00HRS MORNING JAM 09:00-13:00HRS LETE RAHA 13:00-14:00HRS DW-RADIO 14:00-16:00HRS CLUB 101 16:00-18:00HRS DALA DALA 18:00-18:10HRS HABARI 18:10-20:00HRS BOZOUK TIME 20:00-21:00HRS SPORTS 21:00-23:00HRS MALUMBANO YA HOJA 22:00-05:00HRS MUZIKI MCHAGANGANYIKO)	05:00-09:00HRS MORNING JAM 09:00-13:00HRS LETE RAHA 13:00-14:00HRS DW-RADIO 14:00-16:00HRS CLUB 101 16:00-18:00HRS DALA DALA 18:00-18:10HRS HABARI 18:10-20:00HRS BOZOUK TIME 20:00-21:00HRS SPORTS 21:00-23:00HRS KIPIMA JOTO 22:00-05:00HRS MUZIKI MCHAGANGANYIKO)	07:30-10:00HRS DK 90 DUNIANI 10:00-11:00HRS KADOGOO 11:00-13:00HRS BONGO HITS 13:00-14:00HRS DW RADIO 14:00-16:00HRS ZAIDI YA UMJUAVYO 16:00-18:00HRS ALIYEUUMA 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

Coffee is adopted, view as strategic commodity under AU agenda 2063

By Special Correspondent

COFFEE has been adopted as a strategic commodity under the AU Agenda 2063. This was revealed at the announcement of the outcome of the G25 Kampala Declaration, at a press conference held on August 1, 2024, in Addis Ababa.

This declaration, unanimously adopted by the AU Heads of State, also included the Inter-African Coffee Organisation (IACO) as a designated specialized agency of the African Union.

"The 37th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union, held from February 18th to 20th, 2024, in Addis Ababa, unanimously adopted the Kampala Declaration to 'include coffee as a strategic commodity in the AU AGENDA 2063 and the inclusion of the Inter-African Coffee Organisation (IACO) as an AU designated specialized agency of the African Union,' a statement from IACO read.

Prior to the AU Summit in February 2024, the Heads of State and

Governments of the 25 African Coffee Producing Countries convened for the 2nd Session of the G25 African Coffee Summit in Kampala, Uganda, on August 8, 2023, under the theme "Transforming the African Coffee Sector through Value Addition."

The main objectives of the summit were to continue to marshal consensus on declaring coffee as a strategic commodity in harmony with the AU Agenda 2063; promote value addition and domestic consumption of coffee by educating people, particularly the youth, about coffee and its health benefits.

Expand regional coffee trade within the framework of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

The summit, hosted under the leadership of His Excellency, Yoweri Museveni, the President of Uganda, noted with concern that while Africa is the birthplace of both Arabica and Robusta coffee, the sector is still plagued by low productivity and production, inequality in the coffee value chain,

loss of economic benefits associated with low consumption (99% of coffee is exported in raw form), and the impending threats of climate change.

Also, notable significance was the commitment expressed by the G25 African Heads of State to support the following initiatives:

Conduct research in coffee value addition to enable innovation and development of new products, generate new knowledge on best practices, improved technologies

and studies on varieties resilient to harsher climatic conditions, pests and diseases.

Investment in value addition of coffee and its products and promote domestic coffee consumption. Investment in vocational training in coffee for the youth and women for job creation.

Enhance access to finance for coffee value addition projects through the AU/AfCFTA framework and institutions, including the African Development Bank, African Ex-

port-Import Bank (Afreximbank), and African Coffee Facility Fund.

The decision to adopt coffee as a strategic anchor commodity in the AU Agenda 2063 and the inclusion of the Inter-African Coffee Organisation (IACO) as an AU designated specialized agency of the African Union is a historic milestone for the African coffee sector and a positive recognition of the important role coffee plays in the socio-economic transformation of the continent.

It is also an acknowledgment that it is only by working as a continent shall Africa earn the leverage to overcome the challenges associated with value addition.

"The Inter-African Coffee Organisation (IACO) is honored to be designated as the AU Specialized Agency and pledges to support and diligently execute the vision of transforming the African coffee sector through value addition," IACO noted.



Small farmers feeling climate change heat find little support from the state

KARACHI

THE over 20 million residents of Pakistan's port city of Karachi, in Sindh province in particular, have been experiencing brutal heat since May. But they are not the only ones bearing the brunt of high temperatures and humidity.

Up to 15,000 cattle died due to scorching heat mixed with high humidity which Shakir Umar Gujjar, president of the Cattle and Dairy Farmers Association, Pakistan, said was "no joke".

Mubashir Abbas, owner of 170 heads, lost eight cows and five buffaloes to the "extreme heat" in the last week of June, which translates to a loss of Rs 5.5 million (USD 19,800) for him.

"Three more are running high fever and I will have to sell them to cut my losses," he told IPS over phone from Bhains Colony, in Karachi's Landhi district. "I will fetch no more than Rs 40,000 (USD 143) a piece, when the market rate for each healthy one is valued between Rs 1.5 and 2 million (USD 5,300-7,000)," he estimated. Every now and then, in the last 23 years, he would lose a few to disease, but he had never "seen a healthy animal dying from heat."

Livestock, the largest sub-sector in agriculture, contributed 60.84 percent to agriculture and 14.63 percent to the country's GDP during 2023-2024, according to the Pakistan Economic Survey. More than eight million rural families are engaged in livestock production, accounting for 35-40 percent of their total income.

"From June 23 to 30, Karachi experienced a heatwave with temperatures ranging between 40 and 42°C. The 'feel-like' temperature went up to 54°C due to high humidity," said Dr. Sardar Sarfaraz, chief meteorologist at the Pakistan Meteorological Department.

Dr. Nazeer Hussain Kalhoro, director general at the government's Sindh Institute of Animal Health in the Livestock and Fisheries Department in Karachi, attributed extreme heat to the death of livestock, especially exotic and crossed breeds.

The temperature was still lower than the deadly 2015 heatwave temperature of 44.8°C that claimed over 2,000 human lives when the feel-like heat index exceeded 60°C, said Sarfaraz. "A much bigger number of animals died then, and many young animals had to be slaughtered," said Gujjar.

The heat had adversely affected the milk production of the over



The extreme heat adversely affected the milk production of the over 800,000 cattle in Karachi.

800,000 cattle in Karachi, said Gujjar. "When an animal is in stress and discomfort, due to extreme heat, its intake of regular amount of fodder decreases, which can result in decrease in milk production," said Kalhoro.

"I was getting between 1,400 and 1,480 kg in a day; it is not more than 960 kg now. I lose 0.11 million rupees (USD 400) daily," said Abbas.

The lack of engagement with the farmer by the government was the reason. Gujjar said the communication gap between the ministry of national food security and research at the federal level and the livestock departments at the provincial departments meant the uneducated farmer was on his own.

"The biggest tragedy is that our farmer is not educated and also unaware of how to prepare or protect the animal from the vagaries of climate," said Gujjar, adding: "They do their own traditional treatment of their animals, which results in even more avoidable deaths."

Similar is the plight of small farmers who remain in the eye of the climate storm. "They are continuously in a reactive mode," said Mahmood Nawaz Shah, president of a farmers' group, the Sindh Abadgar Board, with "government policies not conducive to them".

Giving examples, Shah said the minimum price of cotton was fixed and notified at Rs 8,500/kg (USD 30) but growers received Rs 5,200/kg (USD 18); a 50-kilo bag of urea increased from Rs 1,700 to Rs 4,600 (USD 6 to 16) in just three years; and the artificial shortage for the same last year meant the farmer had to pay Rs 5,500 for the same bag from the black market.

"We had recommended to the government to develop a climate endowment fund and compensate small farmers by involving insurance companies as soon as extreme events lead to crop and livestock losses," said Shah.

Both the farmers, Gujjar and Shah, have hit the nail on the head on why Pakistan, one of the most vulnerable to climate crises, is unable to manage it effectively. The disconnect and lack of coordination between different federal and their related

provincial government bodies is found across the spectrum and is highlighted in the 2024 Climate Change Performance Index (CCPI) as a major reason that hampered policy implementation, placing Pakistan on the 30th position among 63 countries and the EU, which collectively account for over 90 percent of global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. "Improved cooperation between different levels of government would be a step in the right direction," it concluded.

Similarly, the 2024 Environmental Performance Index that assesses the progress of effectiveness of 180 countries in mitigating climate change, relying on historical greenhouse gas emissions data, put Pakistan three rungs down at 179th rank this year from the 176th position it held in 2022.

Both the CCPI and the EPI are a clear giveaway of government's nonchalance. The latter index has especially pointed to areas like air pollution, wastewater treatment, protected areas management and climate mitigation.

"The country is slipping on most environmental indicators," agreed former climate change minister, Malik Amin Aslam, pointing to the weak air pollution control measures, non-adherence to the electric vehicles transition and failure to promote renewables. From being a country championing the global green cause in 2022 to now "ignominiously slipping down the environmental performance ladder" should certainly raise alarm bells for our current green policy makers, warned Aslam.

The 2022 floods, which should have acted as a wake-up call for the government, he said, failed to move the government towards preparedness and improving the health of the environment.

Maha Qasim, CEO of Zero-Point Partners, an environmental management and consulting firm, said: "No significant effort had been made in building climate-resilient infrastructure like roads, drainage systems and flood management facilities like levees or reservoirs."

Putting things in perspective, Qasim said that in 2021, only around 14% of Pakistan's energy mix was based on coal, while it figured 45 percent and

63 percent in India's and Estonia's energy mix. But in the last two years, Pakistan's overall GHG emissions as well as CO2 have declined, due to "Pakistan's overall performance capita emissions from fossil fuels and industry have declined due to stagnant economic growth," she said.

Thus, Pakistan is well within its carbon budget and has met its Nationally Determined Contribution commitments to the UNFCCC.

The updated NDCs of 2021 have pledged to reduce emissions by 50%, shifting to renewable energy by 60 percent and 30 percent to electric vehicles by 2030, and a complete ban on importing coal.

Poor transport fuel regulations, old and inefficient vehicles on the road, mass cutting down of trees to make way for rapid urbanization, burning of agricultural residue and poor solid waste management have also been mentioned for Pakistan's poor score.

Aslam, however, said the index failed to "register or recognize" Pakistan's efforts on reforestation—the Billion Tree Tsunami Afforestation Project in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, followed by 10 Billion Tree Tsunami Programme across the country. "The EPI ranking can certainly enhance its acceptability and credibility by improving these areas," he said.

Sobia Kapadia, a humanitarian aid practitioner, added factors like "weak governance, turning to fire-fighting and ad-hoc measures" whenever a climate crisis arises, thereby destroying the symbiosis.

"Heat, rain and floods are all connected to the core issue of human-induced development; but blaming heat and humidity on climate change is like blaming the naughtiest child," said Kapadia, citing resorts being constructed in the mountains by cutting trees.

In yet another recent report that gives insights to investors and helps governments in setting carbon market-friendly policies, Pakistan comes 39th out of 40 countries.

Khalid Waleed, an energy economics expert

at the Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI), was quoted by media saying "for the first time in budget history, the government has tagged projects worth Rs53 billion under climate change adaptation and Rs225 billion under climate change mitigation," referring to the budget presented earlier this month. However, he added that the budget was not climate change project-specific but had been tagged for their climate benefits.

Zia ul Islam finds the budget allocation "rather tricky" to understand as it not only indicates development projects from the Ministry of Planning Development & Special Initiatives, but foreign-funded projects and projects under various ministries and provinces.

Environmental and public policy analyst Dawar Butt, comparing the country's minuscule environmental spending to India and Bangladesh, said climate did not seem to be a priority. He further added that the climate change allocation has been "cut down by one billion rupees from what finally got approved in this year's budget."

But it is not just how the government is handling climate change. Referring to a climate risk awareness survey conducted by GIZ Pakistan, Qasim highlighted that while many organizations are beginning to acknowledge the impact of climate change on their business models, their approach towards dealing with it was "incomplete and fragmented with a focus on climate mitigation" to meet external requirements of clients or regulators rather than on long-term business sustainability.

Due to the funding fatigue, Zia ul Islam suggested the "begging attitude" may be replaced by capacity building of concerned authorities, bringing in necessary improvements in the legal instruments and effective implementation.

If Pakistan can somehow link smooth governance with climate finance and showcase to the world that it can fund its own climate solutions, it will give local and international companies the confidence to invest in the country. This year's Financing Climate Action report by Transparency International states Pakistan has a huge potential to "dollarize climate adaptive and mitigation projects" provided climate governance is improved.

Flood insurance initiatives for farmers, for example, said Qasim, at very low markup rates, have the potential to be "scaled up across the country to increase flood resilience."

China's opening up brings broad opportunities for multinational corporations

By Li Xinyi, Li Yan, Wang Hailin

At the GE HealthCare Beijing Imaging Equipment Manufacturing Base, located at No. 1 Yongchang North Road in Beijing Economic and Technological Development Area, production lines were humming as medical devices were assembled one after another.

Two out of every three CT scanners sold globally by GE HealthCare are produced here, and products manufactured at the base are sold to over 100 countries and regions worldwide.

"When we entered Beijing Economic and Technological Development Area 33 years ago, this place was mostly farmland and livestock farms. From the beginning, we firmly believed that we could achieve long-term growth in the Chinese market. Today, this has become GE HealthCare's largest imaging equipment production base globally. This success came from China's continuously improving business environment, stable and smooth industrial and supply chains, and steadily increasing innovation capabilities," said Zhang Yihao, vice president of GE HealthCare and president and CEO of GE HealthCare China, during an interview with People's Daily.

In 1991, GE HealthCare established GE Hangwei Medical Systems, Co., Ltd. in China. It was GE HealthCare's first joint venture in China and one of the earliest companies to settle in the Beijing Economic and Technological Development Area.

Over the past 30-plus years, the company has achieved rapid development there. Currently, the GE HealthCare Beijing Imaging Equipment Manufacturing Base is able to produce CT scanners ranging from 16-slice to 256-slice, molecular imaging equipment, surgical systems, angiography systems, bone densitometers, nuclear medicine PET/CT equipment, as well as components such as detectors and X-ray tubes. Its product design and manufacturing processes for CT equipment components are leading globally.

Now, GE HealthCare has six major production bases and seven factories located in Beijing, Shanghai, Wuxi, Tianjin, Chengdu, and Shenzhen. The continuous improvement in GE HealthCare's localized production in the Chinese market is inseparable from China's stable and smooth industrial and supply chains.

