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Tanzania handed over chair of blue economy

By Guardian Reporter

TANZANIA has been officially handed over the chair of the fishing and blue economy sector of the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS) at the ambassadorial level.

Tanzania's Ambassador to Belgium and OACPS, Jestas Abuok Nyamanga (pictured) was officially handed over the chair for the sector by the Ghanaian Ambassador in Belgium, Harriet Sena Siaw-Boateng, whose term had ended.

The brief handing-over was held on Monday, with Tanzania nominated for the chair at the OACPS ministerial meeting in Brussels last June.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and East African Cooperation said in a statement yesterday that the chairmanship is exercised at the OACPS ambassador level, for those accredited to Brussels, and the OACPS ministers responsible for blue economy issues, expiring in February 2025.

It said that Tanzania is fully mobilised in handling the implementation of various issues in the OACPS agenda, like putting in place robust strategies and the right environment on the issue.

This is especially so as relates to the need to empower people in the various



Since OACPS was initiated, a number of goals have been realised and benefits obtained through various programmes

member countries to appropriately benefit from the blue economy, chiefly in fishing and harvesting other sea resources, it said, affirming that Tanzania will thus organise the next OACPS ministerial meeting overfishing issues billed for mid next year.

Tanzania was picked for the chair in view of its influence within OACPS and its track record especially with the sixth phase government in handling various national and international issues tied to the fishing sector and the wider blue economy aspect, it said.

Prime Minister Kassim Majaliwa late last year assured OACPS that Tanzania will be supportive of its efforts in promoting the blue economy and fostering sustainable development among the member countries, the statement noted.

He represented the country at the Heads of State and Government for OACPS member states at its tenth summit in the Angolan capital of Luanda.

Tanzania reaffirmed its position as a strong partner bent on ensuring that OACPS goals are realised, thus urging the need for each member state to "build the desire to achieve

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Two ministers in portfolio shifting

By Guardian Reporter

PRESIDENT Samia Suluhu Hassan yesterday swore in newly appointed cabinet ministers and other top government officials following a minor reshuffle late on Tuesday.

In the new line-up, the president shifted Minister Mohamed Mchengerwa from Culture, Arts and Sports to Tourism and Natural Resources, while incumbent Dr Pindi Chana takes over at the Culture, Arts and Sports portfolio.

At the State House event in Dar es Salaam, Vice President Dr Philip Mpango asked the newly sworn in ministers and permanent secretaries to refrain from deviating from their ethics norms when executing duties in their respective docket.

"I am aware of the temptations in some ministries," he said, appealing to appointees and others to refrain from such acts. As they are not new to the cabinet and ministerial offices, this gives the government confidence that they will observe the required norms, he said.

The VP hailed President Samia for the changes saying reshuffles help to improve efficiency, in like manner as a soccer coach who has to pull out a player or two depending on circumstance.

Prime Minister Kassim Majaliwa said his office will offer support to the newly



This is the second reshuffle since last April, at a time when she had earlier revamped the cabinet three months earlier

appointed ministers and top civil servants as they are not new in top levels of government. He similarly used the occasion to make a public assessment of his tour of Songwe Region, airing affection of the people of the region for the president.

In the changes, the Culture, Arts and Sports permanent secretary Dr Hassan Abbasi moves to the Tourism and Natural Resources docket, taking over from Prof Eliamiani Sedoyeka. Said Othman Yakub becomes permanent secretary with the Culture, Arts and Sports docket, taking over from Dr Abbasi.

This is the second reshuffle since last April, at a time when she had earlier revamped the cabinet three months earlier.

In remarks in closing the CCM electoral congress, President Samia said there were top leaders who were not in tune with the speed of the sixth phase government, emphasising that CCM has to deliver on its [election manifesto as it prepares for local government elections next year and the general election.



Dr Philip Mpango



Prime Minister Kassim Majaliwa pictured yesterday addressing Tunduma town residents from an open car while on a tour of Songwe Region. Photo: PMO

Govt: 90,000 tonnes rice imports will ease pricing

By Guardian Reporter

THE government has issued special permits to traders for the importation of 90,000 tonnes of rice to soften price rises starting early next month.

Dr Ashatu Kijaji, the Investment, Industry and Trade minister, made this observation at a press briefing yesterday on the price trend for grains and other food staples.

The minister said President Samia Suluhu Hassan has approved the import of subsidized rice to ignite price relief expected early next month, especially as the fasting starts in the fourth week of



Rice is sold from 2,500/- and 3,500/- and hasn't changed since last month

March.

"We hope that with this importation, rice prices will fall and thus provide relief to consumers," she said, noting that the price of various food grains hasn't changed much during the past month.

The government was taking measures to overcome the rapid price rises in major food crops, like opening maize selling points in 15 regions and various districts, she said.

Up to the end of last month a total of 29,084 tonnes of subsidized maize had been delivered in 15 regions, helping to reduce prices of the key staple, she

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AU picks Kikwete for Food Prize Committee

By Guardian Reporter

FORMER president Jakaya Kikwete (pictured) is tomorrow expected to be installed as chairman for the Africa Food Prize Committee the African Union AU head offices in Addis Ababa, on the sidelines of the AU summit.

A statement released yesterday by the



Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA) said that after inducting the new chair, the committee and its partners will launch the 2023 call for nominations.

The former president takes over from former Nigerian president Olusegun Obasanjo, with Ethiopian ex-premier Hailemariam Dessalegn, chair of the AGRA board of directors, presiding at the ceremony.

Obasanjo started his tenure as Africa Food Prize Committee chairman in 2016, elevating the recognition of the prize, the statement noted, describing the Africa Food Prize as the preeminent award in

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joint success," the premier had stated.

Since OACPS was initiated, a number of goals have been realised and benefits obtained through various programmes, he stated, elaborating that taking up joint

venture projects among member countries has been fruitful.

OACPS brings together 79 member states from Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific, striving to achieve sustainable development of member states via their progressive integration into the global economy, the statement indicated.

AU picks Kikwete for Food Prize Committee

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that field.

It is geared at recognizing an outstanding individual or institution leading the effort to change the reality of farming in Africa, from a struggle to survive to a business that thrives, it affirmed.

Now in its seventh year, previous winners have included Professor Eric Yirenkyi Danquah - a Ghanaian plant geneticist, despite that scores of AU member states still resist legalising the genetic modification of crops.

Other winners are two researchers at the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT), namely Dr André Bationo from Burkina Faso and Dr Catherine Nakalembe, a Ugandan national.

The \$100,000 prize celebrates Africans who are taking control of Africa's agriculture agenda. It puts a spotlight on bold initiatives and technical innovations that can be replicated across the continent to create a new era of food security and economic opportunity for all

Africans, the AU secretariat said in a briefing.

It highlighted farmers' difficulties in accessing markets, constrained by distance and limited quantities of produce, thus seeing farmers receive low prices for their products.

Many farmers do not have access to storage, thus selling their produce at harvest time when the price is lowest, or risk having the quality of their produce slowly eroded because of poor storage technologies, it said.

Limited technical knowledge also means farmers can be slow to adopt modern agricultural practices that are more productive, commercial and sustainable. And with the effects of climate change becoming real, this need to continue learning and adopting becomes even more important as farmers counter the increasingly challenging conditions.

The Africa Food Prize exists to reward pioneering efforts to overcome these obstacles and encourage others to follow their lead, it added.

Billionaire's bid to control Kenya's cement business

NAIROBI

FIVE cement makers have put up a spirited fight against a fresh plot by billionaire Narendra Raval Guru to control the lucrative clinker market.

Narendra, also known as Guru, through his company National Cement, is once again pushing for enhanced import duty on clinker, the main ingredient for the manufacture of cement as the steel magnate eyes some Sh8.3 billion that factories without grinders pay to import the crucial raw material.

The tycoon, whose Devki Group also has an iron grip on the steel sector, is understood to have been given an ear by the new administration of President William Ruto as it prepares its first budget for the upcoming fiscal year starting July.

Finance ministers from seven member-states of the East African Community (EAC) will soon agree on common external tariffs (CET) that will guide the trade between the regional community and countries outside of the EAC.

Most of the goods and services are traded duty-free between EAC countries, but a CET is levied on goods coming from nations outside the trading bloc with clinker attracting an import duty of 10 percent.

The Athi River-based National Cement, which has the largest limestone deposits, the main material for clinker production, wants import duty on clinker raised to 25 percent.

But just like in an earlier attempt, five cement manufacturers - Rai Cement, Bamburi Cement, Savannah Cement, Ndovu Cement and Riftcot Limited - have fought back, arguing that this would create an unfair playing ground with only two players, National Cement and Mombasa Cement, dominating the industry.

In this meeting, unlike in the earlier one in Financial Year 2020/21, Mombasa Cement was non-committal on the proposed increase of duty, leaving National Cement a lone ranger in the hunt for the billions of shillings in imported clinker.

During the forum between the

State Department of Industry and the Kenya Association of Manufacturers (KAM) on the proposed increase of duty on clinker that was held on January 31, Narendra's National Cement argued that the country had enough capacity to produce clinker.

"National Cement reported they have fully integrated plants in Athi River, Mombasa, Emali with a clinker production capacity of 4.5 million tonnes per annum and a new one in West Pokot, which has a capacity of 2.5 million tonnes per annum and a total combined was seven million tonnes per annum," reads minutes in the meeting that was chaired the PS for State Department for Industry Juma Mukhwana.

The event was also attended by Abubakar Hassan, PS for the State Department of Investment Promotion.

In a sharp rejoinder, however, the other five cement makers argued that raising duty on clinker would result in unfair competition with the quality of clinker not being guaranteed.

They said they had already been given a grace period of four years lapsing in 2026 to build their own grinders.

The other five players are expected to put up individual clinker investments worth \$1 billion (Sh125 billion).

Such investments normally take about 22-36 months to be installed and commissioned.

They said locally-produced clinker was supposed to be significantly cheaper than imported one.

"But this was not the case as local producers peg their prices to the landed cost of imported clinker," reads the minutes.

During the meeting, there was a recommendation for a preliminary analysis of the impact of changing the duty on clinker through a temporary suspension of the 10 percent duty to a higher tariff of 25 percent.

"Preliminary findings point to flooding of cheap cement from Uganda and Tanzania and significant loss of export opportunities to other EAC Partner States' markets," reads the minutes.

AGENCIES



Agriculture minister Hussein Bashe (C) poses for group photo in Dar es Salaam yesterday with officials representing, among others agencies, the East Africa Farmers Federation, Tanzania Federation of Cooperatives, Cooperatives Union of Zanzibar and Agricultural Council of Tanzania. They had just exchanged ideas on draft legislation on the East African Community Cooperative Societies Act, 2015, which is awaiting assent by EAC heads of state. EAFF is a non-political, not-for-profit regional umbrella network of over 20 million active smallholder family farmers. Its membership is voluntary and it currently comprises women's organisations, commodity associations, co-operatives and advocacy organisations. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

Govt: 90,000 tonnes rice imports will ease pricing

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said, hinting at other measures to control inflation in basic products.

The minister cautioned unfaithful traders from improper price hiking especially when Muslims move into fasting, specifying that traders importing the rice will have to sell at a subsidized price as instructed by the government.

The ministry was conducting market analysis to identify the trend in demand for maize and maize flour, before setting up a

subsidised maize trade initiative in major cities to reduce prices, she stated.

With these measures, the government is sure that in the next two to three months, inflation will decrease with grain products going down.

Maize flour prices in February range from 1,500/- to 2,100/- per kilogramme, the same as in the past month.

"Rice is sold from 2,500/- and 3,500/- and hasn't changed since last month," she said, citing regions

accessing the produce at low prices as Iringa, Simiyu and Tabora, while the more high price regions are Dar es Salaam, Lindi and Manyara.

Beans prices range from 2,300/- and 4,000/- per kg which is relatively unchanged from the lower level of 2,400/- last month.

Potatoes fetch a lower price of 1,000/- to 1,750/- per kg down from the earlier 2,000/- upper prices last month. Songwe, Tanga and Mbeya regions get the produce at lower price and high prices are noticed in Manyara and Ruvuma,

she stated.

Wheat flour is sold at 2,000/- to 2,500/- per kg, with the higher price level dropping from 3,200/- in January. Sugar prices remained stable for most of the time, at 3,000/- per kilo.

One litre of sunflower oil sells at 4,750/- to 7,800/- while palm oil sells at 4,500/- to 7,250/- per litre. Manyara, Morogoro and Singida regions get edible oil at lower prices where Lindi, Mtwara, Coast and Mara access it at higher prices, she added.



Zanzibar President Dr Hussein Ali Mwinyi pictured at Zanzibar State House yesterday engaged in talks on fuel business and other issues with a Puma Afrika delegation led by Puma Energy's Head of Africa, Fadi Mitri. Photo: Zanzibar State House

'Govt officials responsible over status of development projects'

By Guardian Reporter

THE government has accomplished a lot in ensuring it implements various development projects for the people, hence it is the responsibility of government officials at various levels to inspect them and the projects are of high standards as intended for the money value.

The remarks were made by the Prime Minister, Kassim Majaliwa on Tuesday at Kakozi village, Momba District, Songwe Region during his official visit to inspect the progress of development projects during

the two years of the phase VI government.

While at the village he inspected the construction work on the strategic crops and livestock international market including six warehouses saying he was satisfied with the stage reached and commended Momba district officials for the good work.

The project to cost 8.6bn/- is being funded by the central government and involves the construction of a livestock auction and a cattle dip.

The completion of the project will increase the district revenues

that will enable it to finance various infrastructure and the provision of social services.

Momba Member of Parliament, Condester Sicalwe used the occasion to thank President Samia Suluhu Hassan for endorsing adequate funds for his constituency in the past two years for implementing development projects, including 7.8bn/- for water projects.

The MP also appealed to the government to complete rural electricity distribution including the building of a hostel off secondary school.

PM Majaliwa said 22 out of 72 villages will be connected to power, saying President Samia wants to see every home of a Tanzanian has electricity.

Meanwhile, Majaliwa addressed residents of Tunduma town saying the government will continue implementing development projects depending on their needs, and lauded Tunduma Town executive director for good revenue collection.

David Silinde, Tunduma Member of Parliament and deputy minister in the President's Office - Regional Administration and Local Government (PO-RALG) thanked the phase VI government for implementing various development projects costing more than 11bn/- in his constituency in the last two years.



Alliance for Africa Farmers Party national chairman Sudi Said Sudi addresses journalists in Dar es Salaam yesterday chiefly on the run-up to the resumption of the party's public meetings. With him is deputy chairperson (Mainland) Nancy Mrikaria. Photo: Correspondent Sabato Kasika

Flight fails to land at Dodoma airport

By Guardian Reporter

PRECISION Air flight PW 600 yesterday failed to land at Dodoma Airport and was forced to come back to the Julius Nyerere International Airport (JNIA) after developing technical problems in one of its engines.

According to one of the passengers (name withheld), the airplane failed after one of its engines failed as they were trying to land at Dodoma Airport yesterday morning.

"Today when we were travelling from Dar es Salaam to Dodoma with Precision Air craft PW 600, there is something which happened, I experienced this as I was seating near the window, the captain announced an emergency that one engine had failed and we had to come back to Julius Nyerere International Airport (JNIA), the situation was intense in the airplane but we thank God we landed safely."

He called on authorities to take robust measures in supervising aviation issues which include monitoring well to ensure that aircraft get regular services as the faults are putting the lives of the majority of people in danger.

Precision Air marketing and communications manager, Hillary Mremi confirmed that the plane failed to land at Dodoma Airport but didn't explain in detail the cause of the failure.

"We have seen the information on our plane failure to land at Dodoma Airport, as per security procedures if the captain receives information from operation systems, takes required precaution measures immediately," he said.

"On this, the captain got information that there were faults in the engine's system and what he did was shutting it down to protect it and then he was required to land in another nearby airport which was JNIA," he explained.

Mremi assured customers that their planes are all safe and there was nothing to worry.

"These planes have been created with two engines, so if one fails, the one continues to work to help the aircraft to land safely. Pilots have also been trained to overcome any

challenges while on air," he explained.

He added that all Precision Air planes undergo service as per national and international security procedures which include also being inspected by local and international authorities.



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Tanzania and Comoro sign MoU to establish permanent commission

By Guardian Reporter

THE governments of Tanzania and Comoro have signed a memorandum of Agreement (MoU) to establish a joint permanent commission (JPC).

The MoU was signed by Tanzania's Minister for Foreign Affairs and East African Cooperation, Dr Stergomena Tax and Comoro's Foreign Minister,

Dhoahir Dhoulkamal at the Tanzania's embassy in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Soon after signing the MoU, Dr Tax said that Tanzania and Comoro enjoy historical relations and that both countries have been cooperating in various sectors.

In various areas, hence the signing of the agreement will enable the two countries to work more closely

including initiating the process to establish the JPC for the benefit of the two countries.

"Tanzania and Comoro have been cooperating in trade, investment, health, social, political, defence and security, hence the signing of the MoU will enable the two nations to work much closely," said Dr Tax.

For his part, Comoro Foreign Minister Dhoulkamal thanked

the government of Tanzania for agreeing to form JPC and Comoro's readiness to continue cooperating with Tanzania both diplomatically and economically. "Tanzania has been a friendly country to Comoro for a long time, we believe that today's signing of the agreement will facilitate the opening of various new economic opportunities for the wide interest of our two countries," said Dhoulkamal.

Dr Tax is in Addis Ababa, to participate at the 42nd meeting of the AU council ministers that was expected to start yesterday and ends today.

AWZ, AfriCraft inaugurate waste management project in Kigoma

By Guardian Reporter

THE German Parliamentary delegation committee on economic cooperation and development (AWZ) has launched an AfriCraft small scale waste management project in Kigoma Region.

Implemented by the African Handcraft Organisation (AfriCraft), the project costs 11,500 euros (28.8m) where the German Embassy is contributing 9,285 euros (23.3m/-) and the rest by AfriCraft.

In a statement availed to the media stated their visit brings a strong message of the German government's support to the youth, women, and efforts taken to conserve the environment in Tanzania.

The small-scale waste

management project will be implemented by AfriCraft in partnership with the Pentecostal Church and will tackle unemployment by enabling young people to carry out waste collection and save the environment by subsequently transforming waste into products that are useful in everyday life."

The delegation was headed by Knut Gerschau (FDP party) other MPs were Derya Türk-Nachbaur (SPD), Rebecca Schamber (SPD), Thomas Rachel (CDU/CSU), Ullrich Schauws (THE GREEN), Dietmar Friedhoff (AfD), Cornelia Möhring (THE LEFT), Annette Verheyen (consultant) and Renate Wolf (interpreter).