It is learned that GE HealthCare has over 1,000 suppliers in China, including more than 160 core suppliers. Zhang said that China is working to optimize its economic structure, supporting cooperation between Chinese and foreign enterprises, accelerating the implementation of advanced digital technologies, products, and solutions. This contributes to building a global industrial and supply chain system that is secure, stable, smooth, efficient, open, inclusive and mutually beneficial.

In recent years, Beijing Economic and Technological Development Area has built a 100-billion-yuan (\$13.8 billion)-scale biological technology and health industry cluster, attracting over 4,200 biotech and health companies. Cooperation between upstream and downstream sectors of the industrial and supply chains has been further strengthened.

On an orthopedic surgical equipment production line at the GE HealthCare Beijing Imaging Equipment Manufacturing Base, automated testing robots responsible for equipment final testing were simultaneously calibrating and testing six CT devices. Human-machine collaborative testing robots and AI-based automatic testing systems for surgical equipment worked closely together to complete position corrections and radiation dose measurements at nine test points.



A technician of GE HealthCare works in a laboratory. (Photo provided by GE HealthCare)

This is the world's first fully automated "testing tunnel," developed by GE HealthCare's Chinese team. It requires only 15 workers to produce over 2,000 sets of products annually, with one surgical system roll-

ing off the line every 50 minutes on average. Both product quality and work efficiency have been greatly improved.

Currently, GE HealthCare has about 1,800 R&D personnel in China, with over 1,000

R&D staff and more than 160 R&D laboratories in Beijing alone. Over the past decade, the company's Chinese team has developed and launched over 120 products.

Among these, the CT scanner equipped with the "Skeye" digital solution based on deep learning and AI technologies has become the "star product" of GE HealthCare. Of the Class III medical device licenses approved for the company in China, 77 percent of the product technologies were developed by the Chinese team and registered in China.

"In recent years, China has implemented an innovation-driven development strategy, rapidly advancing its technological capabilities. The abundant innovative elements have helped us gain a competitive edge in the global market," Zhang stated.

He added that China is accelerating the development of new quality productive forces and actively fostering emerging and future industries. "We look forward to deepening cooperation with our Chinese partners to further promote development in relevant fields."

Zhang emphasized that GE HealthCare has been both a witness to and beneficiary of China's continuous expansion of opening up. "As China's door opens wider, and the level of openness continues to rise, it will undoubtedly bring broader development opportunities for multinational companies and provide stronger momentum for global economic recovery and growth." *People's Daily*



New products of GE HealthCare are exhibited at the sixth China International Import Expo. (Photo provided by GE HealthCare)

RADIO One RATIBA YA VIPINDI JUMATATU - JUMAPILI

MONDAY TIME PROGRAMME	TUESDAY TIME PROGRAMME	WEDNESDAY TIME PROGRAMME	THURSDAY TIME PROGRAMME	FRIDAY TIME PROGRAMME	SATURDAY TIME PROGRAMME	SUNDAY TIME PROGRAMME
05.00 AM HALI YA HEWA / KUMEPAMBAZUKA I 06.00 AM AMKA NA BBC 06.30 AM NIPASHE 06.50 AM MATANGAZO 07.00 AM NEWS BULLETIN 07.10 AM MATANGAZO 07.15 AM TAARIFA ZA BARABARANI 07.25 AM UDONDOZI WA MAGAZETI 07.40 AM KUMEPAMBAZUKA II 08.00 AM HABARI NYEPESI 08.10 AM KUMEPAMBAZUKA III 09.00 AM HABARI ZA BIASHARA 09.10 AM MATANGAZO 09.20 AM BRAND TALK 10.00 AM NEWS BRIEF 10.03 AM DEATH ANNOUNCEMENTS 10.10 AM YALIYOMO YAMO 13.00 HRS NEWS BULLETIN 13.10 HRS DEATH ANNOUNCEMENTS 13.30 HRS DJ SHOW 16.00 HRS NEWS BRIEF 16.03 HRS DEATH ANNOUNCEMENTS 16.30 HRS HOJA YA LEO 18.30 HRS DIRA YA DUNIA BBC 19.30 HRS SPOTI LEO 20.00 HRS NEWS BULLETIN 20.10 HRS RADIO ONE DOCTOR 21.00 HRS NEWS BRIEF 21.05 HRS DAKIKA 45 22.00 HRS NEWS BULLETIN (24 HRS) 22.15 HRS AFRO TIZI 23.00 HRS NEWS BRIEF 23.03 HRS AFRO TIZI 01.00-05.00HRS MUZIKI (MCHANGANYIKO)	05.00 AM HALI YA HEWA / KUMEPAMBAZUKA I 06.00 AM AMKA NA BBC 06.30 AM NIPASHE 06.50 AM MATANGAZO 07.00 AM NEWS BULLETIN 07.10 AM MATANGAZO 07.15 AM TAARIFA ZA 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Radio One

Factors obstructing cooperative unions' economic progress -11

By Francis Kajubi

A bunch of cooperative unions got adverse audit opinions in the 2022/23 financial year owing to unprofessional financial reporting of auctioned agro products alongside poor internal auditing of the cooperatives' assets actual value.

This journalist has established that over 60 percent of cooperative unions in the country have been hiring temporary internal auditors who lack professional skills in drafting financial statements.

However, there are notable weaknesses in relation to assets auditing thus leading the collective schemes into adverse, disclaimer and qualified audit opinions by the apex state owned auditing firm-Cooperative Audit and Supervision Corporation (COASCO).

Jeremiah Mugeta, COASCO Acting Director General said in a recent interview that as of June 30, 2023, the corporation audited 3,911 unions, an equivalent of 78.22 percent of the set target of auditing 5,000 unions in the 2022/23 financial year.

Of the audited cooperative unions, he said, 479 unions (12.25 percent) received qualified opinions, 2,475 unions (63.28 percent) received adverse opinions, 830 unions (21.22 percent) received disclaimer opinions and 127 unions (3.25 percent) received unjust opinions.

Mugeta was responding to this journalist's questions while quoting the au-

dit report on cooperatives for the financial year 2022/23 as he remarked that unions were audited in different groups namely: the Tanzania Federation of Cooperatives (TFC), Regional Cooperative Unions, Savings and Credit Cooperative Societies (SACCOS), Agricultural Marketing Cooperative Societies (AMCOS), Joint Enterprises and other unions in the economic sectors of mining, beekeeping, fishing and vegetable.

He asserted that the audit report shows that qualified opinions have increased from 339 in 2021/22 to 479 in 2022/23. Adverse opinions have increased from 2,393 in 2021/22 to 2,475 in 2022/23.

According to Mugeta, disclaimer opinions have decreased from 1,198 in 2021/22 to 830 in 2022/23 while unjust opinions have decreased from 2,075 in 2021/22 to 127 in 2022/23.

"The results generally show that the state of performance in Cooperatives has begun to improve but there are still weaknesses in the internal auditing system;

The weakness is seen in the recording of transactions, the maintenance of financial records as well as the preparation of financial statements according to accepted accounting standards," said Mugeta.

He said that as for the Savings and Credit Cooperative Societies (SACCOS), the results show that there are improvements with regard to strengthening of the unions as qualified opinions increased from 249 in 2021/22 to 310

opinions in 2022/23.

Adverse opinions have decreased from 711 in 2021/22 to 594 in 2022/23. Disclaimer opinions have also decreased from 264 in 2021/22 to 159 in 2022/23 and unjust opinions decreased from 625 in 2021/22 to 33 in 2022/23.

"In general, SACCOS auditing results show that the performance has improved in the financial year 2022/23 compared to the preceding financial year of 2021/22," said Mugeta.

Mugeta recommends that a way forward should be for stakeholders within the cooperative unions to take urgent initiatives by initiating programs that equip cooperative auditors and managers with required professional skills of drafting financial statements.

This journalist has established that poor preparation of financial statements and auditing reports by cooperatives internal auditors are contrary to Section 55 (2) of the Cooperative Societies Act No. 6 of 2013 which states: 'Every registered society shall keep proper accounts and other records in relation thereto and shall within three months prepare in respect of every financial year a statement of accounts in a form which conforms to the best accounting standards.'

The weaknesses are also contrary to Section 23 (1) of the Cooperative Societies Regulations 2015 which state: A cooperative society shall prepare and maintain at its registered office or at any other place in Tanzania as designated by its board the financial or accounting records, membership register setting out their names and addresses, the number of any membership shares owned and the amount of any loans among other aspects.

In a follow-up to establish what initiatives are cooperatives stakeholders observing in addressing the highlighted challenges, this journalist spoke to the Tanzania Federation of Cooper-

atives (TFC) chief who shared insights on the initiatives that the apex body is administering?

Florian Haule, TFC Executive Secretary, in his response, said the federation had since January 2022 enrolled sensitization and capacity building workshops to cooperative auditors and managers through its sensitization programme dubbed 'Cooperatives Financial Management Transformation-CFMT-P' which is being implemented in phases.

"We started with the Morogoro region where a huge number of cooperatives got adverse and disclaimer audit opinions. We are training cooperative auditors and managers on how to draft professional financial statements. Tabora came next where the programme is ongoing," said Haule.

According to him, other regions to be covered in the programme are Shinyanga, Simiyu, Geita, Kilimanjaro, Singida, Mbeya, Pwani and Mara. He said the reason behind selecting these regions as the programme's prioritized areas is aligned with their poor auditing performance as indicated in the COASCO report.

Dr Benson Ndiege, Registrar and Chief Executive Tanzania Cooperative Development Commission (TCDC) said that his office has been closely coordinating the resolving of all the arising challenges in collaboration with stakeholders from the private sector.

Agriculture Minister Hussein Bashe admitted that there are weaknesses for cooperatives in preparing financial statements and internal auditing reports of cooperatives' assets.

"When I was appointed as a minister for this ministry, I found that 95 percent of the cooperatives were in a bad situation of preparing financial statements;

It was a big challenge that I chose to start working on and now the situation has started to im-

prove," said Bashe.

He said that immediately after he was appointed; he went on instructing the TCDC to start training 57 cooperative union leaders on ethics, corruption, and mental health from the regions of Tabora, Katavi, Rukwa, Mbeya and Njombe.

According to Bashe, in strengthening the capacity of leaders and executives to manage cooperative unions, he instructed TCDC to collaborate with TFC, SCCULT, COASCO and MoCU to provide training on preparing accounting books and register 40,253 cooperative members, 5,553 cooperative leaders and 7,517 cooperative executives on the Cooperative Societies Database Management System.

He said that as of April, 2024, TCDC conducted a leadership audit of all AMCOS and found that 65 percent of executives did not have the qualifications to lead in their positions.

As a result, the Commission directed the relevant cooperatives to hire qualified executives.

"Through TCDC, the ministry has instructed the AMCOS to hire qualified leaders, and unqualified union leaders, including chief accountants who do not hold CPA to go back to universities within the period of three years as of December 2026," said Bashe.

The minister said that in resolving the challenge, TCDC prepared three types of standard operating guidelines namely: Human resource management guidelines based on employment management procedures, Disciplinary guidelines and Termination guidelines based on operational requirements.

"TCDC has facilitated the recruitment of chief executive officers for three cooperative unions namely Nyanza Cooperative Union, Shinyanga Region Cooperative Union and Simiyu Cooperative Union to strengthen the operational capacity of the unions. The officers have been recruited to the unions through the secondment procedure," said Bashe.



Health sector's budget out of tune with the Abuja Declaration

By Correspondent Daniel Semberya

THE government has been urged to consider reasonable increments in the health sector budget so as to align with the Health Sector Strategic Plan-V Cost-effective Strategic Framework and the Abuja Declaration.

Addressing participants of the Policy Forum's Breakfast Debate: Post National Budget 2024/2025 held in Dar es Salaam earlier this week dubbed: 'Examining the credibility equation of the health sector', Happiness Maruchu, Consultant for Gender and Social Inclusion at the Tanzania Gender Networking Programme (TGNP), said that although there are some progresses in the health sector, challenges exist especially when it comes to direct health service provision to the society.

"We recommend that consideration should be made in cutting down huge budgets for acquisition of vehicles such as the 190bn/- allocated by the President's Office-Regional Administration and Local Government (PORALG) in the 2024/25 budget," she said.

She proposed downsizing the external dependency on financing critical health sector programmes at the LGA level to ensure certainty and sustainability in execution.

Exploration of additional revenue streams such as taxes on cigarettes, gambling, lotteries, and football to increase funds for health insurance and other critical health services is of great importance.

She further recommended that the government should consider blocking a certain percentage of the national budget to finance universal health to speed up the implementation of Universal Health Coverage (UHC) program considering there are still many households who cannot afford to enroll in the current schemes due to their economic situation.

Maruchu was of the view that for that matter the government budgets among others need to prioritize and invest more in health infrastructure and service delivery for remote areas, increase the number of human resources for primary healthcare facilities, and health education to the population.



Happiness Maruchu, TGNP's consultant for gender and social inclusion, speaks at a dialogue held earlier this week in Dar es Salaam. Photo: Daniel Semberya

According to her, the approved health sector budget for the financial year 2024/25 stands at 2.54trn/-, reflecting a modest 6 percent increase from the previous year's allocation of 2.4trn/-.

She said that the current allocation of 2.5trn/- is less than a quarter of the projected requirement by Health Sector Strategic Plan-V Cost Framework (2021/22-2025/26).

"The share of the health sector budget relative to the national budget has remained below 6 percent for four consecutive years, from 2021/22 to 2024/25. In the current fiscal year, the health sector's share is 5.1 percent, down from 5.4 percent in 2023/24," said Maruchu.

The rate is considerably lower than the 15 percent target recommended by the Abuja Declaration for African Union States.

This financing trend means that the government health per capita spending continues to decline significantly given that the country's population is growing by 3.2 percent annually.

The most recent available data shows that health per capita spending decreased from US\$41 in 2018 to USD39 in 2020 (WHO).

Similarly, as a percentage of gross domestic products (GDP), health spending has been declining, dropping from 4.16 percent to 3.75 percent between 2018 and 2020, against the WHO benchmark of 6 percent.

Out of pocket health expenditure is significantly rising considering rising cost of healthcare services which mostly impacts poor households and women especially those in the informal sector.

The financing block is still a major challenge. The sector is given insufficient funds for implementation of the health sector strategic plan (HSSP V) objectives.

Interventions such as those under rural water supply and sanitation program, reproductive, maternal, newborn, child and adolescent health (RMNCAH), nutrition, HIV, gender-based violence (GBV) response and communicable and non-communicable diseases are externally financed which is a threat to sustainability and ownership.

On a wider picture, the budget for the sector is dependent on external sources to approximately 40 percent. For example, in 2024/25 a total of 416.25bn/- (61pc) of the ministry development budget is expected to be sourced

from domestic revenues and 263.31bn/- (39 percent) will be sourced from foreign source compared to 430.29bn/- (69 percent) and 302.06bn/- (31 percent) respectively indicated in the 2023/24.

Funds allocated for the implementation of the Universal Health Insurance Act no.13 are significantly small.

Delayed budget disbursement is still a major concern. For example, the Ministry of Health had only received an average of 68pc of the total budget which was 1,24trn/- by the end of March 2024, instead of at least 75 percent while the disbursement for the development budget 732.36bn/- was only 59 percent as of March 2024.

For her part, Dr Kuduishie Kisowile commended the government for constructing many modern health facilities and infrastructures across the country; however, she said that was not enough because quality of health services go beyond sending equipment but rather qualified health personnel/ doctors.

"Human resources are small which do not correlate with the established infrastructures across the country, for there is a deficit of 64 percent of health personnel. We have over 30,000 nurses and

doctors roaming about in the streets," said Sr Kisowile.

She said there are over 4000 health volunteers in referral hospitals and 700000 health volunteers in health centers, saying it is high time for the government to employ them.

Japhet Makongo, a participant, said that globally health financing has never been enough; however, he suggested the government to disburse the allocated budget to priority areas and should disburse it timely.

"We need to increase our health services from output to outcome. And it should improve and cement the human resource personally," he said.

Beatrice Siame, another participant concurred with other contributors by urging the government to invest heavily on healthy human capital. She was of the view that improving the Health Sector is one of the priorities of the Tanzania development vision 2025 (TDV 2025).

The development vision targets at achieving several goals in the health sector by 2025 which include access to quality primary health care for all, access to quality reproductive health services for all individuals of appropriate ages, among many others.

SEC crusading for capital market growth

LAGOS

IN line with President Bola Tinubu's Renewed Hope Agenda, the Director General of the Securities and Exchange Commission, Dr. Emomotimi Agama, is set to outline the Commission's vision for the Nigerian capital market at the Second Capital Market Committee (CMO) meeting.

A statement by the Commission said the meeting which is taking place next

week aims to develop strategies for enhancing the capital market's role in driving economic growth and development through initiatives that attract investments, improve market efficiency, and safeguard investor interests.

According to the SEC, "The meeting will bring together key stakeholders in the Nigerian capital market to discuss the industry's current landscape, regulatory framework, and strategies for future growth. Participants

will exchange ideas and reaffirm their commitment to fostering a robust investment climate characterized by innovation, sustainability, and investor protection.

"We need to create an enabling environment for the capital market to thrive and contribute meaningfully to the country's economic development."

SEC stated that the meeting will focus on critical issues affecting the market and ensure that concerns are



thoroughly addressed.

"The committee will review reports from technical committees, market infrastructures, and industry observers, and discuss emerging market trends".

"We want to ensure that all stakeholders are on the same page and working towards a common goal", it added. The Capital Market Committee (CMC) is an industry-wide body comprising the SEC, capital market operators, trade groups, and other stakeholders.

The Commission explained that "the CMC serves as a platform for dialogue, facilitates the exchange of ideas, addresses key issues impacting market growth and organization, and collaborates on shaping the market's future."

SEC emphasized the importance of collaboration and cooperation among stakeholders. "We need to work together to build a robust investment climate characterized by innovation, sustainability, and investor protection"

The meeting will draw CEOs from all registered capital market firms, including broker/dealers, investment advisers, custodians, fund/portfolio managers, and more.

RSE's Rwabukumba highlights plans to attract more listings

KIGALI

THE Rwanda Stock Exchange (RSE) has seen increased activity in the first half of 2024 both in equities and fixed markets.

A local outlet held an interview with Pierre-Célestin Rwabukumba, the company's Chief Executive Officer, on the performance of the bourse, as well as his priorities as the President of the African Securities Exchanges Association (ASEA).

How has the bourse performed in the first half of 2024?

We have had a good run so far. We have seen an increment in our trading activity for both equities and bonds. The equities market turnover between January and June this year increased to Rwf58.6 billion from Rwf2.1 billion in the same period last year.

The indices have slightly gone up. Between January and May 2024, the All Rwanda Share Index (ALSI) - which measures performance of all listed companies - went up by 1 per cent, while the Rwanda Share Index (RSI) - which measures performance of domestic listed firms - went up by 4 per cent.

However, we have seen a reduction in issuances in the first half of this year, which was expected, because the government is trying to contain the borrowing in the market.

On the other hand, we have seen renewed activity and interest from corporate companies who have applied to list and raise money in the market.

What has been the investor sentiment towards the market?

Investor sentiment can be gauged by reviewing the trading activity, which has increased in our market, pointing to positive investor sentiment.

We are seeing a lot more trading in equities. I remember a time when the market could go for a month or two without any transactions. But today, we trade daily.

However, we cannot ignore the fact that our market is not so liquid, especially on the equities side. The stock market has ten companies, five of them local, so the float is not that big.

What are some of the initiatives in place to attract more investors to the stock market?

We are working on providing a variety of new products in the market that will appeal to different investors.

We will introduce the Real Estate Investment Trusts (REITs) that will allow investors to earn income from real estate without having to buy, manage or finance properties themselves.

We are also looking to introduce the Exchange-traded funds (ETFs), a collective investment vehicle where investors can earn interest from the fund.



Rwanda Stock Exchange CEO Pierre-Célestin Rwabukumba

Finally, we are working to provide a framework that will allow people to issue Sukuk or Sharia compliant products. All these new product offerings, which will be launched soon, will make our market more attractive to investors.

Apart from the new products, we are appealing to policy makers to push for privatisation and encourage more companies to come to the market or issue corporate bonds. This will definitely grow the stock market.

Since the inception of the Investment Clinic, what has been the progress so far?

We had created a market segment for small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) in 2018, but we quickly realised that most of these small companies were not investor ready. That is why we came up with the Investment Clinic in 2020 to help prepare SMEs and ensure that they could talk to investors.

We attracted 45 companies in the first cohort. 12 out of the 45 companies made it

to the next phase and only 3 made it to the profiling stage.

One of the three companies has already raised money through a corporate bond, another has applied for listing by introduction, and the third company is preparing their documents so they can raise funding in the next few months.

The three profile-listed companies - which are listed on the RSE SME special board - are from the energy, agro processing, and export sectors.

From the second cohort, which attracted 10 companies, one has already applied for a bond issuance. Getting the SMEs investor-ready has not been easy, but we are making progress and seeing tangible results.

How are you leveraging technology to ease market access?

Currently, the stock market is not fully automated, but we are working on it. Unfortunately, there has been a delay because we are part of the wider East Af-

rican Community Capital Markets Infrastructure project, which is a technology platform to link the capital markets of the East African Partner States.

That has slowed down the process, but now the project is back on track and soon the market will be automated. That will allow direct market access for investors in the diaspora as well as local investors.

We are also looking at the use of phones, USSD codes and other technologies that will enable people to access the market from remote places without having to call or walk to a brokerage firm for trading.

What was the rationale behind the E-SEA's proposal to issue capital market instruments denominated in stable currencies?

This proposal, from the East African Stock Exchanges Association (EASEA), seeks to cushion investors, mostly foreign investors, from exposure to local currency risks because they have been raising concerns about the exchange rate risks.

So, the idea is to allow companies to raise capital from the capital markets by issuing bonds dominated in hard currency; the dollar in particular. This will allow cheaper capital to flow in our countries and also allow more savings from the diaspora into our economies.

Central Banks in the region have been hesitant about this idea, but they are slowly starting to come on board. The proposal cannot take off without their collective approval.

What are your priorities as the President of the African Securities Exchanges Association (ASEA)?

My first priority is to link our African markets. ASEA's flagship project called the African Exchanges Linkage Project (AELP) aims to facilitate cross-border trading of securities in Africa.

We target to onboard 15 stock exchanges on the continent and so far, we have ten exchanges who have joined the project, with Uganda Securities Exchange as the newest entrant.

The linkage of these exchanges will enable people to trade across markets and raise money on the continent while serving the bigger purpose of having integrated African markets that are able to talk to each other.

At the same time, in the spirit of supporting the African Continental Free Trade Area, ASEA has a Memorandum of Understanding with the Pan African Payment and Settlement System (PAPSS) that will promote cross border payments of capital markets infrastructure in Africa.

We are also forging strategic alliances. For example, my first assignment as ASEA president was to sign with the Arab Federation of Capital Markets.

This alliance will link African and Arab capital markets and that is why we are also creating the Sharia Compliant products.

Shenzhen to issue new offshore bonds in HK

HONG KONG

THE Shenzhen municipal government in Guangdong province will issue offshore renminbi-denominated bonds in Hong Kong for the fourth time since 2021, further bolstering Hong Kong-Shenzhen financial collaboration by encouraging more mainland governments and corporate issuers to tap Hong Kong's fund-raising platform for channelling capital to promote regional development.

The bond issuance amount will be up to 7 billion yuan (\$980 million), with maturities of two years, three years, five years and 10 years, with the bulk being social responsibility bonds, low-carbon city-themed green bonds and sustainable development bonds.

Among them, the 10-year tranche is the first time a mainland municipal government will issue outside of the Chinese mainland. It is also the first time that Shenzhen will issue green bonds themed around promoting a low-carbon city.

"The bond issuance move enriches the product types of offshore yuan-denominated financial products and the vitality of the yuan-denominated bond market in Hong Kong, bolstering yuan internationalization and upholding the central government's vision of maintaining Hong Kong as an international financial center," Hong Kong Deputy Financial Secretary Michael Wong Wai-lun said during the bond issuance roadshow.

The roadshow on Wednesday invited representatives of 33 investment institutions from countries such as Canada, South Korea and the United Kingdom.



A view of the Victoria Harbour in Hong Kong.

"While Shenzhen's bond issuances in Hong Kong are an important achievement of the city's reform pilots, it is also a milestone for Shenzhen and Hong Kong to strengthen financial cooperation and promote the interconnection of capital

markets in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, making new and greater contributions to building a world-class city cluster," added Li Lirong, deputy director of the Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office of the Shenzhen

municipal government.

The municipal government had issued a total of 15 billion yuan of offshore renminbi-denominated government bonds in Hong Kong for three consecutive years since 2021.

In 2023, Shenzhen's total economic output reached 3.46 trillion yuan and its total export volume has ranked first among mainland cities for 30 consecutive years. In the first half of 2024, the city's total economic value was 1.73 trillion yuan, a year-on-year increase of 5.9 percent, the municipal government said.

"With a longer term of maturities in this bond issuance, this will exert a positive and supportive impact on the offshore yuan-denominated bond market by enriching product types," Hong Kong Monetary Authority Executive Director (External) Kenneth Hui Wai-chi added. "The decision by the Shenzhen government to issue a 10-year bond on top of a two-year bond, a three-year bond and a five-year bond for the first time, will help establish a more comprehensive yield curve for local governments by creating a benchmark for long-term maturities, and improve the interest rate transmission mechanism," said Zhao Zhongliang, head of the finance bureau of Shenzhen.

"By introducing a long-term bond product, Shenzhen can diversify the product structure of the offshore renminbi market that can offer a wider range of investment choices for investors," Zhao said.

Stock market rebounds as investors get N97bn

LAGOS

THE Nigerian stock market rebounded with positive momentum on Wednesday, adding N97 billion to investors' portfolios.

Specifically, the market capitalisation of listed equities, which opened at N55.033 trillion, advanced by 0.18 per cent or N97 billion to N55.130 trillion.

The All-Share Index also increased by 0.18 per cent or 171 points to settle at 97,098.98, against 96,928.52 recorded on Tuesday.

Consequently, the Year-To-Date return rose to 29.86 per cent. Market breadth also closed positive with 27 gainers and 22 losers.

On the gainers' table, Redstarex led by 10 per cent to close at N4.18, Oando trailed closely by 9.98 per cent to close at N33.60 per share.

RT Briscoe and United Capital gained 9.90 per cent each to close at N1.11 and N16.10 per share respectively, while Industrial and Medical Gases added 9.87 per cent to close at N17.25 per share.

On the other hand, Neimeth led the losers' table by 7.69 per cent to close at N1.80, Honeywell Flour followed by 6.10 per cent to close at N3.85 per share.

Sovereign Trust Insurance dropped 5.56 per cent to close at 51k, Deap Capital Management and Trust Plc declined by four per cent to close at 48k, and Ecobank Transnational Incorporated



shed 3.72 per cent to close at N20.70 per share.

Analysis of the market activities showed trade turnover settled higher relative to the previous session, with the value of transactions up by 89.59 per cent.

A total of 636.50 million shares worth N12.77 billion was exchanged in 9,744 deals, in contrast to 449.21 million shares valued at N6.74 billion traded in 9,381 deals posted in the previous session.

Meanwhile, Access Corporation emerged as the most traded stock in volume with 112.62 million shares worth N2.11 billion.

Also, Guaranty Trust Holding Company (GTCO) led in value with 74.34 million shares valued at N3.34 billion.(NAN)

Rwanda plots procedures for beryllium exports

KIGALI

THE government through the Rwanda Mines, Gas, and Petroleum Board (RMB) says it has embarked on reviewing and imposing improved export procedures to streamline the beryllium business on the local market.

The development comes after the mining board suspended the beryllium exportation business on Thursday, August 8, a decision that the latter attributed to rising cases of illegal mining and associated with unrest and conflicts of beryllium in the country.

John Kanyangira, Mining Traceability Division Manager at RMB, said in an interview that the demand for beryllium is on the rise triggering illegal activities among mineral exporters.

Beryllium is a strong, light metal used in aerospace and defense, electronics, and nuclear industries. Like Lithium, it is also associated with 3Ts and is mainly found in tailings, especially in pegmatite.

According to Kanyangira, export earnings from Beryllium have been increasing since 2021 as the global demand for Beryllium increases.

According to data from the mining board, Rwanda earned over Rwf5.6 billion in the first half of 2024, surpassing the value acquired in the whole year of 2023. The main markets, RMB said, are China and UAE.

“Based on various inspections conducted, it was observed that most of the Beryllium exported is hand-picked from the old tailings scattered in mines or abandoned mines and from streams nearby the mines, which causes illegal mining in different parts of the country,” Kanyangira said.

He added: “Mineral exporters source Beryllium from different localities which include mining companies and outsourcing.