The delegates were received by the regional commissioner

of Kigoma, Tobias Adengeny, and accompanied by Dr Katrin Bornemann, German mission head of cooperation, the founder of AfriCraft, Meinolf Kuper and the ArchBishop of Pentecostal Church, Ezra Enoch Mtamya.

Gerschau highlighted that Kigoma is one of the most poverty-affected regions in Tanzania with a high rate of unemployment among the youth and limited access to jobs. This factor pushes young people to move to Dar es Salaam in order to look for employment.

African Handcraft Organisation is a non-profit organisation aiming at improving the livelihoods of the less privileged people in Tanzania through different social projects such as Coco beach waste management centre for beach entrepreneurs, reusable sanitary pads for school girls, provision of bicycles to school students who walk for long distances to access education among others.



Government chief valuer Evelynne Mugasha (R) has a word in Dar es Salaam on Monday with Henk Diederichs (L), chief operating officer of Australia-based gold-mining firm OreCorp Limited, and Damien Valente, general manager of SOTTA Mining Corporation Limited - Africa, both with ongoing operations in Tanzania. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

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Kilombero valley villagers benefiting from economic activities initiated by STEP

By Felister Peter

VILLAGERS in the Kilombero valley, Morogoro Region are now reaping money through various economic activities initiated by Southern Tanzania Elephant Programme (STEP), a local Non-Governmental Organization that works to reduce human wildlife conflicts along the Kilombero elephant corridor.

The Kilombero elephant corridor links Udzungwa Mountains with the Nyerere National Park through the Magombera Nature Reserve.

"We are thankful to STEP for assisting us to establish the Village Savings and Loan Association (VSLA) as I can save money and access loans to boost my business and purchase school materials including uniforms for my children at both primary and secondary school," said Issaya Utambule from Kanyenja village in Mkula ward, Kilombero District.

Utambule, who received a loan of 100,000/- in January this year, was speaking to a group of journalists from the Journalists Environmental Association of Tanzania (JET) who visited the corridor recently as part of the USAID Tuhifadhi Maliasili Activity (USAID-TMA). He is also the chairman of the Manufaa VSLA.

Mrashi Dongwe who is a member of the 'TunzaKikutunze' VSLA in Sonjo village, Mkula ward commended STEP for coming up with the idea to establish the savings groups because apart from saving money, they are also trained on financial discipline and management.

"As women we are slowly developing a money saving culture; some of the profits we get from our businesses are partly invested in the savings group," said Dongwe, expressing optimism that the group will later on grow to offer more loans as all members are determined with similar ambitions.

A member of TEWAMI Milesa group, Juma Mahulu from Kanyenja village in Mng'ula B ward said as members they are benefitting with

a beekeeping project which was initiated by the NGO for purposes of installing beehives fences to scare elephants from invading crops farms but also to support villagers economically.

Human Elephant Co-existence (HEC) Coordinator from STEP, Kim Lim said they have been working closely with 258 villagers to ensure the big animals do not invade farms and damage crops. Among the farmers, 133 are women and 125 men.

Lim remarked that they have been deploying various methods to keep elephants away from farmers' agricultural fields as well as providing education to villagers and students on the importance of the animals and how they can save themselves whenever they come across the wild animals.

On VSLA, Kim said villagers through their already established savings groups use the generated profits to establish various income generating projects including vegetable gardens, sugarcane farms and soap making.

She said STEP also supports the groups financially whereas they have been providing non-interest loans to each of the groups starting with 500,000/- which is repaid in a year. She said those repaying on time can have their loan amount increased to between 1m/- and 3m/-.

"A total of 114 loans worth over 12m/- were provided to the villagers saving groups in 2021 through monies generated from their weekly savings while STEP provided the groups with loans amounting to 3.5m/- and another 7m/- in 2022," stated the official.

She added that at Kanyenja village, group members resolved to use the generated profit to construct a dispensary while in Magombera village they are using the money to build a village office.

STEP was established in 2014 for purposes of conducting research as well as to control and reduce human wildlife conflicts. It only started with four workers but the number has now increased to 35.

SADC to include NSAs, CSOs in its peace and security architecture

By Guardian Reporter

THE Southern African Development Community (SADC) in 2022 made significant progress towards strengthening the democratisation process in the Region through training on electoral assistance and including Non-State Actors (NSAs) and civil society in its peace and security architecture.

As a result, a total of 44 NSAs were trained as long-term observers and these included representatives of civil society, parliamentarians and senior officials of Electoral Management Bodies (EMBs).

This was in line with a critical provision in the revised SADC Principles and Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections (2021) on diversity in the composition of the SADC Electoral Observer Missions (SEOMs).

Member States nominated the representatives of civil society, senior officials of EMBs and parliamentarians, in addition to government officials, for the first time, to participate in SEOMs deployed to cover the Angolan and Lesotho elections held in August and October 2022 respectively.

These actions sought to improve the quality of SEOM reports and increase their credibility in the future.

This was done through enhancing SADC's capacity for electoral assistance which falls under Result Area 1 of the Support to Peace and Security in the SADC region programme (SPSS), a European Union (EU) funded facility which seeks to promote peace, security, stability and democracy across the Region in line with the SADC Treaty; and to strengthen the SADC peace and security architecture in the areas of conflict prevention and resolution and public and human security, in line with the Regional Indicative Strategic Development

Plan (RISDP) 2020-2030.

The deliberate capacitation and infusion of civil society and other NSA into the work of SADC's peace and security architecture is significant given that the Ministerial Committee of the Organ and Council of Ministers approved the operationalization of the NSA mechanism which will enable a more structured partnership with civil society, think-tanks, and research and academic institutions in respect of further strengthening SADC's developmental interventions and its peace and security architecture.

In mediation and conflict management training, 514 members of civil society in 13 countries were trained in conflict analysis and mediation skills and now form part of SADC's Mediation Roster which may be activated as appropriate to assist with national or regional interventions; as well as contribute to early warning systems.

During the year under review, the SADC Mediation, conflict prevention and preventive diplomacy structures were fully operationalized with the appointment of five members of the Panel of Elders (PoE) and 9 members of the Mediation Reference Group (MRG), followed by their subsequent induction trainings in readiness for deployment to countries experiencing conflict, such as Eswatini, Lesotho and the Democratic Republic of Congo. Members of the MRG were also actively involved in the training of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs).

Work towards strengthening the Region's Infrastructure for Peace (I4P) continued in 12 countries, including support to physical I4Ps such as the Regional Counter Terrorism Centre (RCTC) in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, with the acquisition of ICT Data bank related equipment to enable its functionality.



National Economic Empowerment Council executive secretary Beng'i Issa updates journalists in Dodoma city Tuesday on developments at the council. The photo we ran in yesterday's issue carried the wrong caption, an error we sincerely regret. - Editor. Photo: Correspondent Ibrahim Joseph

WWF reiterates vow to promote environmental conservation to mitigate climate change effects

By Henry Mwangonde

THE World-Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) has assured Tanzania of its commitment to work together in formulating strategies aimed at promoting environmental conservation and mitigating climate change effects.

Visiting Director General for WWF International Dr Kirsten Schuijt made the assurance on Tuesday when she met the Minister in the State Vice President's Office (Union and Environment) Dr Selemani Jafo, during her first visit to Tanzania

since she was appointed to lead the organisation some five weeks ago.

She said WWF will remain committed to work in four long-term perspectives in ensuring the environment is protected and reducing the impact of climate change.

The director mentioned four areas of focus in which the organisation is implementing in the country with the aim of protecting the environment including water sources, marine areas, landscape restoration and forest restoration.

"We live in a world where biodiversity is impacted and local communities as well due to climate change so we are visiting Tanzania with the aim of emphasizing the true commitment and collaboration between WWF and the government," she said.

Dr Schuijt said the reason WWF exists in Tanzania is because of the beautiful biodiversity both for the international and local community, also there is great cooperation between the two partners.

Minister Jafo hailed WWF for continuing to work with the

government adding that Tanzania was open to work with development partners with WWF being one adding that the visit by the senior official was important because it has come soon after the COP27 meeting where nations agreed on new areas of cooperation that will enable the recovery of natural resources.

WWF country director for Tanzania Dr Aman Ngusuru said that climate change was real as evidenced by damages notably in the mountains of Kilimanjaro and Usambara, where trees have been cut in large quantities.



Serengeti Breweries Limited Pilsner Lager brand manager Wankyo Marando (R) speaks virtually from Dar es Salaam on Tuesday to the winners of the first draw of the firm's raffle dubbed 'Kapu la Wana'. Seven of the brand's customers in the Lake Victoria South and North zones won smart television sets, smart phones and a motorcycle. Left is Gaming Board of Tanzania representative Salim Mgafi. The photo we ran in yesterday's issue carried the wrong caption, an error we sincerely regret. - Editor. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

Brewer embarks on campaign to promote anti-drinking education among under-age

By Guardian Reporter

LOCAL brewer, Serengeti Breweries Limited (SBL) and Tanga region education stakeholders have embarked on a campaign to promote anti-drinking education for the under-age to curb alcohol-drinking tendencies among students in the region.

The campaign by the office of the regional Education Officer for Tanga Maurus Ndunguru Coordinator for Civil Society Organisations and Development Officer for Tanga region, Naetwa Kilango aims at sensitizing secondary school pupils on the adverse impacts of under-age drinking at Nguvumali secondary school.

The campaign, dubbed

SMASHED, is an interactive theatre experience conducted in schools to educate secondary school-going students about the side effects of alcohol consumption at a tender age, advising them to refrain from consuming alcohol before maturity.

Tanzania is among African countries with early-age initiation to alcohol consumption. A study conducted in 2019 in Mwanza and Kilimanjaro regions found the prevalence of alcohol consumption among secondary school students aged 15 and above ranging from 12.9 percent among girls in Mwanza to 63.9 percent among boys in Kilimanjaro.

The prevalence of alcohol use among students aged 13-15 in Dar es Salaam was 5.6 percent.

The programme combines drama presentations and students' engagement in a motivational learning environment to equip them with facts, skills, and confidence to make responsible choices and develop responsible attitudes in health-related matters.

Speaking at Nguvumali secondary school, Ndunguru said, "This campaign will improve students' awareness on making the right choices in their lives, especially in the targeted schools which have several underage drinking cases."

John Wanyancha, SBL Corporate Director, said the programme is implemented countrywide in phases, which began in Dar es Salaam and now in the Tanga region. The programme has reached over

15,000 students in the two regions. "SMASHED gives important life lessons to students, which arms them with knowledge and information necessary to make smart choices and safeguard their welfare as well as dreams," Wanyancha added.

Meanwhile, the Coordinator for Civil Society Organisations and Development Officer for the Tanga region, Kilango, commended SBL's efforts against underage alcohol consumption.

"We appreciate SBL's efforts in providing awareness on responsible drinking and underage alcohol consumption. The SMASHED programme brings tangible items that students must contextualize to safeguard their potential," she added.



Daniel Kindole (R), Iringa regional manager of the Tanzania National Roads Agency (Tanroads), pictured in Iringa municipality yesterday briefing Works and Transport minister Prof Makame Mbarawa (L) on progress made in renovating and expanding Iringa Airport. He said the work was 45 per cent done. The minister was on a one-day tour of Iringa Region. Photo: Correspondent Friday Simbaya

Government opens room for private sector to venture into business of commuter trains

By Correspondent James Kandoya

THE government has opened room for the private sector to invest in commuter train operations in the city to reduce running costs and promote Public Private Partnership (PPP).

Tanzania Railway Corporation (TRC) Director general Masanja Kadogosa, briefed journalists yesterday in Dar es Salaam during a seminar organised for editors when unveiling success and future plans for the entity.

He said public private partnership will help to reduce operation costs including construction and procurement of wagons.

Kadogosa said already a number

of investors have shown interest in the urban rail construction noting that the government was open for discussions.

"The government has already done the designs, partnership is the only solution to improve urban commuter train services which are urgently needed due to the increase in population," he said.

He said the projection shows that by 2030, Dar es Salaam city will have a population of 10 million people. According to him, bus transport services will not be enough to serve the city.

According to him, the open access amendment currently is under legal procedures to make it right and when completed, it will be used in

the running process of the business.

The TRC boss said the SGR operation for Dar es Salaam section will start in May this year adding that operation will start when the procured wagons arrive in the country.

"It is our hope that by April this year all needed procured wagons will have arrived in the country," he said.

In his opening speech, the Permanent Secretary, Ministry for Works and Transport Gabriel Digile called upon journalists in the country to avoid reporting unbalanced news.

"Whenever you perform your duties, don't forget patriotism," he said.

WHRRB plans to launch e-warehouse next month

By Polycarp Machira, Dodoma

THE Warehouse Receipt Regulatory Board (WHRRB) has accomplished its process for establishment of an e-warehouse which is expected to be launched next month.

According to WHRRB Executive Director, Asangye Bangu with the new system licences for warehouses will now be provided electronically in efforts to reduce disturbances to the board's clients.

He was outlining key achievements so far attained by his board since its inception in 2006. The board kicked its duties officially in 2007.

He said that his board was working on partnership with e-GA, a public entity dealing with putting up ICT systems in different ministries, departments, Local Government Authorities and Public Entities.

In the new ICT system, Bangu said, all main warehouses in the

country would be installed with CCTV cameras which will help the board to monitor all the activities inside and outside warehouses.

According to the Executive Director, since it kicked off operations, the board has so far formalized about 2.3 billion kilograms of 11 cash crops in the warehouse system.

Bangu further said that his organisation was now mulling to incorporate into the warehouse receipt system other products apart from cash crops.

To begin with, he said, already, the board had made fruitful negotiations with the ministry of Livestock and Fisheries to put skin and hides products in the warehouse receipt system.

"I am glad that the ministry has accorded us a very close collaboration and already they have put in place digital measuring equipment for hides and skins," he noted.

The agency was established under the Warehouse Receipts Act No. 10 of year 2005. With its mission of regulating and promoting the Warehouse Receipts System that ensures a fair and sustainable accessibility to formal credit and commodity marketing systems, is expected to be met by performing its functions of licensing the warehouse, warehouse operations.



I am glad that the ministry has accorded us a very close collaboration and already they have put in place digital measuring equipment for hides and skins

Dunnagan inaugurates special mountain adaptation programme

By Correspondent James Lanka,

Moshi

A United States citizen who is Tanzania's tourism ambassador, Macon Dunnagan has launched a special mountain adaptation programme through the Mweka route of Kilimanjaro Mountain to help climbers find comfort while ascending to Africa's highest.

In an interview held recently before starting his 49th Mount Kilimanjaro Climb earlier this week, the US national explained that the move also aims to maintain control over mind and body while dealing with the major risks of hypothermia and Acute Mountain Sickness.

"I started this program of high mountains acclimatization for myself last year with my professional mountain guide from ZARA tours, Edwin Kilawe, to make our body fit before starting our Mount Kilimanjaro and Meru expeditions, it has been beneficial," he explained.

He added that high mountains acclimatization is vital for all mountain trekkers as it avoids high risks of high altitude mountain sickness to the mountain tourists and other trekkers.

Some of tourists who climbed Mount Kilimanjaro with Macon Dunnagan including American native Kent Kysar (68) from Atlanta Georgia US, explained that, though it is their first time to be in Africa, they will make sure that they reach the highest peak of the 'Roof of Africa' Mount Kilimanjaro's Uhuru Peak.

"It is my first time in Tanzania, and I am happy that Tanzanians are very kind, my goal is to reach the top of Mount Kilimanjaro though I'm old enough," explained Kent.

He further explained that he planned to climb Mount Kilimanjaro from April 2022 when he met with Macon Dunnagan in one of the Atlanta Georgia Travel Show in the US where he explained to him the majesty of the mountain and other unique tourism destinations in Tanzania.

Meanwhile, in a move that aims at providing Helicopter Search and Rescue operations ensuring the safety of everyone on Mount Kilimanjaro and Meru, the Tanzanian-owned KILIMEDAIR Aviation Company has a special programme of providing full

rescue and high altitude mountains sickness to the mountain tourists and other trekkers.

The Sales and Marketing Officer of the special aviation firm, Abel Casmir Shoki explained that, the services for the mountaineers includes helicopter evacuation from high altitudes while on the mountain as well as high altitude mountain sickness medication at the company's best ever in Africa-High Altitude Medicine Clinic known as KiliMedair Wilderness Medicine Clinic located at Shanty Town, in Moshi Municipality.

"Apart from providing mountains evacuation and high altitude diseases treatment to the Mount Kilimanjaro and Meru trekkers, we are also providing scenic flights whereby any tourist can be taken to any tourist destination of their preference like Scenic over Lake Natron, Mount Kilimanjaro and Meru views, Zanzibar beaches, and the Serengeti Wildebeest migration, among many others," he further explained.

Director for Medical Services of the KILIMEDAIR, Dr. Hussein Abradha explained that they have medical evacuation by providing reliable helicopter medevac with EMS 138 configured helicopters from remote areas like Mount Kilimanjaro and Meru and all national parks in Tanzania covered by Insurance.

Tanzania has a growing need for private Air Tax Services, from Tourism industry, entertainment, professionals, executives, entrepreneurs, politicians, private sectors and government entities.



It is my first time in Tanzania, and I am happy that Tanzanians are very kind, my goal is to reach the top of Mount Kilimanjaro though I'm old enough

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Job Opportunity – Recency Technical Lead

Location : Dar es Salaam
Application deadline : February 26, 2023
Start date : April 01, 2023

Background:

The University of California San Francisco (UCSF) is engaged in a five-year Cooperative Agreement with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention-

Tanzania (CDC-Tanzania) to provide strategic information and health information systems (HIS) technical assistance to the Ministry of Health (MOH) as well as the United States' President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) and their implementing partners (IPs). As part of our strategic information portfolio, UCSF will be responsible for providing technical assistance (TA) and guidance for the training and roll-out of recent HIV infection testing and surveillance.

To oversee this activity, UCSF is recruiting an individual through our affiliated international NGO 'Global Programs' to serve as Recency Technical Lead. This is a full-time position through September 2023 with the possibility of extension subject to continued funding. The position is expected to start on April 01, 2023 and will be based in Dar es Salaam.

Main duties and responsibilities:

The Recency Technical Lead will be responsible for coordinating all UCSF-Global Programs' recency-related TA and support. This will include coordinating recency training and providing ongoing technical assistance and support to PEPFAR implementing partners (IPs) and facilities that are implementing recency testing.