However, given the quantities exported vis avis the nine mining companies that are authorized to extract and sell Beryllium, it seems that the mineral traders still get supply from unknown sources.”

According to the mining board, beryllium is associated with 3Ts and most of the companies have not added Beryllium on their licenses, even when they still supply to the traders without authorization.



Miners on duty in a tunnel at Mageragere mining site.

Equally alarming is the fact that mineral exporters get beryllium from illegally extracted areas.

“Just recently there were some 200 people caught in the act of illegally mining beryllium, and the majority were sent by investors whose licenses were not permitted to export the mineral metal.”

As it stands, RMB maintained that a ton of beryllium oxide with a grade of (8-12) percent ranges between \$1,000 and \$3,000 on the local market.

However, on the global market, the average price of a metric ton of beryllium alloys is \$831,600 due to its rarity. This is equivalent

to approximately \$6,172 per kilogram.

Beryllium is used as a complement to other metals, and its demand on the global market is growing, making it a “strategic” mineral like lithium and other minerals.

“Given the fact that demand for beryllium is growing, RMB should emphasize exploration in the long run and inventory of active sites in different parts of the country in the short term,” reads part of RMB’s statement shared with The New Times.

Reacting to the large-scale use of the mineral, Kanyangira pointed out that beryllium provides several benefits such as hardness, high melting point, heat control system,

and high thermal conductivity.

It is also increasingly being used in various sectors like medicine, telecommunications, industries, energy, and electricity.

“However, the depletion of raw materials from which it is extracted is a major restraint in the growth of its market share. This means that the demand for Beryllium is likely to continue growing.”

It is estimated that the market value of beryllium will reach a value of \$218.23 billion in 2031, growing with a compound annual growth rate of 4.6 percent during the forecast period of 2022 to 2031.

The North American region has contrib-

uted to about more than 90 percent of the total revenue generated in 2022 owing to the increasing investment by various sectors such as defense, industries, and consumer electronics.

The US region is also anticipated to drive market share due to the rising demand for this element in the defense sector of this region.

The Asia Pacific beryllium market is also expected to garner significant revenue during the forecast period because of the increasing use of consumer electronics in this region.

Rwanda’s mineral exports rose to over \$1.1 billion in 2023, up from \$772 million in 2022, a 43 percent growth.

The growth, according to the mining board, is largely attributed to increased value addition, continued professionalization, greater investment in mechanization, and the strategic implementation of sustainable and responsible mining practices.

However, it’s not all rosy for the sector whose growth is still hindered by illegal mining activities, particularly landowners who allow persons without licenses to carry out mining activities on their land.

The Rwanda Mines, Petroleum, and Gas Board (RMB) has announced the suspension of beryllium exportation, citing cases of illegal mining and associated unrest and conflicts.

Beryllium is a strong, light metal used in aerospace and defense, electronics, and nuclear industries.

The mining board did not provide details of the cases that unfolded to the build-up of the decision, but noted that the suspension will last “until further notice.”

Chinese vehicle buyers value smart functions

BEIJING

NEW vehicle owners show a strong preference for purchasing smart cockpit technologies such as online navigation, intelligent voice assistants and digital keys, according to a J.D. Power study released on Thursday.

This suggests that smart cockpit technologies are more widely accepted by new vehicle owners in China and are a key factor in their vehicle-buying decisions, showed the 2024 China Tech Experience Index Study.

The study, now in its fifth year, measures the TXI Innovation Index—which consists of the Technology Execution Index and Market Depth Index, both of which are equally weighted—to determine how effectively carmakers bring technologies to market.

The indices combine the level of adoption of new technologies with the excellence in execution. The Execution Index examines how much owners like the technologies and how many problems they experience while using them.

“Under the fierce competition in China’s auto market, automakers are ramping up their efforts on smart technologies,” said Elvis Yang, general manager of auto product practice at J.D. Power China.

“Smart cabin technologies are still the most frequently used and preferred for repurchase. As automakers upgrade their smart car solutions, this trend will likely continue,” added Yang.

However, complaints about instability or inaccuracies have risen for three consecutive years, reaching 46 percent for smart cockpit technologies and 39 percent for smart driving technologies.

These increases show that as smart technologies become more widespread and are used more frequently, new vehicle owners are placing higher demands on stability and accuracy.

“Automakers must balance innovation with quality control to provide a great smart experience for vehicle owners,” said Yang.



Smart cabin technologies are still the most frequently used and preferred for repurchase. As automakers upgrade



MONDAY - WEDNESDAY FROM 10:30 PM



ITV PGM SCHEDULE			
WEDNESDAY 31 July	5:00 Soap rpt: Uzalo	6:00 HABARI	12:45 Filler doc
5:30 Uwariya wa Mazezei	6:30 KUMEKUCHA	13:00 Telenovela rpt: I Plead Guilty Rpt	12:55 Habari za saa
6:00 HABARI	6:40 KUMEKUCHA	13:00 Business Edition Rpt	13:00 Kipindi maalum: BOT
6:40 KUMEKUCHA	7:00 HABARI	13:00 Art and Lifestyle	13:30 Art and Lifestyle
7:30 HABARI	7:30 HABARI	13:00 Watoto wetu	13:55 Habari za saa
8:00 KUMEKUCHA Michezo	7:30 HABARI	10:05 Shikamba 5	14:00 Shamsam za pwanji rpt
8:55 Habari za saa	8:00 KUMEKUCHA Michezo	10:35 Mjuzi Zaidi rpt	14:55 Habari za saa
9:00 KUMEKUCHA Kishindo	8:55 Habari za saa	11:15 Chetu ni chetu rpt	15:00 Meza huru
9:30 Soap: Laws of love	9:00 KUMEKUCHA Kishindo	11:50 Hawavumi lakini wamo	16:00 Culinary Delights Rpt
9:55 Habari za saa	9:30 Soap rpt: Laws of love	12:50 Art and Lifestyle	16:30 Capchat rpt
10:00 Watoto wetu	10:00 Watoto wetu	13:20 Shamba lulu	17:30 Meza huru
10:30 Jungu kuu rpt	10:30 Uasiri wako	13:30 Dicoor Rpt	19:00 Innovation
10:55 Habari za saa	10:30 Uasiri wako	13:30 Our Earth	19:00 Innovation
11:00 Mjuzi zaidi	10:55 Habari za saa	13:30 Telenovela: In Love With Ramon	14:00 Culinary rpt
11:40 Maji Kilimanjaro	11:00 Kipindi maalum: TMDA	14:30 Dik 45 rpt	14:30 Ripoti maalum
11:55 Habari za saa	11:20 Kipindi maalum: TMDA	15:00 Dk 45 rpt	16:00 Dw News Africa rpt
12:00 Al Jazeera	11:55 Habari za saa	16:00 The Monday Agenda rpt	16:30 Meza huru
12:30 Our Earth	12:00 Kipindi maalum rpt: Tanesco	17:30 Rev	19:00 Out & About Rpt
12:55 Habari za saa	12:30 Kipindi maalum rpt: Tanesco	20:00 Abu Yako	20:00 Local Pgm: Business Edition
13:00 Dakika 45 rpt	12:55 Habari za saa	20:15 Local Pgm: Business Edition	20:45 Telenovela: In Love With Ramon
13:55 Habari za saa	13:00 Kipindi Maalum rpt: Maisha ni nyumba	21:30 Capital Prime News	22:00 Malumano ya hoja rpt
14:00 Chetu ni chetu rpt	13:30 Kipindi Maalum rpt: Sema na mahakama	00:00 Al Jazeera	
14:40 Mapishi	13:55 Habari za saa		
14:55 Habari za saa	14:00 Kipindi Maalum rpt: Sema na mahakama		
15:00 Meza huru	14:00 Kipindi Maalum rpt: Sema na mahakama		
16:30 Watoto Wetu	14:30 DW Kilimanjaro rpt		
17:00 Music: The Base	14:55 Habari za saa		
18:00 Hapa na Pale	15:00 Meza huru		
18:15 Mapishi	16:30 Watoto Wetu		
18:30 Jarida la wanawake	17:00 The Base (DJ Show)		
19:00 Kipindi maalum: BOT	17:30 Kisiam		
19:30 Soap: Laws of love	18:00 Hapa na Pale		
20:00 Habari	18:15 Maji Kilimanjaro		
21:05 Abu Yako	19:30 Shamba lulu		
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21:20 Kipindi maalum: Michezo Supa Jackpot	19:30 Kipindi maalum: Michezo Supa Jackpot		
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23:30 Music: The Base	23:00 Jiji letu		
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	00:30 Al Jazeera		
THURSDAY 1 Aug			
5:00 Soap rpt: Uzalo			
5:30 Uwariya wa Mazezei			
6:00 HABARI			
6:40 KUMEKUCHA			
7:30 HABARI			
8:00 KUMEKUCHA Michezo			
8:55 Habari za saa			
9:00 KUMEKUCHA Kishindo			
9:30 Soap rpt: Laws of love			
9:55 Habari za saa			
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10:55 Habari za saa			
11:00 Ripoti maalum			
11:55 Habari za saa			
12:00 Al Jazeera			
FRIDAY 2 Aug			
5:00 Soap rpt: Uzalo			
5:30 Uwariya wa Mazezei			
6:00 HABARI			
6:40 KUMEKUCHA			
7:30 HABARI			
8:00 KUMEKUCHA Michezo			
8:55 Habari za saa			
9:00 KUMEKUCHA Kishindo			
9:30 Soap rpt: Laws of love			
9:55 Habari za saa			
10:00 Watoto wetu			
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10:55 Habari za saa			
11:00 Kipindi maalum: Watumishi housing			
11:20 Kipindi maalum: TMDA			
11:55 Habari za saa			
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12:30 Kipindi maalum rpt: Tanesco			
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13:00 Kipindi Maalum rpt: Maisha ni nyumba			
13:30 Kipindi Maalum rpt: Sema na mahakama			
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18:15 Maji Kilimanjaro			
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19:00 Soap: Laws of love			
20:00 Habari			
21:05 Kipima Joto			
23:00 Jiji letu			
23:30 The Base			
00:30 Al Jazeera			
SATURDAY 3 Aug			
5:30 Uwariya wa Mazezei			
SUNDAY 4 Aug			
5:30 Uwariya wa Mazezei			
6:00 HABARI			
6:40 KUMEKUCHA			
7:00 Habari			
8:00 Al Jazeera			
09:00 Watoto Wetu			
10:00 Soap rpt: Laws of love			
11:45 Hawavumi lakini wamo rpt			
12:45 Mjuzi zaidi			
13:30 Uasiri wako			
14:00 Tamasha la Michezo			
15:30 Mwangaza			
16:30 ITV Top 10 rpt			
17:20 Kipindi cha kiritato			
18:00 Hapa na Pale			
18:15 Mapishi			
18:30 Matukio ya wizi			
19:30 Habari za saa			
20:00 HABARI			
21:05 Igizo: Mizengwe			
21:20 Kipindi maalum: Michezo Supa Jackpot			
21:40 Mjuzi Zaidi			
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MONDAY 5 Aug			
06:00 Al Jazeera			
09:00 KUMEKUCHA Michezo rpt			
10:00 Meza Huru Rpt			
11:30 Spots gazette			
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13:00 Culinary			
13:00 Telenovela rpt: In Love With Ramon rpt			
14:00 Our Earth rpt			
14:30 DW news Africa rpt			
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15:30 Mizengwe rpt			
16:00 Tomorrow Today			
17:30 Business edition rpt			
18:00 In good shape			
17:30 Meza huru			
19:00 Out & About Rpt			
19:30 EcoAfrica			
20:00 Our Earth Rpt			
20:45 Telenovela: In Love With Ramon			
21:30 Capital Prime News			
TUESDAY 6 Aug			
06:00 Al Jazeera			
09:00 KUMEKUCHA Michezo rpt			
10:00 Meza Huru Rpt			
11:30 Spots gazette			
12:00 Innovation			
13:00 Culinary			
13:00 Telenovela rpt: In Love With Ramon rpt			
14:00 Our Earth rpt			
14:30 DW news Africa rpt			
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15:30 Mizengwe rpt			
16:00 Tomorrow Today			
17:30 Business edition rpt			
18:00 In good shape			
17:30 Meza huru			
19:00 Out & About Rpt			
19:30 EcoAfrica			
20:00 Our Earth Rpt			
20:45 Telenovela: In Love With Ramon			
21:30 Capital Prime News			
WEDNESDAY 7 Aug			
06:00 Al Jazeera			
09:00 KUMEKUCHA Michezo rpt			
10:00 Meza Huru Rpt			
11:30 Spots gazette			
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19:00 Out & About Rpt			
19:30 EcoAfrica			
20:00 Our Earth Rpt			
20:45 Telenovela: In Love With Ramon			
21:30 Capital Prime News			
THURSDAY 8 Aug			
06:00 Al Jazeera			
09:00 KUMEKUCHA Michezo rpt			
10:00 Meza Huru Rpt			
11:30 Spots gazette			
12:00 Innovation			
13:00 Culinary			
13:00 Telenovela rpt: In Love With Ramon rpt			
14:00 Our Earth rpt			
14:30 DW news Africa rpt			
15:00 Innovation			
15:30 Mizengwe rpt			
16:00 Tomorrow Today			
17:30 Business edition rpt			
18:00 In good shape			



This combo of photos shows Vice-President Kamala Harris (L) on Aug 7, 2024 and Republican presidential candidate former President Donald Trump on July 31, 2024. AP

Trump and Harris to debate on ABC, Trump says he wants two more

DETROIT

US Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump and Democratic opponent Kamala Harris will debate on Sept 10 on ABC, setting up the first face-to-face match-up between the rivals in what polls show is a close race.

In a news conference at his Palm Beach, Florida, residence, Trump said he wanted additional debates on Sept 4 and Sept 25 that would air on Fox and NBC.

Harris said in a post on X that she was looking forward to the Sept 10 debate after Trump "finally committed".

She told reporters after a Detroit-area campaign stop that she was open to discussing more debates, but a campaign official reiterated their position that a Sept 4 Fox debate is off the table.

Discussions on future debates depend on Trump's participating in the Sept 10 debate on ABC, the official said. The Harris campaign had already opposed a Fox debate, saying the host network should be one that sponsored recent primary debates by both parties.

Trump previously suggested he might back out of the ABC debate, scheduled before Harris, the US vice-president, replaced President Joe Biden as the Democratic presidential candidate less than three weeks ago, upending the contest. The Sept 10 debate on ABC was to be the second of two agreed upon between Biden and Trump, following their June 27 debate on CNN.