Specific responsibilities include:

- Manage all UCSF-Global Programs recency activities and ensure deliverables and timelines are clearly delineated and met.
- Coordinate training of trainer (TOT) sessions with PEPFAR clinical IPs to train on all aspects of the recency testing protocol.
- Provide ongoing TA and technical guidance to support IP-led step-down trainings for clinical sites and activation of new recency sites.
- Provide ongoing QA/QC support and monitoring for clinical IPs who have been trained and are implementing recency testing.
- Support protocol amendments and modifications as needed.
- Routinely review and update recency training materials, SOPs, job aids, and other guidance documents based on field experience and user requirements.
- Develop implementation tools and systems to support standardization of recency implementation and monitoring across facilities.
- Oversee reporting of recency data by IPs, as required by PEPFAR.
- Analyze and visualize recency data.
- Continuously document implementation progress and lessons learned and make recommendations for continuous quality improvement for recency testing.
- Collaborate with and provide guidance for MOH and stakeholders in relation to HIV recent infection surveillance.
- Collaborate with members of the UCSF-Global Programs team throughout Africa who are engaged in recent infection surveillance, including through regular zoom calls, to exchange best practices and lessons learned.
- Liaise with technical advisors at UCSF HQ to ensure delivery of outputs.
- Communicate regularly with the UCSF Program Manager about key deliverables in the scope of work and any challenges.
- Periodic travel (15% or less) within Tanzania may be required.

Experience, skills, and minimum required qualifications:

- Undergraduate degree in public health, Laboratory Science, Bio-Statistics, epidemiology or related fields is required. A Master's degree in a relevant field is an advantage.
- Minimum of five years of progressive professional experience in public health surveillance. Previous experience managing HIV and AIDS projects in the PEPFAR setting is strongly preferred.
- Knowledge of concepts of public health, epidemiology, and surveillance. Knowledge of HIV recent infection surveillance and laboratory testing and methods is strongly preferred.
- Demonstrable experience with analysis, interpretation, and reporting of surveillance data. Experience with DHIS2 preferred.
- Experience writing and updating protocols and procedures relating to surveillance data collection, storage, reporting, sharing, and dissemination.
- Strong analytical, problem-solving, and decision-making skills.
- Excellent communication and organizational skills.
- Demonstrable experience working with a variety of organizations and stakeholders, including experience collaborating with MOHCDGEC.
- Ability to work professionally and collaboratively in a multi-cultural, internationally based team setting.
- Fluency in oral and written English and Kiswahili are required.

Other desired skills/qualities:

- Ability to prioritize, work under deadlines, work with minimal supervision, and multi-task.
- Ability to work flexible hours, including some evenings as required (in order to liaise with colleagues abroad).
- Ability to travel in-country to support project activities.
- Strong interpersonal skills.

To Apply:

All applicants must address each selection criterion detailed in the minimum requirements above with specific and comprehensive information supporting each item.

All applications must include the following:

- A current CV with names and telephone numbers for at least 2 referees of whom one must be from the current employer.
- Copies of academic and professional certificates.

Applications and supporting documents should be sent via e-mail to info.tanzania@ucglobalprograms.org and must be received by **February 26, 2023**.

NOTE: Only short-listed candidates will be contacted.

Govt join forces with stakeholders to inaugurate national campaign to boost legal aid support and access to justice

By Getrude Mbago

THE government in collaboration with various stakeholders has launched a three-year national campaign aimed to expand legal aid support and access to justice in the country.

Dubbed: "Mama Samia Legal Aid Campaign" and implemented by the Constitution and Legal Affairs Ministry, the campaign will run from February 2023 to February 2026 focusing on massive public education on legal issues and systems, human rights and fight against gender-based violence (GBV).

Speaking during the launching event in Dar es Salaam yesterday, Minister Damas Ndumbaro said the campaign will also work collaboratively with other ministries to address land disputes as well as fight against customs and traditions that hinder women from inheriting properties and land.

"We have come up with this campaign to also complement big efforts conducted by President Samia Suluhu Hassan to improve access to justice in the country, we have all witnessed how the Head of State is working tirelessly to promote human rights so as to make Tanzania a better and peaceful place," he said.

Dr Ndumbaro said the campaign will reach all villages in Tanzania mainland and Zanzibar as it is jointly implemented by human rights and legal aid stakeholders.

"We will ensure that within the three years, no one is left behind by intensively educating the public on their basic rights and how they can access legal support, we will ensure that Tanzanians are aware of where to go to seek legal support whenever they encounter challenges," he said.

Deputy Minister Geoffrey Pinda said they will be conducting an assessment every year to measure the outcomes of the campaign.

He called upon all institutions providing legal services and justice to work together and support the realisation of the campaign goals.

Victoria Mgonela, Child protection specialist from the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) - Tanzania hailed the government for coming up with the campaign and assured that the agency will work closely to support the implementation.

Director of legal rights Lina Msanga at the Registration, Insolvency and Trusteehip Agency (RITA) said that legal issues awareness is very low among Tanzanians, something which causes a lot of disputes, so the campaign will help address the challenge and strengthen access to justice.



We have come up with this campaign to also complement big efforts conducted by President Samia Suluhu Hassan to improve access to justice in the country, we have all witnessed how the Head of State is working tirelessly to promote human rights so as to make Tanzania a better and peaceful place



Tanzania Building Agency CEO Daud Kondoro briefs journalists in Dodoma city yesterday on recent developments at the agency. Photo: Correspondent Ibrahim Joseph

Black rhino tourism in Mkomazi National Park up by 100 percent

By Guardian Correspondent, Arusha

BLACK Rhino Tourism in Mkomazi National Park has increased the number of tourists by 100 percent in the 2021/2022 financial year compared to the preceding year.

On Tuesday Assistant Commissioner of Conservation, Emanuel Moirana said the increase was contributed by the mobilisation of President Samia Suluhu Hassan through the Royal

Tour documentary film in which she starred.

The increase of tourists hailed from Germany, France, Spain and the US.

"We have to thank President Samia who is the country's Number 1 mobiliser of tourism, the Royal Tour film has helped us a lot to advertise our national parks and their attractions," he said.

He added that Tanzania National Parks (TANAPA) has helped in improving infrastructures in

Mkomazi National Park that have now become easily accessible both in rainy and dry seasons.

According to Moirana, other improvements to the conservation of the black rhino is the construction of an electric fence, and added that the fence helps in protecting the rhinos not to intermingle with meat eating animals (carnivores), hence they remain safer and easily discernible by tourists.

He said the National Park has

also invested more than 765m/- in various projects in good neighbourliness projects.

He said the projects include the construction of schools' dormitories, classrooms, teachers' offices, pit latrines and a police station at Kalalani Village in Korogwe District and that they are in various stages of completion.

"The aim of these projects is to assist the residents to appreciate, assist and protect the National Park as well as fighting poachers.

Majaliwa orders investigations on AMCOS in Mbozi

By Guardian Reporter

PRIME Minister Kassim Majaliwa has said the government will launch an investigations on Agricultural Marketing Cooperative Societies (AMCOS) in Mbozi District, Songwe Region and legal action will be taken against all officials who will be found to be involved in their embezzlement.

Majaliwa made the remarks Tuesday this week following the complaints from Mbozi Member of Parliament, George Mwenisongole against AMCOS in the district for giving coffee farmers raw deals to the extent of making them hate cooperatives.

He was addressing a public rally at Mlwo in Mbozi district during his official visit in Songwe Region to inspect development projects.

"Cooperatives are important for farmers' development, but for that to happen there have to be faithful cooperative officials, hence we shall launch investigations on AMCOS to unearth all embezzlers and take legal steps against them," he said.

Meanwhile, Mbozi MP Mwenisongole thanked the government for endorsing providing the district with 10bn/- for implementing development projects for the period of two years.

He said among the projects include those for water, to cost 5.3bn/-, education including building of two schools and classrooms to cost 3bn/- and 1.65bn/- already spent in the health sector including the construction of a health centre, a dispensary and a maternal building at Itaka Hospital.

He also thanked the government for endorsing 150bn/- as fertiliser subsidy that has become the saviour for farmers who used to buy a bag of

fertiliser at 130,000/-, but now they buy the same at only 70,000/-.

Meanwhile Prime Minister Majaliwa has instructed Songwe Regional Commissioner, Waziri Kindamba to make sure he supervises Momba District officials to move to their new station instead of remaining at Tunduma.

"Momba District officials still staying in Tunduma should move here. You have been stationed in Momba to serve the people of Momba, hence it is not right for them to continue staying at Tunduma.

Majaliwa issued the instructions after laying the cornerstone for the construction of the administrative building for Momba District Council at Tindingoma Village, Chitete Ward to cost 2.7bn/-.



Cooperatives are important for farmers' development, but for that to happen there have to be faithful cooperative officials, hence we shall launch investigations on AMCOS to unearth all embezzlers and take legal steps against them



Chato district commissioner Deusedith Katwale (2nd-L) pictured in Bukome ward yesterday addressing residents of Nyabilezi and Ng'wabaluhi villages, urging them to willingly let portions of the land they own be used under the Geita Airport expansion project. Photo: Correspondent Daniel Limbe

Zimbabwe to host the 6th transform Africa summit

HARARE

THE Transform Africa Summit is the leading Africa tech and digital event organised by Smart Africa bringing together over 5000 delegates from more than 100 countries to engage on the digital transformation of the continent across multiple sectors.

Heads of States, who constitute Smart Africa's board, Ministers,

international industry leaders and key players in the ICT will attend the three days event aimed at making core decisions for Africa's socio economic development through ICT.

Connect, Transform and Innovate is the theme of this edition where the focus will be on regulation and policy, digital infrastructure financing, capacity building and skills development

and digital continental trade among other key aspects.

Lacina Koné, Director General and CEO of Smart Africa said: "The Transform Africa Summit will be held outside Rwanda for the first time and we are pleased to have our active member country Zimbabwe hosting us in the city of Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe.

He said the TAS 2023 will once again underline the commitment

of African Governments towards accelerating Africa's digital agenda.

"We are welcoming all digital players from public and private sector on the continent in April in Zimbabwe. 2023 is a landmark year for Africa's digital transformation", he said.

The summit will be open for public participation in exhibitions and multiple discussion panels and roundtables.

Zimbabwe President, Emmerson Mnangagwa, will open the summit and welcome other Heads of State including President Paul Kagame of Rwanda and Chairman of the Smart Africa Board who will convene a Board meeting at the summit.

NGO launches campaign to build awareness among youth on use of condoms to battle STDs, unwanted pregnancies

By Guardian Reporter

A Non-Governmental Organisation- DKT Tanzania has embarked on a campaign to create awareness to the youth on the use of condoms in the fight against sexually transmitted diseases and unwanted pregnancies.

The campaign which started on 13th is part of celebrations to the world condom day, an initiative by the AIDS Health care foundation launched since 2009.

"The rationale of the campaign is to remind people on the use of condoms against sexually transmitted diseases and unwanted pregnancies," said DKT Tanzania's marketing manager Deogratius Kithama.

In the campaign, the NGO visited Mbagala Zakiem, Mwananyamala and Makumbusho in Dar es Salaam to sensitize the youth who are the majority of the population on the importance of safe sex.

Kithama said there is still a great need to speak more on safe sex to the group in Tanzania; with over 60 percent of the crowd to be under 35 as statistics still show HIV/AIDS is more prevalent among youth.

Kithama commended the government for the support it has been offering to social marketing organisations like DKT Tanzania so as to reach more young people in the country through governing SRH policies.

The social marketing company sells brands like Bull condoms which during the campaign was

distributed to over 1,728 youth in Dar es Salaam.

Family planning challenges in Tanzania include supply chain stock outs and irregularities, social inhibitions related to religion and culture, and a lack of modern birth control methods and sex education for young girls and adolescents.

Tanzania grapples with a serious HIV epidemic- nearly 1.6 million people are infected. Women are particularly affected and comprise over 60-percent of cases.

The organisation's goal is to respond to these problems by providing a wide range of high-quality contraceptives at affordable prices. Providing method choices, introducing innovative technologies and filling gaps in the supply chain will help serve the total marketplace.



The rationale of the campaign is to remind people on the use of condoms against sexually transmitted diseases and unwanted pregnancies

WWF pledges to work with Arusha National Park to address existing challenges

By Correspondent Marc Nkwame,

Arusha

THE World Wide Fund for Nature is promising to work closely with the Arusha National Park to address emerging challenges including cases arising from Human and Wildlife encounters as well as invasive species.

The WWF International's new Director General, Dr Kirsten Schuijt who is on official visit in the country, assured that her organization will continue to support Tanzania's conservation efforts that also entail community development.

Dr Schuijt who toured the Arusha National Park said he was impressed by the ANAPA management of the conservancy despite the fact that the reserve happens to be an island in the middle of a vast sea of human settlements and activities.

"The Arusha National Park is the highlight of our visit in Tanzania," the WWF International Director stated, shortly after her game drive.

"Just as we support conservation efforts, the WWF also works closely with the local community to ensure a participatory approach in environment protection," she added.

Averting Human and Wildlife Conflicts, addressing effects of Global Warming and Climate Change are some of the issues that the WWF addresses in many of the organization's projects being executed in Tanzania.

On her part the Tanzania National Park (TANAPA)'s Assistant

Commissioner of Conservation, Yustina Kiwango who is the commander of the Arusha National Park said there are initiatives being taken to ensure that the Park does not remain isolated.

"We have started to take efforts in ensuring the formerly defunct wildlife corridors and dispersal areas get restored for healthy survival of wildlife species," she explained, pointing out that the National Park directly borders villages as well as modern human activities.

Measuring 137 square kilometers, Arusha National Park may be small but it features practically all types of fauna and flora, including dense forests, grass plains, extensive savannah, a mountain, a crater as well as lakes, in addition to most wildlife species.

Country Director of World Wide Fund for Nature in Tanzania Dr Amani Ngusuru said the new WWF International Director General, Dr Schuijt previously held talks with both the Vice President, Dr Philip Mpango as well as the Minister of State in the President's Office, in-charge of Regional Administration and Local Government, Suleiman Jafo.

WWF is the world's largest conservation organization, with over five million supporters worldwide, working in more than 100 countries and supporting around 3,000 conservation and environmental projects, with Tanzania being among the countries benefiting from the programs.



Selemani Jafo (R), Minister of State in the Vice President's Office (Union and Environment), pictured in Dar es Salaam on Tuesday symbolically presenting a prize house to Quran recital competition winner Abdulmaliki Ramadhan. Photo: Correspondent Jumanne Juma

Govt signs 38.7bn/- pact for construction of 32-km four-lane Nsalanga-SIA highway

By Guardian Correspondent, Mbeya

THE government through Tanzania Road Agency (TANROADS) has signed a contract agreement for the construction of the 32-km four-lane highway from Nsalanga near Mbeya to Songwe International Airport (SIA) to cost 38.7bn/-.

The agreement was signed here yesterday between TANROADS officials and those of China Henan International Cooperation Group Co. Ltd (CHICO) that won the tender, and witnessed by the Minister for works and Transport, Prof Makame Mbarawa. TANROADS Chief Executive

Officer, Rogatus Mativila said the road is part of the project for the widening of the Tanzania-Zambia Highway (TANZAM), third part incorporating the 218-km Igawa-Tunduma stretch.

He said the road stretch is worn out due to lack of repairs for a long time as well as increase of heavy duty trucks laden with cargo and added that the last time repairs were made to the road was 1993.

"Bids for the construction of this road stretch were floated on June 7, 2022 and opened October 2020 and consisted of a total of eight bidders which were assessed and CHICO won," said Mativila. He said that according to the

contract agreement the road will be completed after two years beginning now to February 2025.

Dr Tulia Ackson, the speaker of Parliament commended the government for beginning to implement the project which many people had been anticipating.

She said apart from the road being essential to the economy of Mbeya and Songwe Region residents, it will also be an attraction to the City of Mbeya.

Dr Ackson who is also a Member of Parliament for Mbeya Urban said the road will also reduce road congestion in Mbeya City centre.

DR Stephen Mwakajumulo, Mbeya Region CCM Chairman

requested that workers for the implementation of the road should come from Mbeya Region.

He said as for now the region's population stands at 2.8 million hence the huge labour force needed for the project will reduce the unemployment challenge.

Meanwhile, Works and Transport Minister Prof Mbarawa instructed TANROADS officials to closely oversee the road construction bay making sure it reflects the value of the money provided by the government.

He said the project is a huge one and needs to be properly supervised so that it is built to high standard for it to last long.



Barnabas Kijika (2nd-L), a business advisor with the Dar es Salaam-based China Trade and Tourism Development Company advisor, explains how motorcycles are assembled. He was briefing visitors at the firm's premises in Temeke District yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Miraji Msala

Deputy minister calls upon MSCL to complete shipbuilding projects timely

By Guardian Reporter

DEPUTY Works and Transport Minister Atupele Mwakibete has called upon the Marine Shipping Company Services Limited (MSCL) Board to make sure all projects the company is implementing are completed in time and should reflect their money value.

Mwakibete issued the directives

in Mwanza on Monday at the event for launching of MV Mwanza "HapaKaziTu" which was 82 per cent complete.

He said the government will continue investing in the country's marine transport sector by building ships in Lakes Victoria and Tanganyika with the aim of easing both transport and transportation and spur the economies of Lake

Zone regions.

He also called upon the Tanzania Ports Authority (TPA) to ensure they improve berthing facilities at the ports at which MV Mwanza will make calls to be ready once the ship is fully completed.

Meanwhile, Mwanza Regional Commissioner Adam Malima said the completion of the ship will bring together residents of Geita,

Musoma, Simiyu regions and those of neighbouring Kenya and Uganda through Lake Victoria therefore easing lake transport for both cargo and passengers.

MSCL Managing Director, Eric Hamisi thanked the government for seeing the importance of the Company to have a new ship as well as refurbishing existing ones as after completion the projects

will contribute to enhance the revenues of the company, Lake Zone area and the nation in general.

Hamisi assured Deputy Minister Mwakibete that already the company, through its experts, was closely supervising the implementation of all vessels construction and refurbishing projects and making sure they are

completed in time according to the contract agreements.

MV Mwanza is being built by two shipbuilding firms - Gas Enter Ship-Building Engineering and Lang Nam Corporation from Korea and upon completion will cost 109bn/- and will serve the ports of Bukoba, Kemondo, Mwanza, Musoma (Tanzania), Port Bell, Jinja (Uganda) and Kisumu (Kenya).

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Cholera continues to threaten many of our African countries

CHOLERA is an acute, diarrheal illness caused by infection of the small intestine. An estimated 1.3 to 4 million people around the world get cholera each year and 21,000 to 143,000 people die from it. Symptoms may range from none, to mild, to severe. The classic symptom is large amounts of watery diarrhea that lasts a few days. Vomiting and muscle cramps may also occur. Diarrhea can be so severe that it leads within hours to severe dehydration. This may result in sunken eyes, cold skin, decreased skin elasticity, and wrinkling of the hands and feet. [Dehydration can cause the skin to turn bluish. Symptoms start two hours to five days after exposure.