An Ipsos poll published on Thursday found Harris has widened her lead over Trump since late July. She leads Trump 42 percent to 37 percent, compared with a July 22-23 Reuters/Ipsos survey that showed her up 37 percent to 34 percent over Trump.

Thursday's Palm Beach news conference was Trump's first public appearance since Harris selected Minnesota Governor Tim Walz as her running mate on Tuesday.

Harris and Walz have headlined rallies in the battleground states of Pennsylvania, Michigan and Wisconsin this week, drawing tens of thousands of attendees in a fresh sign of how her late entry into the race has galvanized Democrats. Thursday's stop by the Democratic pair at a union hall came as the campaign said it sees labor groups as a key to tipping the balance in the election.

Harris' rapid rise has sent Trump's team scrambling to recalibrate its strategy and messaging. Opinion polls show Harris has erased the lead Trump had built over Biden, and Democrats have raked in hundreds of millions of dollars

from voters and big donors since she became the party's candidate.

Trump insisted on Thursday he has not altered his approach to the race. In a question-and-answer session with reporters that stretched beyond an hour, Trump hopped from topic to topic and said Harris and Walz are weak candidates.

Nevertheless, Trump lamented that he isn't able to face Biden in the Nov 5 election, suggesting the president was a victim of a plot to dislodge him from atop the Democratic ticket.

Biden dropped his faltering reelection bid under pressure from fellow Democrats worried about his chances of victory after a poor debate performance against Trump.

Asked about his controversial comments last week that Harris, who is of Black and Indian descent, recently "happened to turn Black," Trump said: "You'll have to ask her that question, because she's the one that said it, I didn't say it. ... To me it doesn't matter. But to her, from her standpoint, I think it's very disrespectful to both, really, whether it's Indian or Black, I think it's very disrespectful to both."

Trump's initial comments, delivered to an audience of Black journalists, drew widespread condemnation and left donors and aides baffled and alarmed. The Trump campaign didn't immediately comment further to provide evidence of remarks by Harris that Trump said he was referring to.

Trump on Thursday also mocked the size of Harris' campaign crowds, even though they have matched his of late. He falsely claimed the size of the crowd he addressed on Jan 6, 2021 - the day his supporters stormed the US Capitol - was as large as those who packed the National Mall in Washington for Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech in 1963.

"We actually had more people," Trump said. "But I'm ok with it, because I liked Dr. Martin Luther King."

King delivered his speech to an estimated 250,000 people in August 1963, according to the National Constitution Center. Trump's rally on Jan 6, 2021, drew about 53,000 supporters, according to the House of Representatives Select Committee's "187 minutes of dereliction" report.

Echoing a recent attack line from his campaign, Trump criticized Harris for not doing a press interview since launching her campaign.

"She can't do an interview. She's barely competent," Trump said, later again calling her "nasty," a go-to line that he often uses to disparage female critics.

4th India-Zambia Foreign Office Consultations held in Lusaka: MEA

NEW DELHI

INDIA and Zambia held 4th Foreign Office Consultations (FOC) in Lusaka, and held discussions about various sectors of co-operation, including defence and health, the Ministry of External Affairs said.

The FOC took place on Thursday, where the Indian side was led by Puneet R. Kundal, Additional Secretary (East and Southern Africa), and the Zambian side was spearheaded by Etambuyu Anamela Gundersen, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation.

"During the FOC, both delegations reviewed the entire gamut of bilateral relations between the two countries including a review of institutional mechanisms, scholarships, training and capacity building, cooperation in higher education, and trade and commercial relations," the MEA said in an official press release.

The discussions were also held on cooperation in sectors such as defence, health, agriculture, mines and mineral resources, and small and medium enterprises.

The FOC also included discussions on digital platforms, consular issues, cultural exchanges etc, according to MEA.

"Both sides expressed satisfaction over the existing bilateral ties and noted the need to strengthen them further. Discussions were also held on regional and international issues of mutual interest including cooperation in multilateral forums such as the UN," the release added.

The discussions provided an opportunity for both sides to assess the existing state of bilateral relations and explore ways to further strengthen these.

Both India and Zambia agreed to hold the next FOC in New Delhi at a mutually convenient date.

ANI

Africa CDC likely to declare mpox public health emergency next week

KINSHASA

AFRICA'S public health agency is set to declare a mpox emergency as early as next week, saying the viral infection's rate of spread is alarming, as a new variant moves across the Democratic Republic of Congo's borders.

Mpox is transmitted through close contact and causes flu-like symptoms and pus-filled lesions. Most cases are mild but it can kill.

The new variant, known as Clade 1b and circulating mostly in Congo, appears to spread more easily through routine close contact, as seems to be the case among children.

The Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC) Director General, Jean Kaseya, said on Thursday that reported cases in Africa had risen by 79 percent from 2022-2023 and by 160 percent from 2023-24.

"This is one of the aspects that is alarming us," he said.

Kaseya added he would have calls with the heads of the African Union (AU) and the African Union Commission on Tuesday to "get their blessing" and guidance to declare a public health emergency - a new power for the continental body. He said that most likely he would make the declaration next week.

Doing so would enable the Africa CDC to better co-



Christian Musema, a laboratory nurse, takes a sample from a child declared a suspected mpox case, at the treatment center in Munigi, Democratic Republic of the Congo, July 19, 2024. REUTERS

ordinate cross-border responses and would obligate member countries to notify new cases to the continental body, he said.

It would also enable mobilization of domestic and international resources and accelerate vaccine research and development, Kaseya said, adding he had been in talks with executives of the German drug-maker BioNTech about raising vaccine output after the likely declaration next week.

The World Health Organization (WHO) said Africa is experiencing an unprecedented rise in cases this year.

Congo has seen over 13,000 suspected mpox cases including 503 deaths so far this year, the WHO's spokesperson in Congo told Reuters, taking the total number of cases there since the start of 2023 to about 27,000, with more than 1,000 deaths.

To the east of Congo, Rwanda, Uganda and Kenya, which were pre-

viously unaffected by mpox, have all reported cases of the new variant since mid-July, a WHO statement said.

"Further analysis is required to better understand the patterns of transmission to refine the response to the outbreak," the UN agency said.

The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) issued a second health alert on Wednesday to notify clinicians and health departments about the deadly new strain.

WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus has promised to convene an emergency committee to discuss whether the outbreak in Congo represents a public health emergency of international concern.

On Monday, Africa CDC said it had been granted \$10.4 million in emergency funding from the AU for its mpox response.

Ethiopia vaccinates over 10m people against cholera

ADDIS ABABA

ETHIOPIA has vaccinated over 10 million people as part of a national campaign to contain the spread of an ongoing cholera outbreak, the World Health Organization (WHO) has said.

In a statement issued Wednesday, the WHO said that two years after the cholera outbreak began in August 2022, the East African country has continued to battle the disease, with a recent increase in the number of cases.

A national oral cholera vaccination campaign, launched recently to protect at-risk populations covering 89 districts across eight

regions in Ethiopia, has achieved 98.4 percent coverage, vaccinating over 10.19 million people, it said.

As part of the anti-cholera efforts, multi-sectoral stakeholders have also implemented response measures to contain transmission, including house-to-house disinfection, water testing and treatment, and latrine construction.

The WHO stressed that the lack of funding is severely impeding the coordinated anti-cholera response efforts led by the Ethiopian Public Health Institute. It called for "extensive investments" in safe water supply and sanitation systems to effectively combat the outbreak.

According to the WHO, Ethiopia has reported 143 cholera-related deaths so far this year, with 19,271 cholera cases reported from Jan. 1 to June 30.

UN agencies and humanitarian partners have been calling for durable solutions to address the root causes of recurrent cholera outbreaks, which include poor-quality drinking water and open defecation.

In most cases, faecal contamination of drinking water is the main source of cholera, with most cholera patients using unsafe drinking water. *Xinhua*

Putin signs law allowing foreign banks to open branches in Russia

MOSCOW

RUSSIAN President Vladimir Putin signed a law that allows foreign banks to open branches in Russia but also provides for a number of restrictions on their activities. The document was published on the official portal of legal information.

The goal is to create conditions for the development of a system of international settlements and attracting foreign investment, the explanatory note says.

The work of branches of foreign banks will be aimed precisely at this. That is why they will not be able, like ordinary banks, to open deposits for individuals and companies, accounts in precious metals, engage in trust management of money and other property.

Foreign banks will have the right to work in the securities market through a branch created in Russia. Each bank will be allowed to establish only one branch. The law also provides for setting requirements for the qualifications and business reputation of the banks' officials.

Possibilities and restrictions

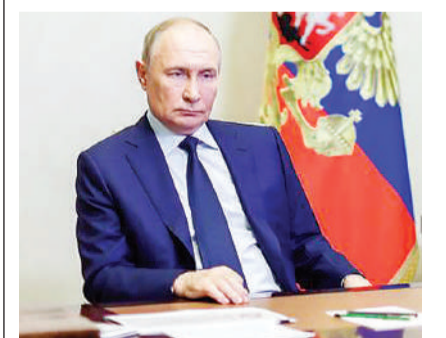
Amendments to the law "On banks and banking activities" were initiated by the Russian government. The law, in particular, defines the procedure for accreditation of a branch of a foreign bank and obtaining a license from the Bank of Russia, a list of operations and transactions that it has the right to carry out.

In particular, branches will not be able to carry out banking operations and transactions with individuals, including those registered as individual entrepreneurs. An exception is made for transfers of funds without opening accounts and the purchase and sale of currency for transfers without opening accounts.

Under the law, branches of foreign banks will not be able to open and maintain accounts of legal entities, transfer funds on their behalf, carry out collection, cash services for legal entities, act as a guarantor and surety for third parties, provide special premises, safes for rent, carry out leasing operations, provide consulting and information services.

According to the law, a branch of a foreign bank must form a security deposit in the amount of at least 1 billion rubles to ensure the fulfillment of obligations under contracts. If the branch fails to comply with the Central Bank's requirements to eliminate violations of anti-money laundering legislation within the established time frame or such violations threaten the interests of creditors, the regulator may impose a fine of up to 1% of the security deposit, but not less than 1 million rubles. At the same time, the Central Bank receives the right to appoint its representatives to branches of foreign banks, who will be able to receive documents and information about its activities, request data on transactions and operations. The law will come into force on September 1, 2024.

Agencies



Chinese envoy urges solidarity, cooperation in fighting terrorism

UNITED NATIONS

A Chinese envoy on Thursday called on the international community to strengthen solidarity and intensify cooperation in the fight against terrorism.

"At present, terrorism continues to pose a threat to international peace and security," said Geng Shuang (pictured), China's deputy permanent representative to the United Nations, at the UN Security Council briefing on threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist

acts.

Noting that the threat posed by Daesh, Al-Qaeda and its affiliated terrorist organizations continues unabated, Geng warned that as the new round of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict continues to escalate, its spillover effects are constantly emerging, leading to a surge in hate crimes and an increased risk of terrorist attacks in many countries.

"These developments are a source of deep concern and disturbance," he stressed.

While underscoring the im-

portance of cooperation in the fight against terrorism, the envoy said counter-terrorism "should not become a tool for major power rivalry, a bargaining chip in geopolitics, or a pretext for interfering in other countries' internal affairs."

"All countries should uphold the concept of common security, abandon ideological bias, eradicate double standards or selectivity in counterterrorism efforts, and effectively respect and protect the security of each and every country," he said.

Geng called on the international community to adhere to the purposes and principles of the UN Charter, uphold and practice true multilateralism, and effectively play the central coordinating role of the United Nations in international counter-terrorism efforts.

He also urged the full implementation of UN resolutions on counter-terrorism and the UN



Global Counterterrorism Strategy, and jointly combatting all terrorist organizations and individuals listed by the Security Council.

Geng stressed the importance of cooperation at the national, regional and global levels, the collective counter-terrorism mechanism, counter-terrorism cooperation efforts in areas like early warning, financing and border control, as well as in-depth research on the impact of emerging technologies on the international fight against ter-

rorism.

Calling for prioritizing counter-terrorism efforts and optimizing the allocation of resources, he said the United Nations and the international community should, based on the counter-terrorism needs of the countries concerned, allocate more resources to help strengthen the legislative, judicial, and law enforcement capabilities of the countries concerned and enhance their comprehensive counter-terrorism and de-radicalization capabilities.

"It has been proved many times that terrorism cannot be completely eliminated purely through military means," the ambassador emphasized, adding that "Only by upholding a systematic concept, focusing on the long-term and on the root causes and taking a multifaceted approach in economic, political, social, cultural, and religious fields, can we eliminate the root causes, and ultimately achieve victory in the fight against terrorism."

Xinhua

Stranded in space, NASA astronauts await rescue

LOS ANGELES

TWO US National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) astronauts find themselves on an unexpectedly extended mission aboard the International Space Station (ISS) as technical issues plague their return spacecraft, Boeing's Starliner.

The intended short test mission has stretched beyond 60 days, with no definite return date in prospect.

During a press conference on Wednesday, Ken Bowersox, associate administrator for NASA's Space Operations Mission Directorate, said that "we could take either path," either returning the astronauts on Starliner or seeking an alternative method of using SpaceX.

On June 5, astronauts Butch Wilmore and Sunita Williams were launched to the ISS as part of Starliner's first crewed test flight, and multiple technical problems have since occurred.

The issues plaguing Starliner include failures in the reaction control system (RCS) thrusters, which are crucial for the spacecraft's maneuverability and safe return to Earth, and helium leaks in the propulsion system. These problems have raised concerns about the capsule's safety and reliability.

The space agency is seriously considering a backup plan involving a SpaceX Crew Dragon capsule to bring the two back to Earth. This contingency could extend their stay in



NASA astronauts Butch Wilmore and Sunita Williams walk at NASA's Kennedy Space Center, ahead of Boeing's Starliner-1 Crew Flight Test (CFT) mission on a United Launch Alliance Atlas V rocket to the International Space Station, in Cape Canaveral, Florida, US May 6, 2024. AGENCIES

space to approximately eight months, with a potential return date around February 2025, according to Wednesday's briefing.

Steve Stich, manager of NASA's commercial crew program, revealed that planning for this backup option began last month. "We started in early July, doing some early planning with SpaceX for some of these contingencies," Stich explained. "Then, as we got closer and got a little bit more data, we started to put a few more things in place."

The Starliner issues have broader implica-

tions for NASA's commercial crew program. The agency has long emphasized the importance of having multiple providers for crew transportation to ensure redundancy and continuous access to the ISS. SpaceX has been successfully ferrying astronauts to and from the station since 2020, while Boeing has faced repeated setbacks and delays with its Starliner program.