It is spread mostly by unsafe water and unsafe food that has been contaminated with human feces containing the bacteria. Undercooked shellfish is a common source. Humans are the only known host for the bacteria. Risk factors for the disease include poor sanitation, not enough clean drinking water, and poverty.

Prevention methods against cholera include improved sanitation and access to clean water.

According to the World Health Organisation (WHO) report Africa is currently experiencing an exponential rise in cholera cases, amid a global surge in the disease. Across the continent, cases in January were 30 per cent higher than for the whole of last year.

Most new infections and deaths have occurred in Malawi, which is facing its worst outbreak in 20 years.

Overall, 10 African countries are affected by cholera. The

waterborne disease causes acute watery diarrhoea and can kill within hours but is easily treatable.

Besides Malawi, cases have been reported in neighbouring Mozambique and Zambia, as well as in Burundi, Cameroon, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and Nigeria.

Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia are also responding to outbreaks amid the historic drought in the Horn of Africa which has left millions in dire need of humanitarian assistance.

Dr Matshidiso Moeti, WHO regional director for Africa said: "We are witnessing a worrying scenario where conflict and extreme climatic events are worsening the triggers of cholera and increasing its toll on lives." As of 29 January, an estimated 26,000 cases and 660 deaths have been reported in the 10 countries.

WHO warned that if the current trend continues, cases could surpass the number recorded in 2021 - the worst year for cholera in Africa in nearly a decade.

The average case fatality ratio is almost at three per cent, which is above the 2.3 per cent reached in 2022 and far exceeds the acceptable level of below one.

"It's critical for African countries to scale up readiness to quickly detect cases and mount comprehensive and timely response," said Dr. Moeti. WHO is helping governments to fight back, including ramping up disease surveillance, prevention and treatment, and community engagement.

Sixty-five experts have been deployed to five countries, 40 alone to Malawi, where nearly 37,000 cholera cases and 1,210 deaths have been reported in all 29 districts since last March.

Business environment should be effective in supporting implementation of PPP policies

THE government recognises the role of private sector in bringing about socio-economic development through investments. Public-Private Partnership (PPP) frameworks provides important instrument for attracting investments. Indeed, Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) have been identified as viable means to effectively address constraints of financing, management and maintenance of public goods and services. Additionally, PPPs can enable the government to fulfill its responsibilities in efficient delivery of socio-economic goods and services by ensuring efficiency, effectiveness, accountability, quality and outreach of services.

Business is the activity of making one's living or making money by producing or buying and selling products such as goods and services. Simply put, it is any activity or enterprise entered into for profit. It does not mean it is a company, a corporation, partnership, or have any such formal organization.

Having a business name does not separate the business entity from the owner, which means that the owner of the business is responsible and liable for debts incurred by the business. If the business acquires debts, the creditors can go after the owner's personal possessions. A business structure does not allow for corporate tax rates. The proprietor is personally taxed on all income from the business.

The term is also often used colloquially (but not by lawyers or by public officials) to refer to a company. A company, on the other hand, is a separate legal entity and provides for limited liability, as well as corporate tax rates. A company structure is more complicated and expensive to set up, but offers more protection and benefits for the owner.

Business environment is effective

in supporting the implementation of Public-Private Partnership (PPP) policies in Education in Tanzania. The government has emphasised the importance of urgently implementing the policies that foster greater private sector participation in the economy. The government has indicated its commitment to carrying out major reforms aimed at promoting good corporate governance and fostering service delivery including education, through the PPP model. Therefore there is a need to investigate and determine if the existing business environment and the associated policies are ineffective in promoting the implementation of PPP policies in the education sector. It is only appropriate that any inquiry into the effectiveness of the institutional set-up and organisational support to PPP investment policies starts with the TNBC, which was set up in 2001 as the highest consultative organ between the government and the private sector. Tanzania needs to improve on institutional coherence in the implementation of investment policies and regulations. A business enabling environment helps to align the pre-current PPP policies with the overall objective of moving Tanzania towards industrialisation for economic transformation and human development, as clearly set out in the second Five Year Development Plan document. According to PricewaterhouseCoopers the 2019/20 National Budget in Tanzania emphasised several macroeconomic objectives and targets notable of which, was objective that required improvements in the enabling environment for business and investment. An enabling business environment mainly involves the construction and rehabilitation of various infrastructure for attracting private sector investment in the education sector.



Did they have to die? Sad tales of rookies sent to battlefronts in volatile Kenya



By George Ntembeya

WHEN Interior Cabinet Secretary Kithure Kindiki revealed that 16 police officers have been killed by bandits and cattle rustlers in Kenya's North Rift in the last 100 days, he only fell short of mentioning that the majority of them were young constables, some having joined the service not so long ago.

Their deaths have shone a spotlight on police policy on deployment to volatile regions with Kenyans taking to social media to ask security agencies to look into the matter lest more young officers die on the frontlines.

In one of the latest attacks in Turkana County, images of the officers - who were ambushed by bandits hiding in a bush shot at and stripped off their clothes before their uniforms and guns were stolen - have been shared on social media where a section of Kenyans have expressed their concerns over the trend.

These young boys are the ones who recently graduated from police training," Julius Kones posed on his Twitter handle.

Under one of the alleged deceased officer's images, Gideon the philosopher said, "Rest in peace my friend and neighbour, it's soo heartbreaking, you were only

getting to start your career. I urge the government to address the banditry with force."

"I have been wondering too. This has become a norm in this country. If this trend continues, we are bound to lose more such young souls. Precautions must be made," Hustler Number One posted.

The deployment of fresh graduates to volatile zones is meant to instil experience in them but some argue that the risk of losing their lives far outweighs their need to acquire prompt experience.

"Years ago, officers set to be deployed to particular volatile zones would be taken for specialised training ahead of deployment and that would limit the number of deaths. Today, I am not sure if that still happens but, at the same time we cannot say that young officers get deployed to these zones alone, they are accompanied by senior officers some of whom have also been victims of these attacks. It's just bad luck," a source said.

In his interview with Nation in 2012, Police Reservist Sone Leskono who survived the Baragoi massacre, where about 40 police officers and reservists were killed, blamed the disaster partly on the deployment of officers who were unfamiliar with the terrain, betrayal and lax intelligence.

"It was like going directly into a trap laid for you by the enemy," he

said at the time.

While giving his accountability report for his first 100 days in office, CS Kindiki last week said the nearly 6,000 new police officers who have joined the National Police Service in the last 100 days will be sent to the frontlines to ensure sustainability in the fight against crime.

"The new officers will be deployed to security hotspots across the country immediately to further buttress the security of our people and their property," he said.

Trans Zoia Governor and former Rift Valley Regional Commander George Ntembeya, however, on Monday night faulted the deployment procedure, blaming it for the deaths of many officers to bandits and cattle rustlers in the region.

"Those are not just bandits, some of them are former police officers who retired or were sacked; some are military officers who were sacked because of indiscipline and some are deserters. These are people who were trained together with police who are currently serving," he said.

"They understand all the tricks and strategies so if you pick a guy from college, a guy who has grown up in Nairobi all his entire life and you are taking him to Suguta valley, the guy will, of course, go there and he will die. Because these people spend most of their time guarding their camps because every night the

camp is under attack and every time a new commander comes in the posts must be attacked so askari analala chini (officers sleep in the bush) protecting the camps so sometimes you get the feeling that these bandits are killing these police officers for fun because they know they can't defend themselves," he explained.

Such teething problems that he said were left unaddressed and the shooting on the head of a 24-year-old GSU officer from Laikipia were some of the factors that pushed him to exit his 26-year-old career in the service.

"We could not get an ambulance to get him to the hospital, we tried to get him to Medihealth and talked to the hospital management to get him but they said he would just be (in a vegetative state) because the brains were out of his skull but the worst thing is my commander had already reported that the officer was dead. They never bothered to take this guy to a hospital and then I tried to call even Nairobi and no one was picking up my calls. I knew I cannot call the president to tell him that one boy has been killed so I decided that I am not going to preside over the deaths of innocent people. I was quitting even joining politics was not even initially in my mind, I was just leaving. I didn't know where I was going but I just said I'm leaving. Guys, it was frustrating," said Ntembeya.

Gains in health sector must be protected for faster pace of development

By Guardia Reporter

AMONG the sectors in which Tanzania has performed exceptionally well in the past 20 or so years, is health. A regional consultative meeting for strengthening implementation of the integrated management of childhood illnesses (IMCI) in Africa was told this week that the country managed to cut under-five mortalities from 147 in 1999 to 43 per 1000 live births last year.

This is a big deal because Tanzania has stood out as the best performer in Sub-Saharan Africa region which still has the highest rates of child mortality, as in the past year, of the five million estimated child deaths worldwide, 2.7 million occurred in this region.

It is important for this and other gains in the sector to be maintained because experts say that there is a direct link between health and economic development. The relationship between health and economic development is measured by assessing the impact of health-related issues like rate of mortality, infant mortality, fertility, diseases and overall health in relation to their impact on human productivity.

For human capital is one of the chief cornerstones of economic development, and any economy that is deficient in this vital component suffers or even collapses. A correlation between health and economic development can be seen in undeveloped countries with inadequate health care systems.

Lack of basic health amenities like good hospitals and competent health care affects the ability of the citizens to produce at an optimal level. When remote areas lack good medicines for even simple diseases like malaria, it affects the level of output because those afflicted with the disease must miss work while they try to deal with its devastating effects. Indeed, the link between health and economic development in such areas is due to the poor economy and resultant poverty in which the citizens do not have the funds to gain access to competent health care, leading to possible needless deaths from completely curable diseases.



That is why our leaders must do everything possible to ensure that gains registered so far are not lost for whatever reason. The good news is that President Samia Suluhu Hassan has been part of this particular success story and has previously stated her commitment to improving health services in the country, especially for women and children.

Speaking during the launch of M-MA-MA—an emergency transport System that helps pregnant women to get transport and receive emergency care—in Dodoma last year, the President expressed her government's commitment to continue improving health services in the country, and tasked regional authorities to support implementation of a system aimed at saving lives of pregnant women and children.

The Head of State ordered regional commissioners to ensure that they allocate funds to support the implementation of

the scheme, which aims at saving lives of pregnant women and their newborns.

Late last year, the President launched projects worth 94.4bn/- in Dodoma aimed at improving health services at health centers and education. Under the projects, 52 vehicles were distributed to district education officers while 517 motorcycles were handed over to boost primary health care provision.

It should be remembered that in November last year, President Samia won praise from the World Health Organisation (WHO) for being among global leaders who demonstrated commitment in addressing appalling trend of 'Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) which are a huge burden in developing countries' health systems.

According to the WHO, such NCDs include heart diseases, strokes, cancer, diabetes and chronic lung disease which are responsible for 17 million premature

deaths every year, where 86 per cent of the deaths occur in low- and middle-income countries.

In Tanzania statistics show that in the 1980s, only five people out of 100 died of NCDs related cases, but recently the number has risen, where 30 up to 40 people out of 100 are said to be dying of NCD-related complications.

Acting WHO Country Representative Dr Zabulon Yoti commended the president's outstanding efforts during the launch of NCDs Journalism fellowship in Dar es Salaam where he said President Samia had showed her commitment to fighting the diseases during the World NCDs Congress 2022 held in the United States.

As for the success story of cutting under-five mortality, Dr Zabulon Yoti, the WHO country representative said the bigger proportion of neonatal deaths and the first years were recorded in West and Central

Africa, describing the common causes of child deaths as largely preventable.

Dr Felix Bundala, the ministry of health's acting director for reproductive and child health, said common infectious diseases, pneumonia, malaria and diarrhea remained the leading causes of under-five deaths alongside neonatal conditions.

Many African countries have achieved significant reductions in child mortality in the past two decades but the annual average rate of reduction of three percent is still much lower than the 10 percent required for achieving targets set out in the sustainable development goals, the meeting was told.

Tanzania started implementation of IMCI in 1996 in two pilot districts, followed by the national rollout in 1998 through 11-days classroom IMCI case management training, the director noted.

In 2000, multi-country evaluations were conducted in Brazil, Peru, Bangladesh, Uganda and Tanzania whose results showed that IMCI had reduced child mortality by 13 percent in Tanzania.

It has also improved the quality of care and rational use of medicines across a range of countries, after the country embraced IMCI and consistently supported implementation, achieving 80 percent coverage for many districts, the report noted.

The rapid coverage was attributed to adoption of distance learning techniques, with significant investments into ensuring IMCI training during health programmes for graduates, allied health fields and training of nurses, it stated.

Reviews by UNICEF, WHO and partners, including a 2016 global IMCI stocktaking, indicate that the coverage remains low worldwide, failing to attain the 60 percent target of sick children seen by IMCI-trained health workers.

Considering the correlation between health and development, it is the hope of all good citizens that the government will do all it can to ensure that the gains are not lost for faster pace of development.

By Joyce Chimbi

AS the effects of climate change escalate and natural disasters such as earthquakes, floods, and droughts become more frequent and severe, threatening lives and livelihoods, humanity is losing the climate battle.

A sharp decline in the variety and the number of both wild animals and species, severe food insecurities, high levels of malnutrition, disappearing streams, springs, and rivers in some areas, and dangerous rises in sea levels that threaten island nations are alerting the world to a climate-driven catastrophe.

Yet even as the world stares at unprecedented climate disasters, experts such as Hafez Ghanem caution that existing international institutions are not delivering on climate change mitigation and finance and are now calling for renewed efforts through the establishment of a Green Bank.

Ghanem, former regional Vice President of the World Bank Group and a current non-resident senior fellow in the Global Economy and Development Program at the Brookings Institution, Senior Fellow at the Policy Center for the New South, and Distinguished Fellow at the Paris School of Economics tells IPS that

World leaders, private sector urged to establish green bank to win climate change battle



A family take shelter on the roof of their small house. Due to climate change, incessant rainfall has flooded nearby houses. The photo was taken from Jatrapur Union in Kurigram District. Credit: Muhammad Amdad Hossain/Climate Visuals

“the creation of a Green Bank as a new international institution to solely address climate change adaptation and mitigation efforts is long overdue.”

“Everybody is looking at how to finance investments in climate change. The estimate is that USD 2 trillion is needed every year for countries in the global South alone to address climate change.”

Today's development assistance, he says, is about USD 200 billion per year, “so we need to multiply that figure 10-fold and only use the funds for climate change and forget about critical social sectors such as health and education.”

Choosing the climate agenda over critical social sectors or vice-versa is a lose-lose situation

because they are both matters of life and death. This has led world leaders to a critical crossroads.

To meet the climate financing gaps, Ghanem says many of the developed countries are asking existing multilateral development banks, such as the World Bank, to reform and invest more in climate change.

Ghanem says reforms within existing institutions will not work and recommends a different approach: the establishment of a singular international institution that concerns itself solely with climate-related matters. An institution that would be a repository for global knowledge on climate change and advice governments on climate policies.

He says a Green Bank would

also develop green projects across the Global South and support their financing and implementation. As currently constituted, multilateral development banks are yet to open up space for Global South to be heard at the same level as those in the North.

At the World Bank, for instance, he says, the voting power is such that the G7 countries control 39.8 percent of the World Bank while other donors control another 14.9 percent.

“Despite the World Bank conducting most of its business in Africa, the largest ten African countries control only about 3.5 percent of its voting power. A development bank that is controlled by its borrowers is not a

good idea; neither is a development bank where beneficiaries feel that they don't have enough voice,” he expounds.

Ghanem further emphasizes that the absence of the private sector will continue to curtail efforts to raise much-needed funds. “I believe that the Green Bank should be a public-private partnership where private corporations, foundations, and civil society organizations are invited to participate in its capital together with sovereign states. I am calling for a tripartite approach where countries of the Global South have the same voice, same voting rights as those in the Global North and the private sector.”

The need to attract much-needed funds from the private sector cannot be over-emphasized, he says as it is now, “there is no voice from the private sector because the owners of, say, the World Bank and the African Development Bank are all sovereign states.”

The Green Bank would, therefore, primarily support private green investments through equity contributions, loans, and guarantees at the national, regional, or global level. The new institution would also free existing multilateral banks to direct scarce resources to social and development assistance.

This would significantly boost progress toward the

delivery of critical social sectors services such as health and education, particularly in poorer, more vulnerable nations such as those classified as Least Developed Countries.

As such, the proposed Green Bank will not be in competition or opposition to existing multilateral banks but an instrument to partner with other institutions and complement their projects.

“Climate change is an external threat facing all of humanity, and all of humanity needs to unite to face it. But a major share of humanity and particularly the Global South lacks the necessary resources,” he says.

“There are many international meetings and summits at which resources are pledged, but the pledges are for much less than what is needed to deal with climate change. Moreover, not all pledges materialize as actual commitments and disbursements.”

As governments in the Global North face tighter budget constraints and competing interests, limiting their ability to provide much-needed finance for climate projects in the South even as climate catastrophes increase, Ghanem says a new approach in the form of a Green Bank that is a private, public partnership would be an important contribution to the solution. You can read his full policy brief on the subject here.

IPS UN Bureau Report

By Victoria Barreto Vieira do Prado

How privatisation of Eletrobras may lead to uncertain future in Brazil's energy transition



Brazil's then-President Jair Bolsonaro launched the sale of shares of Eletrobras, the largest company in the electricity sector in Brazil, which will be privatized through its capitalization. CREDIT: Alan Santos/PR-Public Photos

for the end-consumer.

Gas feeding these power plants will mostly come from Brazil's southeast region to be transported across the country, which adds to transportation costs and emissions. Through this lens, the government-issued Ten-Year Energy Plan (PDE 2031) acknowledges the difficulty and costs of implementation due to the necessary added infrastructure requirements. The report implies that meeting the mandated targets may be challenging. This was reflected in October 2022 auctions in which 1.17 GW of additional capacity for gas-powered power plants were contracted at a price seven times higher than those bided at similar auctions in previous years.

In addition, the implementation of new powerplants would require decades of on-going operation to ensure full amortization of costs. This may lead to stranded assets as demand for cleaner sources of energies outpace fossil fuels. Although the government has claimed that part of the additional installed capacity will be used to replace existing thermal power plants (to be switched off by 2024), emissions from additional infrastructure and the 70% intermittency requirement outpace the efficiency gains from the new installations.