These latest complications have resulted in additional financial strain for Boeing. The company has recently announced a 125-million-

US-dollar write-off related to unplanned costs for the Starliner program, adding to 1.5 billion dollars in previous write-offs.

NASA has pushed back the launch of the next SpaceX Crew Dragon mission, originally scheduled for Aug 18, to no earlier than Sept 24. This delay provides additional time for decision-making regarding Starliner and potential crew adjustments.

If implemented, the contingency plan would involve sending only two astronauts instead of the usual four on the next SpaceX Crew Dragon flight. Wilmore and Williams would join the space station crew as full-fledged members for a six-month stay and return on the Crew Dragon around February 2025.

During their extended stay, Wilmore and Williams have been fully integrated into the ISS crew, participating in various scientific experiments and maintenance tasks.

Their activities include conducting ultrasound scans to study how space affects human veins, working on manufacturing higher-quality optical fibers in microgravity experiments, and participating in fluid physics studies to understand how to manage liquids without gravity.

Additionally, they have been involved in routine maintenance tasks, including some less glamorous chores like toilet maintenance. They also had to take emergency precautions when a defunct Russian satellite broke apart near the ISS, forcing them to prepare for a potential evacuation.

Militants of Zelensky's regime hunt Russian war correspondents – diplomat

MOSCOW

MILITANTS of Ukrainian leader Vladimir Zelensky's regime are conducting a real hunt for Russian media representatives and war correspondents, Russian Foreign Ministry Spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said.

"Militants of Zelensky's terrorist regime are conducting a real hunt for Russian media representatives and war correspondents whose reports are documentary evidence of atrocities committed by Ukrainian armed formations against civilians," the diplomat said in connection with the attempted assassination of war correspondent Yevgeny Poddubny.

According to Zakharova, with the tacit consent of the West and human rights structures under its control, "the Kiev regime has indeed declared unarmed media workers its priority targets, while openly boasting about it."

"Under the 1949 Geneva Conventions and Additional Protocol I, journalists are equal to civilians and are protected from attack. Failure to comply with these norms constitutes a serious violation of international humanitarian law by Zelensky's regime," she added.

"We demand from the relevant international organizations an immediate reaction and a strong condemnation of the terrorist activities of the Bandera regime," the spokeswoman emphasized. **Agencies**



UK riots halted by police, communities but country remains on alert

LONDON

BRITISH police remained on alert on Thursday after a heavy security presence, rapid arrests and displays of unity by people across Britain on Wednesday prevented a repeat of widespread rioting involving racist attacks targeting Muslims and migrants.

After police deployed in force and thousands of anti-racism protesters took to the streets on Wednesday evening, threats of widespread gatherings by far-right anti-immigration groups did not materialize.

But the government said it was still cautious after days of riots triggered by false online posts wrongly identifying the suspected killer of three young girls in a July 29 knife attack in Southport, northwest England, as an Islamist migrant.

Police said a further potential 20 gatherings and three counter-gatherings were planned for Thursday.

"We're going to continue the strong policing response,

making sure that there are additional police officers ready to respond," interior minister Yvette Cooper told reporters.

More than 480 people have been arrested across the country so far, with nearly 150 charged. Dozens have already been sentenced with cases fast-tracked through the justice system.

Britain's most senior police officer, London Commissioner Mark Rowley, said many of those arrested had criminal backgrounds.

For Prime Minister Keir Starmer, a former chief prosecutor, it is the first major test of his premiership since winning a July 4 election in which the previous Conservative government highlighted immigration as a major issue.

Rowley dismissed suggestions the riots were political.

"Any suggestion they're patriots, or they've got a cause... is nonsense," Rowley said. "They're criminals."

Several thousand people from anti-racism groups gathered in Walthamstow, north



Counter protestors face off with police in Walthamstow, London, Aug 7, 2024, ahead of anti-immigration groups planning to target dozens of locations throughout the country following a week of rioting fueled by misinformation over a stabbing attack against young girls. AP

London, on Wednesday following threats to an immigration advice center there. Others protected mosques and hotels housing asylum seekers that were among other targets.

Rowley hailed a "successful" night that had gone "very peacefully" apart from a few criminal incidents.

Footage circulated on X showed a councillor from Starmer's Labour Party at the Walthamstow gathering calling for people to cut the throats of

"disgusting Nazi fascists."

London police said a man in his 50s had been arrested on suspicion of offences including encouraging murder. Labour said the behavior was "completely unacceptable" and the man, a councillor in Dartford, Kent, had been suspended from the party.

'Better than expected'

Sentencing of those involved in disorder over the past week continued on Thursday, with

prison terms of between 11 and 32 months handed out. On Wednesday, one man was jailed for three years. Convictions have also included those who encouraged violence online.

Fast and tough judicial action was viewed as helping quell the last serious nationwide rioting in England in 2011, for which almost 4,000 people were arrested.

Starmer, who met with police and community leaders in Birmingham on Thursday, said Wednesday night was "much better than expected". He is holding an emergency meeting with police on Thursday to discuss efforts to contain any further riots.

More than 100 police officers have been injured since the start of the rioting, including broken limbs.

"I was very keen that we're able to demonstrate that if you're involved in disorder, within days, you'll be in the criminal justice system," he told reporters. "That needs to continue."

Xi stresses preserving China's cultural, natural heritage

BEIJING

CHINESE President Xi Jinping has urged further efforts to preserve the country's cultural and natural treasures and renew their glamour in the new era.

Xi (pictured), also general secretary of the Communist Party of China Central Committee and chairman of the Central Military Commission, made the remarks in an instruction on strengthening the protection, preservation and utilization of cultural and natural heritage.

The instruction was made after one cultural heritage and two natural heritages of China were inscribed on the World Heritage List by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in July 2024.

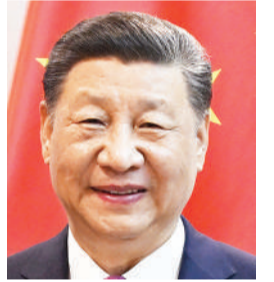
UNESCO announced the inscription of Beijing Central Axis: A Building Ensemble Exhibiting the Ideal Order of the Chinese Capital, Badain Jaran Desert - Towers of Sand, and Lakes, and Migratory Bird Sanctuaries along the Coast of Yellow Sea-Bohai Gulf of China (Phase II) on its list at the 46th session of the UNESCO World Heritage Committee held in New Delhi, India.

The inclusion of these heritage items has positive significance for the building of Chinese modernization that features material and cultural-ethical advancement and harmony between humanity and nature, Xi said, noting that it also adds new luster to world civilizations.

Xi called for efforts to take this UNESCO inclusion as an opportunity to further strengthen the comprehensive and systematic protection of cultural and natural heritage and make good use of them to better meet the people's needs.

He also urged enhanced international exchange and cooperation in this field, and efforts to make greater contribution to the practice of the Global Civilization Initiative and the building of a community with a shared future for humanity.

Currently, China is home to a total of 59 World Heritage Sites. **Xinhua**



PM Modi urges citizens to make 'Har Ghar Tiranga' campaign a 'mass movement'

NEW DELHI

AS India gears up to celebrate its 78th Independence Day, Prime Minister Narendra Modi yesterday urged the citizens of the nation to make the 'Har Ghar Tiranga' campaign a mass movement by hoisting the national flag at their homes.

Changing his profile picture on social media to 'Tricolour', PM Modi further urged everyone

to change their profile picture to the same.

Sharing a link, PM Modi also requested everyone to share their selfies with the national flag while celebrating the 'Har Ghar Tiranga' campaign. One can submit their selfies on the website - <https://harghartiranga.com>

In a social media post on X, PM Modi wrote, "As this year's Independence Day approaches, let's



again make #HarGharTiranga a memorable mass movement. I am changing my profile picture and I urge you all to join me in celebrating our Tricolour by do-

ing the same.

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) is set to launch the 'Har Ghar Tiranga' campaign across the nation from August 11. The ruling party at the Centre will also conduct Tiranga Yatra from August 11 to August 14. During this period, the national flag will be hoisted on every house, shop, and office. A cleanliness drive will also be carried out.

In the 112th 'Mann Ki Baat' on

July 28, Prime Minister Modi called upon all Indians to take part in the 'Har Ghar Tiranga' campaign to celebrate Independence Day. He highlighted the growing trend of taking selfies with the national flag and sharing them on social media. He urged party leaders and workers to ensure that the national flag is hoisted on houses, offices, and shops. **ANI**

Russia's Lipetsk declares emergency following Ukraine drone attack

MOSCOW/KYIV

RUSSIA'S Lipetsk municipal district declared a state of emergency yesterday following the detonation of explosive objects in the aftermath of a Ukrainian drone attack.

Lipetsk Governor Igor Artamonov announced the evacuation of four local communities via his Telegram channel to ensure public safety.

"To eliminate the consequences of the detonation of explosive objects, a state of emergency is being introduced on the territory of the Lipetsk municipal district. To ensure the safety of residents, it was decided to evacuate the settlements: Koptsev Khutor, Fedorovka, Yakovlevka, Tynkovka," Artamonov said.

The recent drone attack on Lipetsk, a city situated approximately 370 km south of Moscow, triggered significant

explosions off civilian structures.

The debris from the Ukrainian drone attack has caused damage to an energy infrastructure facility, resulting in power supply disruptions in the region.

Artamonov called on the residents to observe the instructions from emergency services personnel during the evacuation process. "Temporary accommodation and transport arrangements are being made to assist those affected," he said.

On Thursday, the Russian defense ministry said its forces have repelled Ukrainian attempts to advance deeper into the Kursk region.

"Over the past 24 hours, border defense units along with border guards, reinforcement units and recently arrived reserve forces have prevented the enemy from



An image taken from a handout footage released by the Russian Defence Ministry on Thursday shows a Russian drone attack on Ukrainian armored vehicles outside the town of Sudzha, Kursk Region. AFP

advancing with the use of air and missile strikes and artillery fire," said the ministry.

It noted that "attempts of separate units to penetrate deeper into the Kursk direction were foiled," and air strikes were carried out

against approaching Ukrainian reserve forces on the territory of the Sumy region.

"Units of the Sever Group of Forces along with units of the Russian Federal security forces are continuing to eliminate the armed formations of

the Ukrainian armed forces in the Sudzha and Korenevo districts in the Kursk region," according to the defense ministry.

Since the beginning of Kyiv's large-scale incursion into the Kursk region, Ukrainian losses have amounted to 660 soldiers, and 82 units of armored equipment, it said.

Acting deputy governor of the Kursk region Andrei Belostotsky said on Thursday that Russian forces have halted Ukrainian advances.

"Since this morning, our aerospace forces and our armed forces have been actively working. The enemy has not advanced a single meter and ... is retreating," he said, adding that "the enemy's equipment and combat forces are being actively destroyed."

In a meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin, the

acting governor of the Kursk Region Alexei Smirnov said that all people are actively being evacuated from the region and receiving necessary assistance.

According to preliminary information, 5 people have died following the attacks, and a total of 34 people have been injured, including 5 children.

Ukraine launched a massive attack on the defense positions in Russia's Kursk region at 8 am local time (0500 GMT). Up to 300 soldiers from Ukraine's 22nd Mechanized Brigade, supported by 11 tanks and over 20 armored combat vehicles, attacked the Russian border defense positions near the settlements of Nikolaev-Daryno and Oleshnya, according to the Russian Defense Ministry on Tuesday. **ANI**

Finance Ministry on Thursday said the country has received over \$93 billion in budget support from international partners since the beginning of its conflict with Russia in February 2022.

"These funds have been essential for addressing priority needs in the social and humanitarian sectors, such as social support programs, old-age social payments, salaries for civil servants and others," the ministry said in a statement.

The statement said that about \$40 billion have been allocated to Kyiv through World Bank mechanisms for specific purposes agreed upon by the Ukrainian government and its partners.

Furthermore, Ukraine obtained 25 billion euros (about \$27.2 billion) in macro-financial assistance from the European Union in 2022-2023.

SPORT



Videte Center player Michael John (C) passes the ball followed closely by two Maginja FC players during their friendly match held at the Jakaya Kikwete Sports Park in Dar es Salaam recently. PHOTO: CORRESPONDENT JUMANNE JUMA

MultiChoice Talent Factory and ZIFF host panel on turning filmmaking passion into profit

By Guardian Correspondent

THE MultiChoice Talent Factory, in collaboration with the Zanzibar International Film Festival (ZIFF), recently hosted a groundbreaking panel discussion titled "Passion to Profit and Industry Best Practices."

The event, held in Zanzibar last weekend, brought together key industry figures to address the critical need for a deep understanding of the processes required to establish and sustain a successful film business in an evolving cultural and digital landscape.

The panel was presided over by Asha Shaaban, Director of Institutional Services at the Tanzania Film Board; Victoria Goro OGW, Director of the MultiChoice Talent Factory East Africa Academy; and Hatib Madudu, Director of Festival for ZIFF.

The one-day event attracted over 50 producers from leading production houses across East Africa, all keen to gain valuable insights into the transition from mere passion to profit in the film industry.

The discussion focused on the challenges of balancing creative excellence with commercial viability. Attendees explored various stages of a film's lifecycle, from idea selection to final production, and delved into the essential roles of finance, legal considerations, marketing, communication, networking, and relationship building in creating successful film projects.

Victoria Goro, Director of the MultiChoice Talent Factory East Africa Academy,

emphasized the importance of adopting an entrepreneurial mindset and effective business framing to ensure productions are not only financially sustainable but also profitable. She highlighted the widespread issue of debt among producers and discussed the challenges of running a viable film business.

Goro also pointed to the potential for collaboration, sharing successful examples where pooling resources, expertise, and knowledge helped manage production costs and foster industry growth.

Asha Shaaban, Director of Institutional Services at the Tanzania Film Board, praised MultiChoice for its significant contributions to the Tanzanian film industry.

She assured participants that the Board would take into consideration the producers' recommendations on policies and regulations to support the growth of the industry.

The event also featured breakout sessions, where seasoned producers offered personalized advice and practical guidance to emerging filmmakers. These interactions provided a valuable platform for networking and facilitated connections that could lead to future collaborations.

The insights shared during the panel discussion were instrumental in helping producers navigate the complexities of the film industry, ensuring that they can maintain creative quality while achieving financial success.