This is reinforced when added to the additional requirement of developing 721 kilometers of transmission lines in the Amazon Rainforest region, 125 kilometers of which are located in indigenous land. This implies additional infrastructure costs and more emissions (linked to deforestation). Equally difficult is that such buildup of infrastructure in the Amazon Rainforest and disregard to social and environmental licenses infringes on Brazil's Sustainable Development Goals, thus also going against national energy planning.

Even if it is in the law, will Brazil be able to attract capital for natural gas power plants?

While technically enforceable by the Eletrobras' law, many questions remain on whether companies will be willing to invest in capital-intensive projects which may soon become stranded - especially when penalties for doing otherwise remain unclear.

In addition, it is unlikely that Eletrobras' new shareholders would be on board with such a massive of buildout in thermal power plants. Singapore's sovereign fund, GIC; Canadian pension fund, CPPIB; and, Brazilian Investment Management company, 3G Radar, each hold around 11% of Eletrobras.

All of these financial actors have shown considerable interests towards investing in the energy transition and decarbonizing their portfolios. It is thus believed that this could hinder their willingness in investing in high-cost gas power plants which require additional infrastructure investments in order to become profitable, not to mention that Brazil does not produce enough natural gas and thus might need to be imported via very expensive LNG.

Regardless, if the additional capacity of 8 GW of thermal gas power does go through, one should expect these power plants to be running for a considerably long time in order to fully amortize the investments. This could lead to a 33% emission increase which will slow down the Brazilian government's energy transition strategy.

Lula, Brazil's new president, has indicated that its government will revise this 8 GW mandate, an attempt to remove the 70% inflexibility requirement. Instead, the new government might make the additional power as back-up for renewable energy intermittence, diminishing the potential environmental hindrance foreseen in the law. In order to do so, a new motion would have to be approved in congress - a usually time-intensive measure. This regulatory uncertainty may in the meantime decrease energy investments and impact the pace of the energy transition.

The Eletrobras law also pushed for renewables

The Eletrobras law did promote measures which favor the energy transition. However, if all these requirements are fulfilled, they may also increase electricity prices for the end consumers.

The law dictated new concessions for hydropower generation for the next 30 years, ensuring dispatchable renewable energy, which contributes to the country's energy transition. However, it favors hydropower plants which fall under the price quota regime, allowing them to sell the generated electricity under market prices rather than through imposed limits by the national electricity agency (ANEEL). This may lead to higher tariff prices, which could reach R\$ 167/MWh in 2051 (compared to R\$ 93/MWh today). The government tried to curtail this by mandating that half of the revenue generated through Eletrobras' privatization shall be directed to diminishing the tariff increase. Despite this measure, this could still represent up to eight times less than the required investment needed to keep prices low.

An additional measure promotes the development of small hydropower plants, to be developed over the next 20 years. While this promotes dispatchable renewable energy and addresses the need to replace existing old hydro powerplants which would soon cease operations, it also favors the most expensive form of renewable energy available, again creating possible cost impacts for the end-consumer. The government addressed this by creating a price cap according to 2019 auction prices adjusted to inflation (R\$ 314.55 / MWh). These prices remain 7.7% higher than those found in 2021 auctions.

The government also included the extension of PROINFA by 20 years. PROINFA is a governmental program established between 2002 and 2022

which created subsidies for biomass and small hydro power plants, wind, and solar farm owners in order to incentivize the production of renewable energy sources in the country.

While positive in theory, such extension would only favor previous contracts as opposed to a structural revision of the Brazilian power grid and costs of renewable technologies. Most of these investments have already been amortized and cost of technology has decreased significantly.

Its impact in promoting the energy transition therefore, can be questioned, as it is not necessarily deploying new renewable technologies, but rather favoring outdated contracts at higher costs. A more interesting alternative instead would have been to promote the expansion of new low-cost renewable energy projects through new auctions.

Final thoughts: The mixed outcome of eletrobras' privatization law

In conclusion, it is unclear what impact will Eletrobras' privatization truly incur for the country's energy transition. It is argued that through its privatization, the company will now be freed from bureaucracy, allowing it to speed up investments and increase its ability to invest in new (riskier) clean technologies.

Eletrobras' CEO, has been known for his inclination towards green technologies and has advocated for green hydrogen investments in several occasions. The same is expected from the new shareholders, who have been seen to adopt decarbonization investment strategies. Eletrobras' net zero strategies across scope 1, 2, and 3 are also contradictory to exactly the amendments of the law, claiming to decarbonize through the sales of thermal-powered power plants and I-REC purchases.

However, it is important to note that the law does push for thermal gas expansion, which, if occurs, may shift and delay Brazil's energy transition. The absence of clear penalizations and accountability makes it unclear on whether the additional capacity of 8 GW of thermal gas powerplants will indeed be adopted.

While it is unclear how much the privatization will truly impact the energy transition, increase in tariff prices may be likely. The law and the subsequent auctions since its approval, seem to favor costly renewable contracts, which will likely increase tariffs for the end-consumer. Tariff increases may also happen due to the expansion of PROINFA, promotion of small hydro power plants, and implied cost of necessary added infrastructure for thermal gas-powered plants.

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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	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 UMJUAYVO 16:00-18:00HRS ALIYEVUMA 18:00-21:00HRS BUZUKI TIME 21:00-22:00HRS SPOTI 22:00-05:00HRS MUZIKI MCHAGANGANYIKO	07:00-09:00HRS HABARI NA MATUKIO YA WIKI 09:00-11:00HRS THE SUNDAY 11:00-13:00HRS TOP 20 13:00-14:00HRS DW RADIO 14:00-16:00HRS CAPITAL MICHEZONI 16:00-18:00HRS UKURASA WA MBELE 18:00-21:00HRS JIACHIE 21:00-22:00HRS SPOTI 22:00-01:00HRS LADHA LAINI 01:00-05:00HRS MUZIKI MCHAGANGANYIKO

Tembelea mitandao ya kijamii ya CAPITAL RADIO



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The impact of this build-up in thermal power in Brazil

The inclusion of gas-powered plants is supposed to address energy security and support the company's efficiency in providing reliable energy nationwide as frequent droughts threaten hydropower capacity. While understandable as an objective, as it stands, the current provisions are problematic in many fronts, not only in terms of the GHG emission implications.

According to the law's provisions, the mandatory regions where these thermal powerplants are to be installed are mostly in water-abundant regions. Second the natural gas infrastructure is lacking. Third, additional infrastructure investments may lead to higher energy prices



SADC panel of elders visits the Kingdom of Lesotho

By Guardian Reporter

THE Southern African Development Community (SADC) panel of elders (PoE) led by its chairperson, Tanzania former President Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete undertook a four-day mission to Lesotho to obtain details of the government's roadmap and plan for implementation of the reforms process.

The working visit which began on February 7th 2023 in Johannesburg, South Africa follows the decision by the SADC summit of heads of state and Government in August, 2022 to establish an Oversight Committee made up of the SADC Panel of Elders and the Mediation Reference Group (MRG) to oversee the implementation of reforms in the Kingdom of Lesotho.

The Chairperson of the SADC PoE was accompanied by Paramasivum Pillay B. Vyapoory, former Vice-President of the Republic of Mauritius and Deputy Chairperson of the PoE.

In his engagement with the lead-

ership of Lesotho, Kikwete underlined SADC's continuing commitment to support the Government and the people of Lesotho to consolidating peace and stability.

During the consultations, the government of Lesotho and other stakeholders committed to put in place the necessary legal and constitutional measures for the implementation of the comprehensive reforms process.

In line with the SADC summit decision, the mission sought to obtain a better understanding of the political and security situation in Lesotho with the view to ensure a smooth implementation of the reforms process.

Prior to its deployment to Lesotho, the Chairperson held consultations in South Africa with the leadership of the former SADC facilitation team to the Kingdom of Lesotho to obtain a clearer understanding of the dynamics on the ground in the Kingdom of Lesotho.

While in Lesotho, the mission paid a courtesy call on His Majesty

King Motlotlehi Letsie III and held consultations with Prime Minister, Samuel Ntsokoane Matekane and Lejone Mpotjoane, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Relations.

The mission also met with various stakeholders, among others the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Justice, Law and Parliamentary Affairs, Nthomeng Majara, Vice President of the Senate, Mamonaheng Mokitimi, Speaker of National Assembly, Tlohang Sekhmanane, Attorney General, Rapelang Motsieloa; Former leadership of the National Reforms Authority (NRA), Pelele Letsoela, Opposition parties in parliament, political parties outside parliament, leaders of Civil Society Organisations and Development Partners (United States Ambassador, South African High Commissioner, European Union Ambassador, British High Commissioner and the representative of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

Climate change in Kenya's Maasai Mara National Reserve has really shrunk the wildebeest migration

NAIROBI

RAINFALL disruption by the warming climate brings more drought and more flooding to Kenya's Maasai Mara National Reserve and the Serengeti, where the largest terrestrial migration of Wildebeest, Gazelle, and Zebra has so damaged the ecosystem that the herds lose the pastures that have kept them alive for over two and a half million years according to the fossil record.

Once upon a time, an estimated two million animals migrated from North to South from Tanzania's Serengeti National Park into the Maasai Mara in Kenya, over 1,865 miles.

There used to be four wildebeest migrations in Kenya, but now there is only one with an estimated population of a couple of hundred thousand animals. The decline in population of over 60 percent since 1977.

Human populations have exploded across the earth, but there is not enough land in a fragile ecosystem for both. Fences go up; cattle feed on the same grasslands as the herds, and residents shoot migrating ani-

mals as competition for resources increases.

East Africa is one of the most vulnerable regions to climate change, with countries such as Kenya, Ethiopia and Somalia regularly experiencing unpredictable weather, from long dry spells to torrential rains and floods.

The region is currently experiencing the driest conditions recorded since 1981, following the failure of four consecutive rainy seasons. That has left 26 million people in the three countries on the brink of extreme hunger, according to the World Food Programme.

In the Maasai Mara reserve, the increased dry spells are also stoking conflict between humans and predators.

"When there is drought, the herbivores move into areas looking for pasture and water and they are followed by lions, who then attack cattle," said Kasaine Sankan, senior programme researcher at the Mara Predator Conservation Programme.

Sankan said dry periods also meant that Maasai cattle herders were encroaching into the reserve -

leaving less grazing land for herbivores like the wildebeest.

When it comes to nature-based climate solutions, plants get all the love. It's easy to envisage the carbon locked up in a mighty redwood or a forest of sea kelp.

But now many scientists are also getting excited by the role that animals can play in sequestering carbon, through their diet and behavior, the way they cycle nutrients, and even how they die.

This evolving science is called animating the carbon cycle. In 2019, the International Monetary Fund estimated that each great whale is worth well over \$2 million in terms of the carbon it will sequester during its life.

The science of such calculations is far from settled however, and even if it were, should we be valuing our planet's other inhabitants according to how well they can clean up humanity's carbon mess?

On grasslands. At a larger scale, heavy grazers such as elephants and wildebeest can strip shrubs and small trees from the African savannah—and that's not a bad thing.

In 2009, researchers at the Imperial College in the UK calculated that grazers not only reduce combustible biomass, reducing the risk of wildfires, but also produce dung that returns nutrients and carbon to the soil.

Tropical Africa has two distinct features - rain forests which are dominated by trees and savannas which are dominated by grasses. Both depend on rainfall quantity and seasonality. Seasonality measures how constant the distribution of rainfall over the course of a year is - in other words how long the dry season is.

Forests located close to the Equator receive lots of rainfall constantly over the year, while savannas receive less rainfall and only during the wet season.

Forests and savannas are expected to be strongly affected in the coming decades by changing rainfall patterns, including increased dry periods and decreasing annual rainfall.

These changes are already being felt. In some areas of Burkina Faso desertification is increasing, while in Chad rainfall is increasing. These changes are being linked to climate change across the world.

Forests and savannas are expected to be affected greatly by these changes because they depend heavily on rainfall quantity and seasonality.



Ugandan farmers decry low prices of soya beans

KAMPALA

Hundreds of farmers in Adjumani District have hoarded tonnes of soya beans, citing low market prices.

The farmers are storing their crops in anticipation of higher prices in the coming months.

More than 200 groups and individual farmers growing soya beans say they are stuck with close to 50 tonnes of soya beans.

The farmers embarked on soya bean planting under the Development Initiative in Northern Uganda (DINU) pilot project. The 26 million euro (about Sh101 billion) project runs from 2017 to 2022 in 33 districts, focused on nutrition and food security, road infrastructure, and good governance.

The project, funded by the European Union, among others, promoted the growing of oilseed crops including soya beans in the region for commercial purposes.

In Adjumani, the project targeted farmers in Dzaipi, Pakele, Adropi, Itrikwa, and Ukusijoni sub-counties.

Hawadi Drasiga, a farmer in Dzaipi Sub-county, who had 46 acres of soya beans, at the weekend said he is stuck with over 70 sacks of soya beans due to low prices.

"I bought the seedlings at Sh5,000 per kilogramme, and yet middlemen want to buy a kilogramme at only Sh2,000. I will not recover my costs because I spent close to Sh10 million on land opening, labour and other expenses. It is a big loss because I had planned to sell the soya beans to pay school fees and meet other family needs," he said.

Drasiga said several buyers have approached him to sell a kilogramme between Sh1,800 to Sh2,000 which he said is a loss.

"We want to start a cooperative so that we can have big bargaining power, but unfortunately, we have different capacities. Some of the farmers are impatient and they cannot wait longer, so we call upon the government to help us in marketing the crop," he said.

Another farmer, Michael Amoko from Pakele Sub-county, said he is hoarding 21 sacks of soya beans.

"I am still keeping the soya beans inside. But if a buyer wants a kilogramme at Sh3,000, I can sell because I only want to recover the costs incurred," Amoko added, "Last year I planted 17 acres, and I wanted to increase the acreages but with this price, I am not sure if I will do that this year."

James Logwenya, the agriculture officer of Dzaipi Sub-county, said farmers are hoarding soya beans due to high costs of production. He however said those desperate for quick cash are selling their soya beans at less than Sh2,000 per kilogramme.

The Ofua Sub-county chairman, Robert Dramwi, said there are about 30 farmer groups in the area who participated in the DINU project.

"Ofua has become a hub of Soya beans, the farmers have been trained on seed planting, quality seed identification and post-harvest handling. We have more than 10 tonnes but our farmers cannot sell them due to low prices. Unfortunately, some of the farmers took loans in order to enable them to grow on a large scale," Dramwi said.

He has urged farmers to form cooperatives to improve their bargaining power.

"When the farmers are not organised into cooperatives, middlemen tend to take advantage and buy at low prices" he added.

The prices of soya beans have been dropping in recent years due to their low demand on the world market, hence affecting the small-scale farmers.

For instance in 2019, a kilogramme of soya beans dropped from Sh1,500 to Sh1,000. From 2020 to date, the prices have been averaging at Sh2,000.

Farmers said MAKSOY3N and MAKSOY 4N varieties are the most demanded varieties in Northern Uganda. They said the two varieties mature in less than 120 days and are more resistant to pests and drought.

For once, the UHC format limits a household to six members and if there are more of them, a new entity of the same format is constituted, so 3,000 individuals being covered at 54,000/- per person comes to around 162m/- but the money paid for insurance coverage wasn't stated in black and white for all to see. That adds another element to the query of ability to pay, as to the credibility of those who paid, if all they can show is a membership card, without specific hospital affiliation. It is among a range of questions to be asked, and which need urgent solutions, especially as to validity of payment and recognition by a hospital at one's own residential place. All referrals can start there.

Chances that families will be able to pay 300,000/- to enrol are nil, if they fail to purchase essentials for pupils to continue in secondary

school, preferring that they remain at home. It is clear that the bill is targeting employees and employers to obtain additional funds with which to tie down the population to using public health centres, with a clear risk of excessive breaches of expectations. If the scheme is to work, any holder of insurance cover ought to be attached to a hospital or health centre, even a dispensary, at which the membership fee is paid, and this becomes the premise of being recognised for treatment.

Leaving the format loose as at present, where the limited NHIF cover and especially the CHF cover was simply irrelevant in hospitals, this idea of attachment is vital. Those who designed the current bill left out recognition and prior assurance of medical supplies or availability of prescription drugs to a patient, and this can't be enforced, where hospital staff are compelled to seek the medicine, unless the fee has been paid in that place. It has to be membership to a hospital or health centre, and referral procedure start from this recognition.

It also implies that provisions could be made for insurance cover with private health facilities, not directly pegged on fees for public sector health cover but use them

as a model. Stakeholders in private healthcare could sort out uniform or scaled standards for belonging to a hospital based arrangement, so long as the basic fee for individuals or family (as in UHC bill) has been agreed. The current draft seeks to impose conditions on private health care to be 'friendly' to users, which means cramp their expression as business units, an aspect of bureaucratic thinking or initiatives not shared by whole leadership.

To restate the issues somewhat, a format where only a UHC membership card is presented and can be used in any hospital or health centre, meanwhile as each centre is its own accounting unit for drugs, is singularly unworkable. There has to be a more assured connection between patients and those they will be showing those cards, that is hospital staff and eventually, administrators, so that they can even recognise an emergency. It is precisely this point that was failing in CHF and even NHIF use of coverage, that one's membership and to that extent, eligibility for treatment had to be approved first, and that at times cost lives. Or it is sidelined and cash promptly paid if need be.

Twilight of an era - as Nigeria's crucial election closes in, chaos and uncertainty spawn deeply troubled decisions

By Phillip van Niekerk

How else does one describe the Central Bank's declaration, without proper organisation, that the entire set of notes in circulation - 2.7 trillion naira (\$5.86-billion) - is not money anymore, while printing less than one-tenth of the new notes to replace them?

In a country where only 40% of people have bank accounts and less than 10% use digital money, it is surely a bad joke to tell people to use digital currency.

Or worse, it reeks of Marie Antoinette's famous "let them eat cake" line.

Dr Jibrin Ibrahim, the director of the Centre for Democracy and Development, described the puzzling decision as a "currency confiscation programme, seizing banknotes from the public and refusing to give it back to them".

It was a dagger to the heart of the Nigerian economy, a largely cash-run informal sector. Without cash, people were not able to buy food or do their daily business. Banks shut their doors and were stormed; some were burnt down by angry crowds.

The debacle may have been rescued by three northern governors - from Kaduna, Kogi and Zamfara - who asked the supreme court to declare the Central Bank's plan illegal. The ruling is expected on Wednesday.

Governor of Kaduna state, Nasir el-Rufai, who is one of President Muhammadu Buhari's closest allies, said he felt compelled to ask why any government would incite its own electorate by taking their money away on the eve of an election. He concluded that "it is very clear that there is a hidden agenda. How evil or how dark that agenda is, only God knows."