Victoria Goro, Director of the MultiChoice Talent Factory East Africa Academy, speaking to the media during the producers' panel discussion at the 27th Zanzibar International Film Festival in Zanzibar. The event, held last weekend, was sponsored by MultiChoice. Photo: Correspondent

SPORTS

TCA honours ICC U-19 Men's CWC Africa Division 2 Qualifier participants



Tanzania Cricket Association (TCA) Chairman Balakrishna Sreekumar (Back row, C) in a group photo with Ghana's U-19 cricketers at a ceremony for squads that did not secure progression to the last-four stage of the ICC Men's U-19 World Cup Africa Division 2 Qualifier taking place in Dar es Salaam. The ceremony took place on Wednesday. PHOTO: COURTESY OF TANZANIA CRICKET ASSOCIATION

By Correspondent Japheth Kazenga

TANZANIA Cricket Association (TCA) mid this week hosted a special event to honour the teams that did not make it to the semi-finals of the ICC U-19 Men's World Cup Africa Division 2 Qualifier now taking place in Dar es Salaam.

Botswana, Ghana, Malawi, and Mozambique were presented with exclusive return gifts in sculptures resembling the TCA logo, in a heartwarming gesture to the squads.

The national cricket governing body's Media and Communication Officer, Atif Salim, remarked that the unique mementos featured a giraffe, wickets, and a bat, symbolizing both the spirit of the game and Tanzanian culture.

The event, the official added, saw the special mementos handed over to not only the players and support staff but also the traveling fans from Botswana.

He revealed among the recipients was the youngest traveling fan, highlighting TCA's commitment to recognizing and appreciating the support from the cricket community.

The fans, Salim noted, expressed their gratitude for the exceptional hospitality provided by TCA, making their stay in Tanzania a memorable experience.

Players from each team took the opportunity to convey their appreciation and share their

experiences.

Bright Balala from Malawi, Ariz Sood from Ghana, crowd favourite Manuel Mbebe Jr from Mozambique, and Ayush Harith from Botswana spoke on behalf of their teams.

They expressed their appreciation for the warm welcome and the impeccable arrangements made by TCA throughout the tournament.

The return gifts and the event, according to Salim, underscored the spirit of camaraderie and sportsmanship that cricket fosters.

TCA's thoughtful gesture not only celebrated the journey of these teams in the tournament but also strengthened the bonds between the participating nations, leaving a lasting impression on everyone involved.

The qualifiers' last four ties were scheduled to be played yesterday, with Nigeria - which finished second in Group B - confronting Group A leaders Sierra Leone at the Gymkhana venue.

The phase also had tournament hosts Tanzania, Group B's leaders, locking horns with Rwanda - which came second in Group A - at the University of Dar es Salaam (UDSM) venue. Rwanda made certain of their place in the last four although they lost to Malawi by seven runs at UDSM venue on Wednesday.

In a thrilling low-scoring encounter, Malawi defended the lowest total of the tournament so far, securing a win but falling short on Net Run Rate.

Winning the toss and opting to bat first, Malawi was bowled out for 70 runs in 33 overs.

Apart from the opening pair of Philip Zuze, who scored 10 off 15 balls, and Hamza Vayani, who managed 15 off 46 balls, no other batsman reached double digits.

Elise Gihozo from Rwanda was the standout bowler, taking 5-15 from his 10 overs - ending with a 1.50 economy rate.

Rwanda's chase was filled with drama, especially the last partnership between Jules Mugisha and Moise Kigabo, which kept three teams in Group A on the edge of their seats.

Malawi, Rwanda, and Botswana all had their eyes on the results. Despite Rwanda being bowled out for 63 runs in 34.2 overs, they managed to advance to the semi-finals based on their Net Run Rate, courtesy of playing out the maximum overs in the game.

Hamza Vayani shone for Malawi, taking 3-14 in six overs. Despite the win, Malawi was eliminated based on Net Run Rate - having ended with a -0.6897 Net Run Rate-, while Rwanda - which concluded the group phase with 0.0869 Net Run Rate- advanced to the semi-finals.

Coastal Union coach disappointed but unbowed after heavy defeat

By Correspondent Nassir Nchimbi

COASTAL Union head coach David Ouma has expressed disappointment following his team's 5-2 loss to Azam FC in the semi-finals of the Community Shield tournament at the New Amaan Complex in Zanzibar.

Despite the setback, Ouma remains committed to rebuilding and strengthening his squad ahead of the upcoming season.

Having secured fourth place in the recently concluded Mainland Premier League, Coastal Union earned a spot in the 2024/25 CAF Confederation Cup and participated in the Community Shield tournament. However, their encounter with Azam FC ended in a heavy defeat.

Ouma (pictured) acknowledged the loss as a painful setback but also highlighted it as a valuable lesson for his team.

He pointed to a lack of composure after equalizing as a key factor that led to their downfall, resulting in further goals and ultimately a crushing defeat.

"It was a painful result for us, but also a lesson. After equalizing, we lost composure and allowed attacks that put us in a difficult situation, leading to more goals," Ouma said.

Despite the result, Ouma is determined to strengthen his squad and ensure they compete effectively in the upcoming season.

He emphasized the need for cohesion among the many new players in the squad and promised to address their shortcomings before the start of the new season.

"We made errors that cost us dearly. Conceding five goals is unacceptable. With tough matches against Simba and the CAF Confederation Cup qualifiers ahead, we need to be at our best. We'll work tirelessly



to correct our mistakes before the new season begins," he added.

Ouma also stressed that the Community Shield tournament is serving as a crucial stepping stone for the team to showcase their growth and determination.

Following the defeat, Coastal Union will face Simba in the third-place playoff match tomorrow at the Benjamin Mkapa Stadium.

Simba also suffered a defeat in their semi-final match, losing 1-0 to Young Africans, and will now focus on securing third place in the tournament as they prepare for the upcoming Premier League season.

Both Simba and Coastal Union qualified

to represent Tanzania in continental competitions and will participate in the CAF Confederation Cup.

Coastal Union's campaign will begin with an away match at Estadio De 11 Novembro in Luanda on August 16, followed by a home match at the Benjamin Mkapa Stadium on August 23. This marks Coastal Union's return to international competition since their participation in the 1989 African Cup Winners' Cup, where they were eliminated in the first round.

The competition was later merged with the CAF Cup to form the current CAF Confederation Cup in 2004.

Former FIFA interim president and long-time leader of African soccer Issa Hayatou dies at 77

PARIS

ISSA Hayatou, the long-time leader of African soccer who was made interim president of FIFA during its corruption crisis in 2015, died on Thursday. He was 77.

FIFA president Gianni Infantino said in an Instagram post: "Saddened to hear of the passing of former CAF president, former FIFA president and interim, FIFA vice-president and FIFA Council member Issa Hayatou. A passionate sports fan, he dedicated his life to sports administration. On behalf of FIFA, condolences go to his family, friends, former colleagues and all who knew him. Rest in peace."

Hayatou also was a member of the International Olympic Committee for 15 years, through 2016, and remained an honorary member.

He died in Paris while the city hosted the Olympics.

Though a national champion runner in track and field, it was in soccer that Hayatou rose to power and influence from his native Cameroon.

He was elected to lead the Confederation of African Football in 1988 and within four years was a vice president of the world soccer body FIFA.

In 2002, during a period of deep financial and political turmoil at FIFA, Hayatou challenged then-president Sepp Blatter in an election he would lose heavily despite support for him in Europe. The 139-56 result showed

Hayatou had lost votes from his African colleagues.

Blatter still led FIFA in 2015 when federal investigations in the United States and Switzerland of alleged corruption in international soccer swept a generation of leaders from North and South America out of office, and eventually Blatter himself.

Hayatou took over from his one-time rival as an interim president for four months, to steer FIFA toward anti-corruption reforms and an election that put Infantino in office.

In 2017, Hayatou's 29-year reign as the head of CAF was ended in an election he lost to Ahmad Ahmad of Madagascar, who had been supported by Infantino.

Hayatou then faced an investigation by FIFA's ethics committee, and in 2021 was banned from soccer for one year for alleged breach of "duty of loyalty" in a commercial rights deal at CAF.

In a separate case, he was reprimanded by the IOC ethics commission in 2011 for having taken a cash payment from a Swiss marketing agency, ISL, in 1995 when it sold World Cup broadcasting rights for FIFA.

Hayatou was born into a distinguished Cameroon family, and his brother Sadou was prime minister of the national government in 1991-92.

AP

Morocco wins its first Olympic soccer medal with a 6-0 rout of Egypt for men's bronze

NANTES, France

SOUFIANE Rahimi scored two goals and Morocco won the bronze medal with a 6-0 rout of Egypt on Thursday for the team's first-ever podium finish at the Olympics.

Abde Ezzalzouli, Bilal El Khannouss, Akram Nakach and Achraf Hakimi also scored for Morocco, which went into halftime with a 2-0 lead to the delight of Moroccan fans at La Beaujoire Stadium.

Rahimi scored eight goals at the Paris Olympics, most in the tournament. At 28, he is one of the overage players allowed on the under-23 Olympic squads.

It was Egypt's third fourth-place finish at the Olympics – after Amsterdam in 1928 and Tokyo in 1964.

Morocco has been inspired throughout the tournament by its senior men's team, which was a surprise semifinalist at the World Cup in 2022. The players have also been boosted by the faithful fans who have followed the team on its journey in France.

"We wanted to win the gold medal, that's for sure, but to win a game like this, to get our country's first-ever medal here and in front of so many of our fans, it feels incredible," said forward Ilias Akhomach.

The team also trounced the United States 4-0 at Parc des Princes in Paris in the quarterfinals but lost to Spain 2-1 in the semifinals.

In the group stage, Morocco's fans rushed the field and threw bottles in a 2-1 win over Argentina, causing the game to be suspended for around two hours.

Rahimi's first goal came off a header in the 26th minute that Egypt goalkeeper Alaa Hamza got a glove on but couldn't stop.

Less than three minutes before Rahimi's goal, Ezzalzouli scored from the top of the penalty box into the far corner. He joined his Moroccan teammates in a prayer on the corner of the field following the goal.

Morocco saw the return of midfielder El Khannouss, who was suspended for the semifinal. He made it 3-0 by shaking off a series of defenders for a goal in the 51st.

Rahimi's second came in the 64th and he assisted on Nakach's goal in the 73rd. The rout was capped by Paris Saint-Germain's Hakimi, who scored on a late free kick.

"All credit to Morocco. They were incredible in front of goal. They had a very high percentage in terms of their finishing. For us, it wasn't to be today," said Egypt coach Rogerio Micala, who coached Brazil to the gold medal on home soil at the 2016 Games.

Egypt was without Omar Fayed, who was sent off with a red card in the semifinal against France.

“

We wanted to win the gold medal, that's for sure, but to win a game like this, to get our country's first-ever medal here and in front of so many of our fans, it feels incredible

Why Kenya produces so many world-class marathoners - 2

PARIS

"IMAGINE you're a young girl born in a village," said Gabriele Nicola, an Italian coach who runs a training camp in Iten, the Rift Valley's famed Home of Champions. "If you won a minor race in Europe, you might take home 2,000 Euros, 3,000 Euros. That's a full year of salary for a lady working as a waitress in the biggest hotel in Iten. So simply you try. You don't know if you're strong or not, but you saw your sister, your cousin, the wife of your brother or whatever run fast and go abroad and win money. So you try too."

On any given morning in Iten, as many as 900 elite runners gather silently in packs of 15 or 20 and then disperse to begin grueling training runs. They run for miles and miles on the rocky, red-dirt roads outside of Iten, snaking through farmland and rolling hills at an intimidating pace.

About 10% are true professional athletes, Nicola estimates. They compete internationally in marquee track and road races that offer five- or six-figure appearance fees and prize money. Sponsors pay for their shoes and gear and offer lucrative bonuses for notable victories or world-record times.

Another 20%, Nicola says, "survive race-to-race." They pocket \$1,000 here or there competing in lower-level races, all the while hoping that years of rigorous training will produce a breakthrough time and a big-money sponsorship deal.

The rest are fueled by reckless optimism. They descend upon Iten from across Kenya, hoping to catch the eye of the coach of a major training group there. A few display world-class talent and eventually run their way out of poverty. Most waste the best years of their lives chasing a dream that stays perpetually out of reach.

"It's really terrible," Nicola said. "At 28, 29, 30 years old, they go back to their village, more poor than before and more disappointed than before. Less than three years later, maybe you read in the media that they've passed away from cirrhosis because they started to drink too much."

The pros-to-joes ratio is similar in towns across the Rift Valley where independent runners can hope to latch on with a training group. In the U.S. or Europe, a runner struggling to earn a living might quit to pursue other career paths. In Kenya, amateur runners often keep training full-time into their late 20s and 30s, driven by the chance to improve their lives and the lack of better job opportunities.

Almost every day, Berardelli said, he or his assistants come across someone begging, "Please help me with shoes" or "Let me come join your group." Usually, the Italian coach has to say no, but occasionally he uncovers a late-blooming talent who has gone overlooked.

Nine years ago, one of Berardelli's assistant coaches asked him to give a 24-year-old runner a tryout. The assistant coach told Berardelli that this kid had been running for years while working on his family's farm and was "pressuring" him for a chance.

At first, when Benson Kipruto struggled to keep pace, Berardelli admits, "I wasn't giving him much attention." Then little by little Kipruto kept getting faster, so much faster that he won the Boston Marathon in 2021, the Chicago Marathon in 2022 and the Tokyo Marathon earlier this year.

"Now he's maybe one of the guys who can win the Olympic marathon," Berardelli said.

"Motivation to dope
Kenyan distance runners' deep-rooted motivation to escape poverty has propelled them to unprecedented success. It also, in the words of World Athletics' top anti-doping official, has created "a temptation to dope that's like no other part of our sport."

On September 25, 2014, two doping control officers visited Berardelli's training group in Kapsa-



Runners from around the world now go to Lornah Kiplagat's High Altitude Training Centre in Iten, Kenya. (Agencies)

bet and surprised the world's top-ranked female marathoner with a targeted drug test. Kenya's Rita Jeptoo tested positive for EPO, a prohibited substance with a long history of abuse among endurance athletes seeking to improve stamina and performance.

Jeptoo's lawyers tried to claim that her doctor administered the EPO because she was in a car accident and came to the Kapsabet Medicare Center in "life-threatening condition as a result of the blood she had lost." In support of her claim, Jeptoo even produced falsified medical records.

The Court of Arbitration responded by doubling Jeptoo's original two-year suspension to four years, describing the submission of the forged documents as "the culminating peak in an overall strategy" of deception and obstruction. Jeptoo did not withdraw the forged documents voluntarily, the Court noted in its decision, but "only when she was confronted with overwhelming evidence that her whole defense was totally made up."

Jeptoo, at the time, was maybe the highest-profile marathon runner ever to fail a doping test. The 2014 Chicago marathon and Boston marathon champion was stripped of those titles and also lost the chance to collect the \$500,000 prize she had been awarded as that year's World Marathon Majors champion.

Alarmed by Jeptoo's drug case and a spate of others involving Kenyan runners, the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) teamed up with the IAAF's Athletic Integrity Unit to examine the doping practices of the country's elite athletes. They found, through interviews with athletes, coaches and administrators, that Kenya had "a serious doping problem" but that it was "drastically different from other doping structures discovered elsewhere in the world."

Rogue foreign coaches and agents weren't distributing performance-enhancing drugs to Kenyan runners, as the chairman of Athletics Kenya had previously claimed. Nor was this a state-run doping system like East Germany's or Russia's. Kenyan athletes typically acted on their own, drawn by the chance to improve their own lives and their communities via the six-figure paydays available to the winners of the world's most lucrative road races.

When she spoke to Yahoo Sports, Saina described having to frequently turn away opportunists peddling banned substances obtained from a hospital or pharmacy. Saina said that to this day it's "easy" for Kenyan athletes to obtain anabolic steroids, EPO and other PEDs from

unethical pharmacists and medical workers who are "desperate to make money."

Asked about previous Kenyan runners who have insisted their failed drug tests were a result of unknowingly taking something on WADA's prohibited list, Saina scoffed at those alibis.

"That's bulls—, to be honest," Saina said. "They don't do it by mistake. They do it intentionally, knowing that this is the only way they can win money."

The AIU sought to fight this problem by transforming Kenya from an uncontrolled environment to one with guardrails in place. It has educated Kenyan athletes about the consequences of doping, drastically increased out-of-competition testing for Kenyan runners and bolstered the country's once-nonexistent anti-doping system.

Kenya didn't establish a national anti-doping agency until 2016, soon after the country narrowly avoided a ban from the Rio Olympics for a series of doping offenses and corruption allegations. Only in 2022 did the Kenyan government at last publicly acknowledge the country's doping problem and commit to spending \$25 million over the next five years to combat the epidemic.

Entering the summer, a staggering 91 Kenyan track and field athletes were ineligible to compete due to anti-doping violations, according to the AIU's global list. That group includes world record holders, Olympic gold medalists and other giants of the distance-running world.

Among the recent additions is 35-year-old Lawrence Cherono, a previous winner of marathons in Boston, Chicago and Amsterdam. In May 2022, Cherono provided an out-of-competition urine sample in Kaptagat. That test came back positive for trimetazidine, a heart medication banned by WADA in 2014.

Cherono submitted a written explanation that a local clinic prescribed heart medication to his wife and that she had accidentally given him one of those tablets instead of the painkiller he had requested. Bolstering this explanation, Cherono submitted to the AIU medical documents from the clinic.

For nearly two years, the AIU sought to verify Cherono's story, only to have its investigation "materially obstructed and substantially undermined." Only with the help of a court order did the clinic finally confirm last April that Cherono's wife had not been treated for a heart condition and that the documents he submitted "were not genuine."

Cherono is serving a seven-year suspension and won't be eligible to compete again until July 2029, one month shy of his 41st birthday. It's

an outcome that shows that World Athletics and the AIU are "determined to win the fight to clean up the sport," Travis Tygart, CEO of the U.S. Anti-Doping Agency, told Yahoo Sports.

"Athletes around the world," said Tygart, "ought to have more confidence than they've ever had that Kenyan athletes are being held to the highest of high standards by the AIU."

"I'd be on the C-Squad in Kenya" For years, American distance runner Nell Rojas had been curious about how Kenya produces so many world-class marathoners. In January 2023, Rojas traveled all the way to Iten to find out for herself.

When Rojas arrived, she found what she describes as "a fairytale land for runners." Group after group of elite runners sped past, their brightly colored running shoes leaving behind footprints in Iten's iconic red dirt.

Rojas has placed in the top 10 of the prestigious Boston and New York marathons, but even she struggled to keep pace with the Kenyan runners she trained with in high-altitude Iten. She chuckled as she described she and Australian marathoner Matthew Fox starting a morning run with a pack of other runners, only to be "immediately dropped."

At the end of the run, one of the Kenyan runners who left Rojas behind approached and struck up a conversation. When she mentioned that she was a cousin of Betsy Saina, Rojas told her that she knew Betsy and asked if they ever trained together.

"Oh no," the Kenyan woman said, laughing. "She is a professional runner. I am not even close."

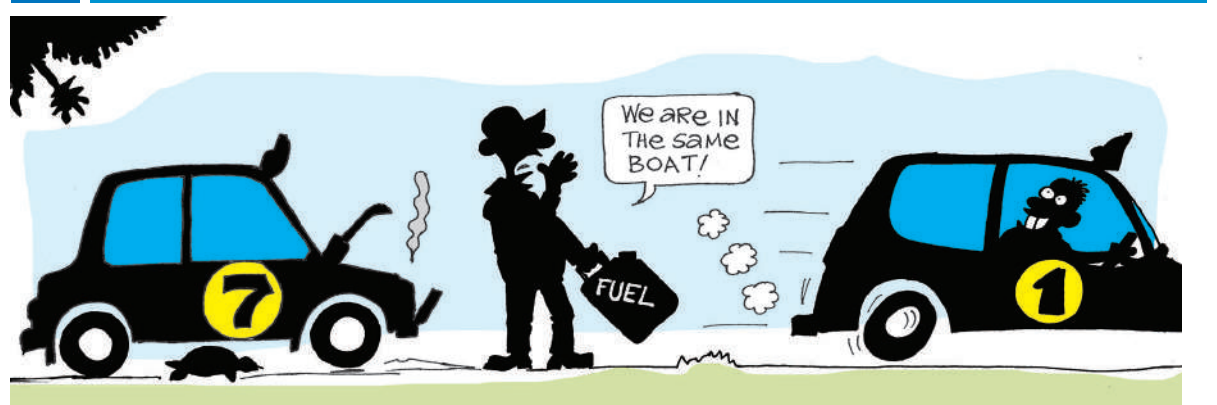
At that moment, Rojas began to understand the depth of distance-running talent in Kenya. It wasn't just the top Kenyans racing internationally who were faster than her. There were dozens more runners back in Kenya training and waiting for their chance.

"It was so humbling," Rojas said. "In the U.S., I'm one of the top marathon runners. I'd be on the C-Squad in Kenya."

Rojas is far from the only foreigner to make a pilgrimage to Iten. Thousands of runners flock to Kenya's "Home of Champions" each year, some seasoned pros seeking strong competition and fresh training methods and others amateurs eager to test themselves on the same rolling hills and terrain traversed by the best in the world.

Among the first to recognize Iten's potential as a tourist destination was Lornah Kiplagat, the future Olympic and marathon champ who slept beside a Nairobi public toilet the night before her first big race. [Yahoo/sports](#)

Gwiji by David Chikoko



SPORT

Why Kenya produces so many world-class marathoners - 2

COMPREHENSIVE REPORT, PAGE 19



Coach Dabo lauds Azam FC's resilience in 5-2 Community Shield victory over Coastal Union

By Correspondent Michael Mwebe

AZAM FC head coach Youssouph Dabo praised his team's strong response that led to a convincing 5-2 victory over Coastal Union in the Community Shield semi-final at the New Amaan Complex in Zanzibar.

Goals from Gibril Sillah, Feisal Salum, Jhonier Blanco, Adam Omar, and Ever Meza secured Azam's place in the final.

"The good thing today is that every time we had a good reaction. When the opponent reduced the deficit, we had the good mentality to score again to keep the gap between us and them," Dabo remarked.

However, Dabo (pictured) expressed concerns about his team's game management, particularly in the first half, where sloppy passing marred their performance despite a 3-1 lead.

"I just respected our opponents since this is football, sometimes it is good, sometimes not so good. Every time you need to learn from situations like today.

"I said to my players during the break that it is not normal when you succeed to have a scoreline advantage against this kind of team. We need to have more control over the ball.

The Senegalese coach also made five substitutions in the second half to give more players time on the pitch and ensure they stay focused on the team's various goals.

"Because everybody is important in this team and I want to give all players their chances and to stay focused on our different targets. With this kind of game, if I don't give them minutes, what kind of game are they going to play?"

"It is also good for them to learn. It is also not easy to come from the bench because you might think it is an easy game but it is not," he said.

Azam FC will face Young Africans in the final after the NBC Premier League champions narrowly defeated Simba 1-0, thanks to a last-gasp first-half goal by Maxi Nzeveli.

“

Because everybody is important in this team and I want to give all players their chances and to stay focused on our different targets. With this kind of game, if I don't give them minutes, what kind of game are they going to play?

Exciting matchups await as NBC Premier League 2024/25 season schedule unveiled

By Correspondent Seth Mapoli

THE NBC Premier League 2024/25 season is set to kick off on Saturday, August 16, 2024, following the official release of the league schedule by the Tanzania Premier League Board (TPLB) yesterday.

The new season promises to deliver a thrilling series of matches as top-tier teams in Tanzanian football vie for supremacy on the pitch.

The much-anticipated season opener will feature a face-off between Pamba Jiji and Tanzania Prisons at the CCM Kirumba Stadium in Mwanza. This match will set the tone for what is expected to be a fiercely competitive season, with teams eager to assert their dominance early on.

The league will continue on August 17 with two more matches. Mashujaa FC will host Dodoma City at Lake Tanganyika Kigoma Stadium, while Namungo FC will welcome Fountain Gate at Majaliwa Stadium in Lindi. These matches are expected to draw significant attention as teams begin their campaigns with the goal of securing crucial points.

Simba SC, one of the giants of Tanzanian football, will make their league debut on August 18 against Tabora United at the newly selected KMC Complex Stadium.

Simba's start to the season will be closely watched, as the club seeks to reclaim the league title after finishing third last season. Following this, Simba will face Fountain Gate on August 25, also at the KMC Complex, before traveling to Sokoine Stadium in Mbeya to take on Tanzania Prisons on October 22.

Simba's early-season fixtures include a potentially challenging encounter against Azam FC in the fourth round, with the exact date yet to be confirmed.

The match against Azam FC, who finished second in the league last season, will be a critical test for Simba as they look to establish themselves as title contenders. Simba's fifth-round match will see them take on Namungo FC, further adding to the club's demanding start to the season.

Young Africans, the reigning champions and dominant force in Tanzanian football, will begin their title defense on August 29 with an away match against Kagera Sugar at Kaitaba Stadium.

The Jangwani-based team, who have clinched the league title for three consecutive seasons, will be under pressure to maintain their winning streak. Their second match will see them face Ken Gold at Sokoine Stadium in Mbeya, followed by a clash with JKT Tanzania at Azam Complex Stadium on October 22.

Young Africans' fixture list also includes a yet-to-be-confirmed date of a fourth-round match against Mashujaa FC at Azam Complex Stadium and a fifth-round match against Singida Big Stars. These matches are expected to be pivotal in determining Young Africans' position in the league standings as the season progresses.

In addition to the domestic league fixtures, Tanzanian clubs will also be engaged in continental competitions. The CAF Champions League and CAF Confederation Cup preliminary rounds are scheduled between August 23 and 25, adding an extra layer of excitement to the early weeks of the season.

Additionally, the AFCON 2025 qualifiers will take place from September 2 to 10, followed by the CAF second preliminary round qualifiers from September 13 to 15.

The 2024/25 NBC Premier League season will conclude on May 24, 2025, after each team has completed 30 rounds of matches. This marks the culmination of a grueling campaign where consistency and endurance will be key to success.

This season will also witness the introduction of two new teams, Pamba Jiji from Mwanza and Ken Gold from Mbeya, who earned their spots in the Premier League after successful campaigns in the Championship. Their promotion adds fresh competition to the league, while the absence of Mtibwa Sugar and Geita Gold, who were relegated last season, marks a significant shift in the league's composition.

As the 2024/25 season approaches, all eyes will be on Young Africans to see if they can continue their dominance and secure a fourth consecutive league title.

Dauids laments penalty denial in Simba's defeat to Yanga



Simba midfielder Deborah Fernandez controls the ball watched closely by Young Africans winger Max Nzengeli during their Community Shield semi-final match held at the Benjamin Mkapa Stadium on Thursday. Young Africans won 1-0. Photo: Courtesy of SSC

By Correspondent Michael Mwebe

SIMBA head coach Fadlu Dauids has voiced his frustrations after his team was denied a penalty in the closing stages of their match against arch-rivals Young Africans on Thursday evening.

The incident occurred when Simba's Kelvin Kijiri went down inside the penalty area under a challenge from Young Africans defender Chadrack Boka.

However, referee Elly Sassi waved play on, much to the dismay of Dauids and his team.

Speaking after the game, Dauids did not hide his disappointment, insisting that the decision was a clear error.

"First of all, the referee should be brave and give a penalty. I watched it back, and it was a clear penalty. I know it's the 94th minute, but it's unacceptable to miss a clear penalty like that, especially when it could have given us the

goal," Dauids remarked.

The South African coach also acknowledged the shortcomings in his team's attacking department, admitting that they need reinforcements to bolster their offensive capabilities.

"We need to strengthen in the attacking department for sure. We are working hard behind the scenes to strengthen our team. That is clear," Dauids stated.

Despite the controversy and his team's attacking struggles, Dauids was pleased with Simba's overall performance.

He felt that his team matched Young Africans, a side that has been largely unchanged, despite Simba having been together for only four weeks.

"I think tonight we have shown that there is no difference between the two teams. We have shown a really brave face to go out there. This is a team that has been together for three years, and we are the team that has been together for four weeks, and it didn't look like that today," he said.

Dauids emphasized the importance of

using the defeat as motivation for the rest of the season.

"Our players have to use this defeat to push us on for the rest of the season because we can't accept a defeat like this and just be okay. We have to use the pain of this defeat to drive us for the rest of the season," he urged.

Analyzing the match, Dauids acknowledged that his team had handled their opponents well, aside from the lapse in concentration that led to Young Africans' goal.

"We handled them quite well besides the goal they scored through the center. We spoke about it, that's where they want to attack, and one lapse of concentration, an individual mistake, led to the goal," Dauids noted.

In conclusion, while Dauids credited his players for their performance after just four weeks together, he reiterated the need to improve their attacking options.

"We have got to create more and score more goals. As I mentioned, we need to strengthen our attacking department to have that fluidity and be able to score more goals," he concluded.

Flexibles by David Chikoko