Speaking to the Premium Times newspaper, El-Rufai said that though the policy was "cloaked with the intention of reducing money laundering", the actual agenda was "to bring trade and commerce and exchange to a halt and make it impossible for the elections to take place or ignite protests so that the entire democratic structure will collapse or lead to an uprising that will invite the military to take over".

In this scenario, the election would be delayed and an interim government would assume control.

Spanner in the works

The obvious question is to what end was this spanner thrown in the works?

Premium Times, the country's leading investigative newspaper, blamed the debacle on Central Bank governor Godwin Emefiele and called for his immediate sacking.

But El-Rufai pointed the finger at non-state actors, "those around Buhari", for pushing the policy because they feared losing power and privileges.

"These are people that prefer to be under the radar but are constantly plotting to preserve power on their own terms," he said.

Buhari came to power eight years ago, promising to clean up the corruption of the Goodluck Jonathan government, but portions of the Nigerian elite have shown a distinct unwillingness to change their ways and the level of rent-seeking these days could possibly be worse than ever.

El-Rufai blamed those who benefit from the subsidies, the costliest of which is for fuel which accounts for more than the total amount the federal government spends on education, health and social protection; it



Campaigners for Nigeria's ruling All Progressive Congress at a rally in the Ojodu district, ahead of general elections in Lagos, on 6 February 2023. Nigeria will hold its general election on 25 February while the state elections are scheduled for 11 March. (Photo: EPA-EFE / Akintunde Akinleye)

disproportionately benefits Nigeria's rich class.

The World Bank complained in November 2022 about the waste, saying the subsidies are not accounted for in the budget which "makes them difficult to track and scrutinise".

Another major scam that is conducted in full view is that of the two-tier exchange rate, in which the insistence by the Reserve Bank's Emefiele that exporters convert their dollar earnings into naira at the much lower official rate has been disastrous for traders. The wide spread between the tightly controlled official rate and a parallel real-life market provides endless opportunities for those with connections to profit from the round trip.

Then, there are the oil thieves.

An estimated 200,000 to 300,000 barrels of oil per day are currently stolen in Nigeria - mainly by tapping directly into pipelines - amounting to about a fifth of the country's total production. Such a massive criminal enterprise, which is bleeding the country dry of revenue and foreign exchange, is only possible with the connivance of some in the military and high-level political and oil industry insiders.

The effect of this oil theft is felt throughout the economy. Oil and gas are still 80% of government revenue, so diminishing oil revenues have forced Nigeria to rely ever more on debt to finance its budget. More than 60% of the Ni-

gerian budget is currently funded through debt.

This rent-seeking is a big part of the stagnation and decline in the Nigerian economy that has so badly hurt the Nigerian people, whether they be middle class or poor.

Give democracy a chance

Peter Obi, the Labour Party candidate and former governor of Anambra, has run an energetic and positive campaign and has become a voice for the frustrated youth of the country. He is also a Christian and from the country's third-largest ethnic group Igbo, which has been shut off from any real power in the federal government during the Buhari years.

Obi has presented himself as the ultimate outsider taking on the establishment. In truth, all three major candidates come from within the two-party political system that has dominated Nigerian politics in the democratic era. More to the point, they are outside the ring of cronies around Buhari.

People's Democratic Party candidate Atiku Abubakar, a former vice-president and once one of the wealthiest men in Nigeria, has seen his companies run into the ground because of his oppositional politics and his two-decade-long presidential ambitions.

But if El-Rufai is to be believed, the main purpose of all these disruptions is to prevent Bola Tinubu, the former governor of Lagos state and the candidate of the ruling All Progressive Congress, from be-

coming president. This means that the political class has calculated that Tinubu is both the most likely winner and the biggest threat to their interests.

Tibor Nagy, the former US assistant secretary of state, queried whether Buhari or his clique were trying to sabotage Tinubu's campaign: "People are furious at the chaotic, unorganised circus. Tinubu could be punished by voters."

Tinubu founded the ruling party with Buhari in 2014, but after he ousted the incumbent Jonathan, the current president marginalised his erstwhile partner. In 2022, the clique went to great lengths to prevent Tinubu from getting the nomination but he managed to wrest the support of a number of northern governors from Buhari - three of whom are now bringing suit against the government run by their own party. Since then, there has been an uncomfortable back-and-forth between the candidate and the Villa, the headquarters of the Nigerian presidency.

Tinubu cannot afford to be publicly at loggerheads with Buhari, who still commands a substantial following in the north-Nigerian vote-rich states of Kano and Katsina, and Buhari appears unwilling to openly challenge the standard bearer of his own party. But the mixed messaging reflects a deep antipathy towards Tinubu by many around the president.

The Tinubu camp claims that, even after the chaos, its internal polling shows that he is 10 points

clear of its rivals and is ahead in 28 of the 36 states - 24 are needed to prevent the election from going to a second round.

Public polls have shown Obi ahead, but they are based on phone sampling and many of the poor in the north, which is where the election will be decided, do not have phones.

Whatever happens, the voters of Nigeria need to make an emphatic statement that the corrupt party is over and the country needs to move forward. It needs to happen without the violence that would play into the hands of those who would like to call the whole thing off.

Speaking of those who still might block change, El-Rufai said they lack any electoral or political legitimacy:

"They can only hide behind the likes of President Buhari to achieve their objectives. What we need to focus on is defeating them and defeating them means having elections and supporting whoever wins."

One group that is endangered by the twilight of the Buhari era is an ageing cohort of military generals who have remained powerful in the governments of both major political parties, manipulating events from behind the scenes long after the formal end of military rule in 1999.

We might just have witnessed their last stand.

DM

RADIO One RATIBA YA VIPINDI JUMATATU - JUMAPILI

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
TIME PROGRAMME	TIME PROGRAMME	TIME PROGRAMME	TIME PROGRAMME	TIME PROGRAMME	TIME PROGRAMME	TIME PROGRAMME
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Tembelea mitandao ya kijamii ya Radio One



Radio One



Thursday 16 February 2023

Absa launches graduate engagement programme

By Francis Kajubi

ABSA Bank Tanzania Limited has launched the fourth phase of its 'Graduate Engagement Program' targeting at placing ten graduates into a twelve months well-structured internship programme for the purpose of creating competent and visionary future leaders.

Absa's leadership development programme designed to cultivate the next generation of Absa leaders' from a pool of recent university graduates.

The program is open to candidates that have graduated from university between the years 2020 to 2023 and are able to join Absa bank Tanzania as soon as April 2023 and remain with the bank for the entire duration of the programme.

The bank is now accepting applications for the programme and interested candidates can visit Empower Tanzania's website, Absa's partner for the programme and search for "Leaders in The Making" to apply before 26 February 2023.

Applications are open for graduates from different courses, not only those who pursued courses in relation to banking.

Obedi Laiser, Finance Director Absa bank Tanzania told the press yesterday in Dar es Salaam that the aim of this programme is to



Absa bank Tanzania finance director Obedi Laiser (second right), addresses journalists during the launch of Absa's graduate engagement program in Dar es Salaam yesterday. Looking on from left are: Absa head of marketing and corporate relations, Aron Luhanga, Absad director of people and culture (HR), Patrick Foya and Empower marketing and communications manager, Joanna Mallya. Phot: Courtesy of Absa.

take fresh university graduates especially those who graduated between 2020 and 2023, provide them with quality job opportunities and nurture them into becoming future corporate leaders who will have

a great impact at Absa and the banking industry at large.

"The young generation faces a rapidly changing world and many challenges in finding job opportunities. Two of Absa's

top priorities are to help young people prepare themselves as future leaders," said Laiser adding:

"Thus, this programme ensures that as a local bank and a good corporate citizen, we live up to our commitment of addressing youth unemployment and skills development for the country."

The bank has been running the programme since 2013, which has proven to be a resounding success in producing local leaders who have gone on to take senior leadership positions within Absa and other financial institutions in the country.

For the 2023 programme, Absa has selected Empower Limited as an implementing partner for the programme.

The bank believes that Empower's expertise and commitment to youth development, their unique understanding of the labour market and the competencies of the future, and their close relationship with the country's largest tertiary academic institutions, makes them the right partners for such an undertaking.

Laiser urged all fresh graduates to grab this opportunity with both hands and apply before the set deadline - promising an exciting and innovative career journey at Absa for all participants.

He also assured everyone that the re-

ruitment process will be fair and transparent, owing to the bank's commitment to being a force for good in the community.

Patrick Foya, the Director of People Function and Culture (HR) said "The partnership with Empower will ensure that the programme remains relevant in this dynamic market and that it pushes the candidates to fulfil their full potential and be ready for future leadership roles in the corporate world.

He asserted that upon completion of the 12-month program, Absa expects that participants will have a comprehensive understanding of the corporate world and be well-equipped to take on leadership roles within the bank and beyond.

Joanna Mallya, Marketing and Communications Manager Empower Limited said the programme will offer participants an immersive learning experience that will consist of leadership exposure and digital masterclasses.

She said the programme will cover mentorship and coaching, innovation challenges, book clubs, 21st century skills workshops, a play-to-win retreat, research and market analysis, inspirational sessions, and practical exposure to various areas of the bank's operations.

Dar's Rotary club raises funds for the vulnerable

By Francis Kajubi

THE Rotary Club of Dar es Salaam Peninsula has celebrated Valentine's Day by hosting a fundraising event aimed at contributing in the efforts to attract a difference in the lives of the visually impaired people.

At the event held on Tuesday evening in Dar es Salaam themed 'Love in not blind, Valentine's Day Fundraising' the Club brought together community members to show love and support for the visually impaired especially the people with albinism.

Nazeer Tajudin, President Rotary Club of Dar es Salaam Peninsula said that the gathering which also featured the Club members targets at sharing generosity, a true testament to the kindness and compassion that exists in the community.

"I want to express my gratitude to all of the sponsors, volunteers, and supporters who have made this event possible. Your generosity and support are truly appreciated. I know that our efforts will make a positive impact on the lives of many," said Tajudin.

He urged the event participants that as they celebrate Valentine's Day they should also reflect on the importance of giving back to the needy.

"By coming together as a community we can make a real difference in the lives of those who are less fortunate," he asserted.

He said the Club is a subsidiary of the Rotary Club International, a global network of more than 1.4million members in over 200 countries. Founded in 1905, Rotary's main objective is to bring together business and professional leaders to provide humanitarian services.

Rotary Club supports projects that promote peace, fight diseases, provide clean water and sanitation, and support education.

"Rotary Club International and its members are dedicated to making the world a better place. The purpose of this event is to raise funds to support the vulnerable impaired in our community. We all know how important it is to have good vision and how much it can impact our quality of life," said Tajudin.

Novatus Ashem, PRIMA Afro marketing manager, the main sponsor of the fundraising event said giving back to the community that the company is connected is even more than a social responsibility.

"We are glad to be committed to serving our community through various approaches. Today we have provided visual equipment for people with albinism. We encourage other companies to be part of a team that gives back to the community," he said.



TCDC Chairman Abdumajid Nsekela

Banker Reporter

THE Tanzania Cooperative Development Commission (TCDC) in collaboration with the Tanzania Federation of Cooperative Societies (TFC) have organized a special meeting of cooperative sector stakeholders to discuss various issues in relation to cooperatives operations.

The meeting to be held on February 27, 2023 in Dar es Salaam

will bring participants from the Agricultural Marketing Cooperative Societies (AMCOS), the Cooperative Audit and Supervision (COASCO), and the Moshi Cooperative University (MoCU).

TCDC Chairman Abdumajid Nsekela told journalists on Tuesday that the meeting will also involve other stakeholders of the cooperative sector.

Nsekela said that the meeting aims to bring together the stake-

Cooperatives stakeholders to set operation strategies

holders of the cooperative sector to discuss the development of cooperatives and set a strategy to strengthen the cooperative sector in the country.

He appealed to all stakeholders in the cooperative sector to respond to the call to participate in the meeting as their ideas are important in improving the cooperative system.

"TCDC is determined to modernize and commercialize the cooperatives sector to increase the participation of people in various sectors, and increase the contribution of this sector in fighting poverty, as well as promoting the country's economy," said Nsekela.

According to Nsekela, the Commission is focusing on the establishment of a digital system to increase the efficiency of Cooperative Societies, to strengthen Institutions involved in management, to provide education on cooperatives to increase the participation of various sectors other than agriculture, and to speed up the

process of establishing the National Cooperatives Bank.

"In the meeting, marketing systems will be discussed; management and use of assets of cooperatives, capital growth, changing society's attitude towards cooperative;

The resolutions that will be reached through the Conference will have to be properly implemented by every stakeholder," he said.

Nsekela who has been appointed by the President as the Chairman of TCDC a few months ago commended the government for its dedicated efforts to strengthen cooperative societies.

On his part, the Registrar of Cooperative Societies and the CEO of TCDC, Dr. Benson Ndiege said that in recent years there has been a great improvement in the cooperative sector which has led to an increase in the scope of cooperatives in various sectors.

There is an increase in cooperatives working capital and an improvement

in the collection of government revenue, especially in the agricultural sector.

For the year 2021/22, the government collected 15.14bn/- in tax from cashew nuts sold by TANECU, MAM-CU, RUNALI, LINDI MWAMBABO, TAM-CU and CORECU cooperative unions.

However, 1.04bn/- has been collected by the local government authorities in tax from KDCU and KCU Cooperatives through the the trading of coffee.

"During the period between 2015 and 2022, we have seen cooperative members increasing from 2.4 million to 7 million, but there has also been a great empowerment of markets through the cooperative system," he said.

Dr. Ndiege said that despite these successes, a lot of work still needs to be done to make the cooperative unions more productive in relation to development of individuals and the nation as a whole.

Banks fixed deposit rate rises to three-year high of 7.16pc



NAIROBI

BANKS have raised the average rate for fixed deposits to a three-and-a-half-year high of 7.16 percent, reacting to the hiking of the base lending rate by the Central Bank of Kenya (CBK) and increased appetite by depositors for government securities.

The CBK raised the base lending rate by 1.75 percentage points to 8.75 percent last year in a bid to arrest high inflation, signalling a higher cost of money in the economy for both borrowers and banks.

The subsequent rise in short-term government securities' rates to highs of between four (182 and 364-day Treasury bill) and seven years (91-day T-bill) has forced banks to adjust interest on non-current deposits in order to encourage larger depositors to leave their money with them instead of lending to the State.

CBK data shows that lenders also adjusted the average lending rate upwards to 12.7 percent from 12.16 percent in December 2021 in order to protect their margins, although the actual cost of a loan paid by customers is significantly

higher once processing fees are factored in.

"Commercial banks' average lending rate increased to 12.7 percent in December 2022 from 12.27 percent in June, reflecting the monetary policy stance. Similarly, the average commercial banks deposit rate increased to 7.16 percent in December 2022 from 6.62 percent in June...consequently, the interest spread decreased slightly from 5.66 percent to 5.53 percent," said the CBK.

Deposits held longer than three months attracted the highest interest at 7.93 percent in December, while those held for less than three months were being paid 7.38 percent.

The savings rate stood at 3.55 percent, up from 2.55 percent a year earlier, while the demand deposit rate remained a slim 1.93 percent, up from 1.16 percent.

On the loan cost side, the approval of the majority of lenders' risk-based pricing plans means that customers are likely to face even steeper rates once banks add a premium to reflect the risk of default.

THE IMPORTANCE OF BANKING INDUSTRY STABILITY IN ECONOMY

By Kelvin Mkwawa

THE banking sector is an important sector for the stabilization of financial system. It plays a critical role in the economy of our country; it facilitates the flow of funds in our economy and ensures financial resources are allocated efficiently toward promoting economic development and growth. Banks are embedded in our everyday lives and activities - withdrawing salaries, paying bills, and saving for our future. The banking industry is fundamentally an industry of trust and its stability depends on public confidence so when the public starts to distrust banks, it will affect its operations hence its stability. Banking instability may lead to a financial crisis with adverse consequences for the economy hence it is vital to have a sound, stable, and healthy banking industry. In this article, I will explain why the stability of our banking system is important to our economic welfare.

The performance of the banks is central to achieving the financial stability of

the country. It is evident that the banking system is complex, big, and interconnected with every other sector of our economy and is an important driver of our future GDP growth. Before I explain why the stability of the banking sector is important, let me briefly state the negative effects of the instability of our banking system in our economy:

- It can increase the tax burden on us as taxpayers when the Government is forced to take over the failing banks and compensate the depositors (when the bank default), there will be less funding left for other development projects.
- A decline in lending to the private sector since banks can't take risks due to their instability
- Furthermore, imagine if the households could not get a short-term fund such as salaries to support their daily activities or imagine how long it will take someone to be a homeowner if they have to pay for their home in cash with no mortgage.



Kelvin Mkwawa,

Now let's look at the benefits of the stable banking industry:

- A stable banking sector facilitates day-to-day fi-

ancial transactions. These financial transactions include salaries payment, business transactions, payment of utility bills, foreign transactions, for instance, the exportation and importation of goods, and as well as normal household purchases.

- It has the capacity to mobilize lending to those who need financing for both personal and business needs.
- It encourages savings and the deposit of funds from the public which can be accessed through various channels such as ATMs and mobile wallets. Additionally, with the stable banking industry, the diaspora can send remittances through financial institutions.

It's the sole responsibility of our regulator, the Bank of Tanzania (BOT), to ensure our banking industry is stable by strengthening regulation and supervision of the banking sector, encouraging prudence on the part of lending, enhancing market discipline through

increased transparency, and using monetary policy instruments to address any potential instability in our banking system.

To sum it up, it is imperative to have a stable banking system as it plays a critical role in our economy. We have seen the benefits of stability in our banks which includes the smoothing of all financial transactions inside and outside the country, and the ability to lend to the public which enhances the lives of the people. Promoting financial stability should be the highest priority of our policymakers thereby ensuring the public confidence in our banking system remains strong at any given time. Furthermore, it is not hard to see that if the banking system is not stable, the people and the country as a whole will suffer severely. Thus the stability of the banking system is a necessary condition for ensuring sustainable economic growth in the long term.

Kelvin Mkwawa, MBA is a seasoned banker

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Individuals, companies avoid paying taxes to govt

NAIROBI

THE harsh economic conditions in Kenya have pushed everyone, including the government and the private sector, to be uptight with their money. Everyone wants to make more money and spend less. That is true of taxes.

Individuals and businesses often use tax minimisation strategies to reduce their tax burden and maximise profits. While tax avoidance is legal, some view it as unethical, calling for everyone to pay their fair share of taxes.

For Kenya Revenue Authority (KRA), tax avoidance and tax evasion are two sides of the same coin. The tax agency has become increasingly sophisticated in its attempt to detect and pursue tax avoidance cases.

So, should firms and individuals make use of legal tax minimisation strategies?

What is tax avoidance? This is the use of legal methods to minimise the amount of income tax paid by an individual or business, either by claiming as many deductions or credits

as it is allowed or prioritising investments with tax advantages such as tax-free infrastructure bonds.

What is the difference between tax avoidance and tax evasion?

Tax evasion is using illegal methods to reduce tax obligations.

For example, individuals or businesses may report lower income or higher expenses leading to reduced or no profit, which attracts less income tax.

Tax evasion also includes the smuggling of goods, under declaration or non-declaration of income, tax fraud, dishonest tax reporting, and overstating deductions.

Andrew Warambo, a senior associate in the tax practice at Dentons Hamilton Harrison & Mathews, a law firm, says that with tax evasion, an individual or company refuses to pay taxes after the liability has crystallised.

For example, an employer deducts pay as you earn (PAYE) from employees but does not remit it to KRA. "There is no context where tax evasion can be legal," said Mr Warambo.

In tax avoidance, an employer can decide that, rath-



er than employ permanent employees for whom he has to pay PAYE at a rate as high as 30 percent, he "instead, can structure the business in such a way that he gets services only from independent contractors for whom he pays only withholding tax," added Warambo.

Are there some forms of tax avoidance that are illegal?

Generally, there is a thin line between tax avoidance and tax evasion. Depending on which side they find themselves on, tax experts disagree on whether all forms of tax avoidance or tax planning are legal.

What does the taxman say?

The Kenya Revenue Authority (KRA) says that the Tax Procedures Act defines tax avoidance as "a transaction or a scheme designed to avoid liability to pay tax under any tax law."

"The Act further allows the Commissioner to impose a penalty equivalent to double the amount of tax that would have been avoided were a taxpayer found to have engaged in any tax avoidance scheme."

But Nikhil Hira, a tax expert, says it is not easy to prove the illegality of tax avoidance.

"Tax avoidance is generally where a taxpayer enters into a scheme, say of restructuring or reorganisation, with the sole intention of avoiding

tax," said Mr Hira.

What are some forms of tax avoidance?

In tax avoidance, the individual or business uses tax planning, profit shifting, use of branches in jurisdictions with lower tax rates and utilisation of tax incentives to reduce their tax bill.

The most common way for multinational corporations (MNCs) to avoid paying taxes is by using Base Erosion and Profit Shifting (BEPS) schemes.

The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), a club for mostly rich countries but which also includes Kenya, says BEPS "are tax avoidance strategies that exploit gaps and mismatches in tax rules, artificially shifting profits to low or no-tax locations."

These jurisdictions with low corporate income tax (CIT) are known as tax havens. They include countries like the Cayman Islands, Ireland, and Mauritius.

Money shifted could be royalty payment for intellectual property or interest payment on a debt. The money could also be a dividend payment, which attracts a lower withholding tax in the tax haven.

What's the most prominent case of tax avoidance in Kenya?

The 'Pandora Papers', an investigation based on the leak of some 11.9 million documents from 14 financial services companies worldwide, revealed how the global elite used offshore tax havens to hide assets worth hundreds of millions of dollars.

Retired President Uhuru Kenyatta and six family members were linked to a network of offshore companies.

The use of secretive trusts and foundations in low-tax jurisdictions is often seen as an effort to avoid paying taxes.

How has Kenya tried to address the problem of tax avoidance?

In the Finance Act, 2021, the government tried to seal loopholes exploited by companies to avoid taxes.

The Act introduced a new rule where interest on debt to a related company or third party that exceeds 30 percent of the earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortisation (EBITDA) would be subjected to income tax.

Holding companies of multinationals must also reveal to KRA where their profits, sales and assets are located and taxes paid to enable the taxman to conduct audits and transfer pricing assessments on transactions between linked companies.

Bank of Russia sells foreign currency worth \$122 million with settlements

MOSCOW

THE Russian Finance Ministry resumed FX sell operations in the domestic FX market as part of the new fiscal rule mechanism on January 13, 2023.

MOSCOW, February 15. /TASS/. Russia's Central Bank sold foreign currency worth 9 bln rubles (\$121.9 mln) on the domestic market with settlements on February 14, according to data published on the regulator's website on Wednesday.

Sales of foreign currency on the domestic market with settlements on February 13 totaled 8.9 bln rubles (\$120 mln).

The Russian Finance Ministry resumed FX sell operations in the domestic FX market as part of the new fiscal rule mechanism on January 13, 2023. The total amount of funds allocated for sale of foreign currency from January 13 to February 6 was planned at 54.5 bln rubles (\$790 mln), with daily amount of foreign currency sale equaling 3.2 bln rubles.

Later, the Finance Ministry said that it would allocate 160.2 bln rubles (\$2.2 bln) for sale of foreign currency from February 7 to March 6, 2023, with daily foreign currency sales equaling 8.9 bln rubles.

Purchase and sales transactions of foreign currency will be carried out by the Bank of Russia in the domestic market in the currency section of Moscow Exchange in the 'Chinese yuan-ruble' instrument.

Uniform EAC laws will fight tax evasion crimes

KAMPALA

TAX Investigation Commissioners are calling for seamless regional laws through which tax investigation can be conducted in the region.

Denis Kugonza, Uganda Revenue Authority (URA) Commissioner Tax Investigation Department said there is need for collaboration to address the tax and revenue linkages which can not be done by a single country.

Joint efforts needed "There is a need for closer collaboration across the region. As URA alone, we cannot fight the vice of tax evasion but once we are together, we can join the fight," Mr Kugonza said.

He noted that the busi-

ness people involved in tax evasion always think ahead, and have resources that can enable them to move resources from one place to another.

This was revealed during the meeting held by the East African Revenue Authorities Commissioners for Tax Investigation (EARACTI) from Burundi, Rwanda, South Sudan, Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda who come together annually to come up with ways through which they can address the gaps and loopholes within the tax investigation department that makes the region lose billions of shillings due to tax evasions, held in Kampala yesterday.

"We always meet an-



A queue of trucks at Malaba border. Fighting cross border crime requires tax commissioners to collaborate under a uniform regional law.

nually to discuss cross border crime and see how we can build capacity and share information to fight cross border

crime in tax evasion. The EAC customers Act allows cross border trade with some goods within the region from one

border to another. Some people are using this opportunity to evade tax.

In this matter, collaboration

will help us declare so that any income earned by any tax payer can be declared in all taxation jurisdiction systems," he added.

Kenya

Dr Tera Saidimu, Commissioner Intelligence and Strategic Operations at the Kenya Revenue Authority (KRA) recommended that technical committees are trained.

"We will be able to identify tax evasion schemes, and collect more taxes," he said, noting that differentiating between the audit and investigation department will help avoid interference or delay of work and compromise," Saidimu said.

Tanzania

Mr Everest Mashiba, Commissioner Tax Investigation at the Tanzania Revenue Authority (TRA) called for the amendment of East Africa Community (EAC) laws and introduce a plea bar-

gain option.

Ms Joyce Wani, Acting Commissioner Internal Affairs in South Sudan said that they are still finalising the legal policy framework regarding the EAR-ACTI.

"We do not have clear cut policies. The capacity and staff are not enough. But once we familiarise ourselves, we will distinguish integrity and investigation. This will also draw a line between audit and investigation," she said.

Tax evasion

Ibrahim Bbossa, Acting manager public and corporate affairs at URA, noted that the commonly smuggled goods include cigarettes, fuels, cooking oil and rice.

However, he noted that URA is investing in quality informers to help them, especially from the porous borders.

Diversify financial assets for investors-Wandera

KAMPALA

THE Absa Africa Financial Markets Index is a score used to measure Africa's economies or markets in terms of market accessibility, openness and transparency.

The index aims at showing how various economies and markets can reduce barriers to investment which can, in turn, boost sustainable growth.

Over the last six years, the index has been recognised as a benchmark for the investment community to assess and access information about the various economies, how easy it is to get into those economies, how to earn returns from those economies and the market infrastructure. The index is a benchmark for policymakers across the continent.

How did Uganda perform in the 2022 index compared to the previous year?

The latest AFMI has been the best so far for Uganda. It improved by 6 points and moved to 4th position out of 26 countries measured. This is the first time Uganda has entered

the top 4 countries and the first time for any East African country.

The pillars or measures of the index are six, namely: Market depth; Access to foreign exchange; Market transparency, tax and regulatory environment; Capacity of local investors; Macroeconomic opportunity and; Legality and enforceability of financial markets master agreements.

What drove this performance?

Two indicators primarily drove Uganda's growth; access to foreign exchange which is a depiction of our foreign exchange market, like the size of the foreign exchange market, the number of products available and the liquidity in the foreign exchange market.

The second indicator where Uganda greatly performed was Market transparency, which was driven by the increased access to foreign exchange, which increased market liquidity for foreign exchange and volumes.

A quick look at Uganda's foreign exchange market showed a growth in the total amount of transactions done from \$24.5 Billion to \$29 billion in 2022, which

was significant growth for Uganda, especially since the country had just recovered from Covid-19 and with the onset of Ebola.

Uganda also performed very well with the ESG initiatives. This is under the Market transparency pillar, and the Bank of Uganda launched a five-year strategic plan from 2022 to 2027, which includes different measures to cover climate risk and sustainable finance. This was one of the initiatives that caused Uganda's performance to improve significantly.

What can be done by both the government and private sector to further improve the performance of the country's financial markets?

There is already work to create or make Uganda a netting destination, which allows money to flow quickly in transactions. With that, we shall be able to improve on three indicators, market depth and capacity of local investors, which is interlinked with the legality and enforceability of financial markets master agreements.

The size of our bond, swap and forex markets are smaller, and this needs just a change in legislation

to significantly move upwards so that investors are confident that there will be fewer barriers in transactions.

The Capacity of local investors needs to be improved by increasing the number of active savers in our pension fund. While Uganda has the largest pension fund in the region, the number of saving per capita for Uganda is \$123 per person compared to the index average for 26 countries which is about \$826. The current number of savers is about 700,000 for formally employed people, this needs more than 100% increase to almost two million savers.

Uganda and most of East Africa struggled with the pillar of Capacity of local investors and Market depth, primarily the bond market. This is because there is no product diversity regarding the number of products traded in Uganda and no green bonds or infrastructure in other countries.

Areas to improve

Despite slight improvements to Uganda's score in Pillar 1: Market depth, corporate bond turnover and total equity turnover remained



David Wandera, executive director and head of markets Absa Bank Uganda.

low in 2022.

Uganda continues to have a relatively low stock market capitalisation, which fell by 1.5 percentage points as a share of gross domestic product in the 12

months to June 2022. Despite the latest ESG incentives and standards, Mr Wandera pointed out that there is limited availability of ESG products (such as green bonds) on the domestic market.

Private sector lending likely to rise

KAMPALA

THE resurgence in economic activities in the country has boosted commercial bank lending to the private sector in different sectors and there will be an increase in commercial lending this year, I&M bank Uganda Limited has said.

Commercial banks are essential for the general public and the economy at large because they create liquidity in the market and create capital besides providing their customers with essential services.

Bank of Uganda in its state of the economy report for December 2022, said in the quarter ended October 2022 growth in Shilling loans increased to 12.2 percent from 9.6 percent, while growth in forex loans declined to 6.3 percent down from 13.8 percent.

Overall, net extensions were largely driven by shilling denominated loans which outweighed the contraction in foreign currency denominated loans.

While meeting a hand-

ful of journalists and customers at its newly established branch at Kingdom Kampala on Wednesday, Mr Joseph Fataa, the head of products and channels at I&M bank, said there were increased economic activities last year compared to past years and they are positioning themselves to expand bank services alongside other commercial banks in the market.

"We are lending to all sectors in the economy, and we are going to maintain this, I&M bank Uganda Limited is no longer a small bank, but a big regional bank and we have added more services beyond what we used to offer to our clients," he said.

Mr Fataa said they are seeing stability in the economy with increased economic activities taking place in Uganda.

The I&M bank's newly established branch will be officially launched next month.

Mr Fataa said the branch has three in one, which includes select suite for net worth cli-

ents (premium customers) and it is designed to help them manage their business and secure their wealth as well, the second is the corporate bank and the third is the digital pod, which offers variety of services among which is internet banking and other related digital services.

Although digitization in the bank services has rapidly grown, with the use of ATMs, Agent Banking, Internet banking among others being preferred to bank hall services, Mr Fataa said banking halls are still alive despite the digital evolution.

Banks must keep up Although digitization in the bank services has rapidly grown, with the use of ATMs, Agent Banking, Internet banking among others being preferred to bank hall services, Mr Fataa said banking halls are still alive despite the digital evolution.

"The banking hall has lost ground but it is not going away anytime soon. Customers want that personal interface once in a

while," he said.

Uganda's Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development (MoFPED) has there was a 0.4 per cent growth in the stock of outstanding private sector credit despite the rise in lending rates from November 2022.

The growth in the stock of private sector credit means that the high lending rate has not discouraged the general public from borrowing funds for different activities from financial institutions.

Official government figures indicate that commercial banks' shilling denominated rates edged to a weighted average of 18.98 per cent in November 2022, up from 18.42 per cent in October 2022.

This, government says, was partly on account of the tight monetary stance that has seen BOU raise the Commercial Borrowing Rate (CBR) from 6.5 per cent in the earlier months of 2022- to 10 per cent that still prevails up to date.

According to a MoFPED report released Janu-



ary 23 focusing on the macroeconomic policy for December 2022, the stock of outstanding private sector credit stood at Shs19.886 trillion in November 2022 compared to the Shs19.827 trillion recorded in October 2022.

"Of this, Shs13.947 trillion was shillings denominated credit while Shs5.938 trillion was foreign currency denominated credit during the month," MoFPED revealed.

However, the MoFPED noted that the private sector credit growth in 2022 was generally lower than historical trends. This

was attributed to "subdued economic activity occasioned by the spillover effects of the Russia-Ukraine war as well as the tight monetary stance by the central bank."

Credit Extensions

Uganda's finance ministry emphasized that the value of credit approved for disbursement in November 2022 amounted to Shs1.139 trillion, representing a 50.4 per cent approval rate against the Shs2.259 trillion that was applied for during the month. This was lower than the 64.2% approval rate registered in October 2022.

Government records suggest that this was partly due to heightened risk aversion from lenders and the tightening liquidity in the financial sector following the rise of the Cash Reserve Ratio by the Central Bank.

"Lending institutions are starting to realign their portfolios from illiquid sectors such as building, mortgage, construction and real estate that demand a lot of money but have long repayment periods to sectors like business, community and social services; and personal and household loans which have shorter repayment periods,"

MoFPED observed.

It further explained that as was the case in October 2022, personal and household loans took the largest share of approved credit at 29.2 per cent (Shs 333.2 billion) in November 2022, followed by Trade at 18.4 per cent (Shs 209.4 billion).

Further, the two sectors accounted for almost half of the funds approved for disbursement during the month. Other notable sectors were manufacturing (14.8 per cent), agriculture (13.1 per cent) and building, mortgage, construction and real estate that accounted for 11.7 per cent.

I&M waives bank to mobile fees permanently

NAIROBI

I&M Bank has permanently dropped levy fees for transferring cash between its platform and mobile wallets, bucking the trend in the sector that has been reinstating the charges since January amid customer outcry.

The move will save I&M customers between Sh10 and Sh65, the range the lender was charging after the Central Bank of Kenya (CBK) announced a return of charges on transactions between banks and mobile money wallets.

The CBK had temporarily stopped the charges from mid-March 2020 in a bid to lower the risk of Covid-19 infections by encouraging cashless transactions but reinstated the charges in January.

The waiver makes I&M the first lender in Kenya to officially offer zero fees for bank to M-Pesa and Airtel Money transactions. The lender said it would extend the waiver to T-Kash transactions for Telkom users.

The lender had cut the charges from the pre-Covid range of Sh12 to Sh84 to between Sh10 and Sh65, in line with CBK guidelines, but has now decided to do away with the charges entirely.

I&M general manager for digital



I&M Bank signage at a branch on Kenyatta Avenue, Nairobi

business Michael Mwangi said the waiver is aimed at supporting the customers transacting on its digital platforms.

"We believe this move will offer new

and existing customers a huge relief during tough economic times and encourage more customers to transact on mobile," said Mr Mwangi.

"As part of our approach to service delivery, recent customer feedback showed that as much as our transaction rates are favourable, there was an opportunity to

review our policies on bank to mobile money wallet charges for the digitally active customer."

All I&M peers, including KCB, Equity, Cooperative, NCBA, Absa Kenya, Standard Chartered Bank Kenya, Diamond Trust Bank and Stanbic, have reinstated the transaction charges after CBK lifted the freeze last December.

Some lenders had attracted backlash for reintroducing the charges despite the High Court on December 19, 2022, issuing interim orders suspending the return of the levies until the case was heard and determined.

I&M wants to ride on the free transfers to grow its digital banking products in line with its current iMara 2.0 strategy.

"We look forward to seeing these numbers grow with digital transactions gaining favour among our digitally active customers," said Mr Mwangi.

CBK's reintroduction of

charges order was unsuccessfully challenged in court.

The regulator, in the December 6 update indicated that maximum charges for transfers from bank accounts to mobile money wallets would be reduced by up to 61 per cent, while mobile money wallet to bank account would fall by up to 47 per cent.

The waiver of charges had seen the number of Kenyans actively using mobile money increase by over 6.2 million, with the monthly volume of person to person (P2P) transactions rising to 440 million from 162 million. The value of P2P transactions rose from Sh234 billion to Sh399 billion.

The monthly volume and value of transactions between payment service providers and banks increased from 18 million transactions worth about Sh157 billion to over 113 million transactions worth Sh800 billion.

WORLD

US, Canada, European powers oppose Israeli settlement plan

JERUSALEM

FOREIGN ministers of four European countries and Canada joined Washington on Tuesday in opposing a decision by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government to authorize nine Jewish settler outposts in the occupied West Bank.

The foreign ministers of Britain, France, Germany, Italy and the United States issued a joint statement voicing concern over the plans announced by Israel on Sunday.

"We strongly oppose unilateral actions which will only serve to exacerbate tensions between Israelis and Palestinians and undermine efforts to achieve a negotiated two-state solution," they said.

Later, Canadian Foreign Minister Melanie Joly said Ottawa also strongly

opposed the expansion of settlements and added that "such unilateral actions jeopardize efforts to achieve comprehensive, just and lasting peace."

On Sunday, Israel granted retroactive authorization to nine settler outposts in the West Bank and announced mass construction of new homes in established settlements, prompting US Secretary of State Antony Blinken to say he was "deeply troubled."

Israel's foreign ministry had no immediate comment but Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir, from the hardline religious nationalist bloc in Netanyahu's government, said he wanted to go further.

"This is our mission. This is our doctrine," Ben-Gvir said. "Nine settlements is nice but it's still not enough. We want much more," he said in a video message.



A view of the West Bank Jewish settlement of Eilat, Feb 14, 2023. (PHOTO / AP)

Most world powers view as illegal the settlements Israel has built on land it captured in a 1967 war with Arab powers.

Israel disputes that and cites biblical, historical and political links to the West Bank, as well as security interests.

Since the 1967 war, it has established 132 settlements on land Palestinians see as the core of a future state, according to the Peace Now watchdog group.

Besides the authorized settlements, groups of settlers have built scores of outposts without government permission. Some have been razed by police, others authorized retroactively. The nine granted approval on Sunday are the first for this Netanyahu government.

Hussein al-Sheikh, a senior Palestinian official, welcomed the joint statement but added: "We demand that words be turned to deeds."

With tensions in the West Bank already high, the move has alarmed world powers which fear an even greater escalation of violence. Israeli forces have conducted near daily raids in the West Bank, pursuing a crackdown begun last year in the wake of a spate of deadly Palestinian attacks.

This year more than 40 Palestinians, including both militant fighters and civilians, have been killed by Israeli forces. At the same time, 10 people have been killed in Israel in two attacks by Palestinians.

Agencies

US arrests four more suspects in plot to kill Haiti ex-president

US federal agents arrested and charged four suspects in Florida for alleged roles in the plot that led to the 2021 assassination of former Haitian president Jovenel Moïse, authorities said on Tuesday.

Moïse's murder left a political vacuum in the Caribbean nation and emboldened powerful gangs who serve as de facto authorities in large parts of the country's capital, Port-au-Prince.

Eleven individuals are now in US custody and charged by a South Florida grand jury in connection with the murder, according to the Justice Department.

Three of the new defendants - Antonio "Tony" Intriago, owner of Counter Terrorist Unit Security, or CTU; Arcangel Pretel Ortiz, operator of the affiliated



This July 8, 2021 file photo shows suspects in the assassination of Haiti's former president Jovenel Moïse, among them Haitian-American citizens James Solages (left) and Joseph Vincent (second left) are shown to the media at the General Direction of the police in Port-au-Prince, Haiti. US federal agents arrested and charged four suspects in Florida for alleged roles in the plot that led to the 2021 assassination of former Haitian president Jovenel Moïse, authorities said on Tuesday. AP

CTU Federal Academy LLC; and Walter Veintemilla, head of Miami-based Worldwide Capital Lending Group - are accused of

supporting a conspiracy to kidnap or kill the president of Haiti, US authorities said in a briefing. The fourth defendant, Freder-

ick Bergmann, is accused of conspiring to smuggle ballistic vests for former Colombian soldiers who allegedly carried out the fatal shooting of Moïse, officials added.

Their investigation focuses on weapons, ballistic vests and financing used in the deadly plot.

Intriago is a Venezuelan-American businessman, while Pretel Ortiz is a Colombian-American citizen. Both were detained in South Florida, the Justice Department told reporters.

Veintemilla, a US citizen, lent over \$170,000 to CTU Security to finance their operations in Haiti, officials added.

The arrests and charges were reported earlier on Tuesday by the Miami Herald and the New York Times. Intriago's lawyer told the New York Times he in-

tended to enter a not guilty plea at his bond hearing on Tuesday.

Haitian gangs have expanded their territory since the assassination. The resulting violence has left much of the country off-limits to the government and led to routine gun battles with police.

In October, the United Nations suggested a "rapid action force" be sent to Haiti to combat escalating violence from armed gangs whose turf battles have left hundreds dead and thousands displaced.

The latest arrests in the United States come a day before leaders of the Caribbean bloc, CARICOM, are set to meet for a three-day conference, where the situation in Haiti is expected to be one of the main issues.

Agencies

'Republicans cool on Trump, Democrats cooler on Biden'

DEMOCRATIC US voters express less support for President Joe Biden running for a second term 2024 than Republicans do for former President Donald Trump's latest White House bid, a Reuters/Ipsos poll shows, a potentially worrisome sign for Biden as he prepares to announce his re-election campaign.

Fifty-two percent of registered Democrats said Biden should not seek a second term, compared to 40 percent of Republicans who said Trump should not run again, according to the national poll, which gathered responses from 4,408 adults from Feb 6-13.

Taken together, the results signal that many Americans are far from enthused about a rematch of the divisive November 2020 contest won by Biden. Trump made false claims that the election was stolen from him through widespread voting fraud, and his supporters attacked the US Capitol on Jan 6, 2021, seeking to stop Congress from certifying Biden's election victory.

Spokespeople for Biden and Trump did not immediately respond to requests for comment. "I think it shows Biden's support level is pretty soft," said Kyle Kondik, an elections analyst at the University of Virginia's Center for Politics. "But you need a real candidate to turn that generic feeling into a specific prob-



lem for Biden, and nobody seems to be stepping up to the plate to push Biden."

Biden, who has yet to announce his candidacy, is expected to stand unopposed in Democratic presidential primaries after he was credited with helping the party do better than expected in the November midterm congressional elections. Democrats lost control of the House of Representatives but retained a Senate majority.

Democratic strategists expressed confidence that the party's voters would enthusiastically support Biden once he announces his run.

Jennifer Holdsworth, who worked on current Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg's 2020 presidential campaign, said the survey

results reflect what she called a media-driven but inaccurate narrative that Biden, 80, is too old to serve in the White House.

"I think it's entirely overblown," Holdsworth said. "Most rank-and-file Democrats that I talk to are thrilled with the record this administration has accomplished."

Biden has shrugged off polling showing voter concerns about his age, asking one interviewer last week, "Look, do you know any polling that's accurate these days?"

Biden and Trump each led their party's field of potential candidates in the poll, but neither drew support from a majority of their voters. Biden was the pick for 35 percent of Democrats and Trump for 43 percent of Republicans.

Florida Governor Ron DeSantis, who has built a national profile with a relentless focus on issues such as race and gender identity, was a clear No. 2 with 31 percent of registered Republicans backing him, just 12 percentage points behind Trump.

A host of other possible Republican contenders, including former Vice President Mike Pence and former South Carolina Governor Nikki Haley, received single-digit support. Besides Trump, Haley, who launched her 2024 campaign on Tuesday,

is the only major Republican candidate to announce a bid.

On the Democratic side, Senator Bernie Sanders drew 13 percent support, Vice President Kamala Harris 12 percent and Buttigieg 10 percent.

The poll numbers are a good sign for DeSantis given that he has never mounted a national campaign. Republican strategist Chuck Coughlin said.

"If I'm Ron DeSantis, I'm pretty encouraged that I'm within striking position and have that kind of name ID," Coughlin said.

Trump's 'momentum problem'

Trump has plenty of vulnerabilities. He faces a slew of civil and criminal investigations and saw many of his hand-picked candidates lose competitive races in the midterm elections.

"Trump's got a momentum problem," Coughlin said. "After the '22 cycle, I think it's dawning on more and more Republicans that his time has come and gone."

That said, Trump prevailed in a crowded primary field in 2016 by winning a plurality, rather than a majority, of Republican votes in early states, a dynamic that could repeat itself in 2024 if more candidates enter the race.

Agencies

Eurozone likely to avoid recession but Germany, Italy still at risk

ROME

THE eurozone may end up sidestepping the risk of a recession, as data released on Tuesday by Eurostat showed positive economic growth in the fourth quarter of last year. But some countries - including Germany and Italy, which represent the eurozone's first and third largest economies respectively, are still facing recession risks.

Eurostat, the European Union (EU)'s main statistics entity, reported Tuesday that the 19 eurozone economies grew by a modest 0.1 percent in the fourth quarter of 2022 compared with the previous quarter.

The data did not include Croatia, which became the 20th member of the euro area at the very start of this year. As an economic recession is defined as two consecutive quarters of negative gross domestic product (GDP) growth, and economic forecasts predict European economies will pick up growth rates in the second quarter this year, this indicates the euro area could probably avoid a technical recession.

But that is not the case for all the countries. Six of eurozone countries showed negative economic growth in the fourth quarter of 2022, including Germany and Italy, whose growth declined by 0.2 percent and 0.1 percent respectively.

The two countries were hardest hit by the Ukraine crisis, as both have export-driven economies and depend heavily on natural gas from Russia, which has been disrupted following sanctions against Russia.

In the last three months of 2022, the 27 member countries of the EU reported an average zero growth compared to the previous quarter. Countries across Europe suffered from high inflation caused by surging energy prices last year.

Eurostat's data showed that the inflation rate for the eurozone dipped back into single digit in December, tallying a 9.2 percent. For the EU as a whole, the rate in December was 10.4 percent. The three Baltic states - Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania - where Russia's economic influence is strong, reported the highest estimated inflation rates in January, at 18.8 percent, 21.6 percent and 18.4 percent respectively.

Cyclone Gabrielle moves away from NZ, recovery efforts begin

WELLINGTON

CYCLONE Gabrielle weakened and moved away from New Zealand yesterday as the country started to assess the damage caused by significant flooding, landslides and high winds that left four people dead and displaced thousands from their homes.

Gabrielle, which reached New Zealand on Sunday before making its way down the east coast of the North Island, cut off entire towns, washed away farms, bridges and livestock, and inundated homes, stranding people on roof tops.

"Our immediate focus has been undertaking lifesaving missions for those affected by the floods who needed to be rescued," said Prime Minister Chris Hipkins on Wednesday at a televised media briefing, adding that all people stranded on roofs by floodwaters have been rescued.

"Please don't return to your homes until you have been given the all clear to do so," he said, warning that the situation remains dangerous even as the weather improves.

Putin praises Emergencies Ministry for work in Turkey, Syria post-earthquake relief

MOSCOW

RUSSIAN President Vladimir Putin praised the work of Russian rescuers in Turkey and Syria post-earthquake relief.

"Just last week, Emergencies Ministry's rescuers were among the first to arrive to help victims of the devastating earthquakes in Turkey and Syria," the head of state pointed out yesterday in a video address to the Emergencies Ministry collegium participants.

"Our rescuers, canine teams, doctors and psychologists worked practically around the clock, mobile hospitals were quickly deployed, search and rescue operations were organized, thus saving the lives and health of many people," Putin said.

The president thanked the leadership, military and civilian specialists of the Emergencies Ministry "for the responsible approach to solving tasks, for professionalism, for the fact that, despite risk and danger, they immediately come to the aid of those who are in trouble."

According to the head of state, the work of Russian rescuers is remembered with gratitude by citizens of foreign countries. Putin drew attention to the fact that in 2022 there were 35 international humanitarian missions.



Local 'two sessions' convened across China, mirror development confidence

CHINESE provinces, autonomous regions, and municipalities recently released their 2023 government work reports as local "two sessions" were convened across the country.

Apart from reporting their performance in the past year, they also unveiled roadmaps for their development in 2023.

Taking high-quality development as the top priority, local governments will focus on stabilizing expectations, boosting confidence and building strength, and will strive to achieve new highs of development.

In their work reports, local governments stressed prioritizing stability while pursuing progress with regard to eco-

nomical and social development in 2023 and the next five years. The major economic and social development goals they unveiled were inspiring.

According to statistics, 11 provinces and autonomous regions set their GDP growth targets at around 6 percent, and nine proposed to achieve growth of over 6 percent, including Chongqing municipality, Xinjiang Uygur autonomous region, Hainan province, and Tibet autonomous region.

In particular, Tibet autonomous region, Jiangxi province, and Xinjiang Uygur autonomous region said they would strive for growths of around 8 percent, 7 percent, and 7 percent, respectively.

Hainan's target was the highest, reaching 9.5 percent. The province also planned to lift its general public budget revenue by around 15 percent, and fixed-asset investment by 12 percent.

These figures mirror the strong resilience, tremendous potential, and great vitality of the Chinese economy, heralding a pickup in China's economy in the new year.

Local governments demonstrated strong confidence in the development in the next five years. Hubei, Hunan, and Anhui provinces said they would expand their economies to about 7 trillion yuan (\$1.02 trillion) in the next five years, while Sichuan has set the number at more than

8 trillion yuan.

Zhejiang province is more ambitious. The province planned to lift its GDP to 12 trillion yuan by 2027, with a per capita GDP of 170,000 yuan and a per capita disposable income of 85,000 yuan.

Many local governments said they would prioritize consumption recovery and expansion this year.

Shanghai will make more efforts to build itself into an international consumption center, vigorously develop "first-launch economy", night economy, and livestream economy, and foster a batch of featured local landmarks.

Shandong province proposed to implement a "consumption vitalization year"

campaign to integrate online and offline businesses and forge a batch of e-commerce industrial belts.

Hainan province will strive to improve the number of visiting tourists and tourism revenue by 20 percent and 25 percent, respectively, and strive for offshore duty-free sales to exceed 80 billion yuan.

With regard to expanding effective investment, northwest China's Shaanxi province has arranged 640 major projects at the provincial level this year, with a planned annual investment of 480.4 billion yuan. The province will work to expand fixed-asset investment by around 8 percent.

Liaoning province in the northeast of

the country will complete the advanced layout of new infrastructure and accelerate the construction of "double gigabit" network infrastructure and charging facilities.

Qinghai province planned to implement over 800 major railway, airport, road, water conservancy, and energy projects, with a total investment of 1.3 trillion yuan.

Being mentioned about 500 times, "high-quality development" remained a buzzword in the government work reports released by the 31 Chinese provinces, autonomous regions, and municipalities.

People's Daily

Russian diplomat skewers US media hoopla over UFOs

MOSCOW

THE hoopla around the recent unidentified flying objects (UFOs) in the United States can be linked to the upcoming elections in America, given the impossibility of returning to the issue of Russia, because 'it has been entirely exhausted', Russian Foreign Ministry Spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said, speaking to Sputnik radio yesterday.

"You know that elections are on the horizon in the US. No wonder there will be Pokemons, there will be UFOs, because it seems to me that it is simply impossible to continue promoting the topic of Russia, because they (the US - TASS) have exhausted it completely and reduced it to absurdity, tiring everyone with the topic of Russia within their information and political field. So, I just do not see any other way how they can continue promoting this topic for many years. However, they do need to surprise the public somehow," she said.

Zakharova also added that a return of the Biden administration to the Russian topic would only raise more questions "because it is their policy on Russia that has been implemented on a disastrous scale and with consequences for all of humanity."

Last week, the North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) spotted three "unidentified objects," two of which were shot down by the US military in national airspace, and another one over Canadian territory.

It was noted that all three objects were much smaller than the Chinese balloon, were at a lower altitude, and were not similar in appearance.

The last of them was destroyed on Sunday over Lake Huron on the US-Canada border, with its debris presumably falling into Canadian territorial waters.

US 'disappointed' in Mexico's new GMO corn decree

WASHINGTON

THE United States said on Tuesday it was "disappointed" in the Mexican government's announcement the previous day which walked back a deadline to ban genetically modified (GM) corn for animal feed and industrial use in the country, but retained its plans to ban the corn for human consumption.

"The US believes in and adheres to a science-based, rules-based trading system and remains committed to preventing disruptions to bilateral agricultural trade and economic harm to US and Mexican producers," Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack said in a statement.

The Mexican Economy Ministry said on Monday that it was eliminating its January 2024 deadline for ending its imports of GM corn used to feed animals. The country buys about 17 million tonnes of mostly GM yellow corn from the United States each year, mostly for animal feed.

Mexico will still prohibit use of GM corn for human consumption, such as flour, dough, or tortilla made from the grain. About 20 percent of Mexican corn imports from the United States is white corn for food products.

It will still move forward with its plan to ban imports of the herbicide glyphosate, with a transition period in effect until March 31, 2024.

In a January meeting with Mexican officials, the US Trade Representative's (USTR) office said it was considering taking action under the US-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) over the dispute, which threatens billions of dollars in corn trade.

"We are carefully reviewing the details of the new decree and intend to work with USTR to ensure our science-based, rules-based commitment remains firm," Vilsack said on Tuesday.

USTR did not respond to a request for comment. The United States had given the Mexican government until Tuesday to explain the science behind its proposed bans.

The National Corn Growers Association, a US industry group, expressed concern over Monday's decree.

"Singling out corn - our number one ag export to Mexico - and hastening an import ban on numerous food-grade uses makes USMCA a dead letter unless it's enforced," said the group's president, Tom Haag.

11 EU nations urge 'great caution' in cutting state aid

BRUSSELS

ELEVEN European Union countries urged "great caution" in relaxing the bloc's state aid rules in a bid to support Europe's green industry in a global race, saying that risked damaging competition inside the bloc, a document showed.

The document dated Feb 10 was sent to the bloc's executive European Commission and signed by Denmark, Finland, Ireland, Poland, Sweden, the Netherlands, Hungary, Latvia, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Belgium.

The Commission proposed easing EU restrictions on state aid for investments in renewable energy or decarbonizing industry, partly in response to the US Inflation Reduction Act. The signatories, however, worry about unduly benefiting those with the deepest pockets in the 27-nation bloc.

"State aid for the mass production and commercial activities can lead to significant negative effects including the fragmentation of internal market, harmful subsidy races and weakening of regional development," read the joint position paper, which was seen by Reuters.

"These harms can be greater than the positive effects. We, the co-signing member states, urge the Commission to exercise great caution."

The European Commission confirmed the receipt of the letter and said it was looking to adopt new rules "in the coming weeks, taking into account the feedback received".

Erdogan vows to rebuild after quake, rescue work winds down

ANTAKYA, TÜRKIYE

TURKISH President Tayyip Erdogan vowed to press on with rescue and recovery efforts more than a week after a powerful quake ripped through his country and neighboring Syria, with an elderly woman the latest to be pulled from the rubble.

The combined death toll in Türkiye and Syria has climbed over 41,000, and many survivors are enduring near-freezing winter temperatures, having been left homeless by the devastation in cities in both countries.

"We will continue our work until we remove the last citizen left under the collapsed buildings," Erdogan said late on Tuesday after a cabinet meeting held at the headquarters of the Disaster and Emergency Management Authority (AFAD).

Damage assessment of buildings, of which tens of thousands were destroyed, will be completed in a week and reconstruction will begin within months, he said.

"We will rebuild all the houses and workplaces, destroyed or made uninhabitable by the earthquake, and hand them over to the rightful owners," he added. More than 105,000 people were injured in the quake, he said, with more than 13,000 still being treated in hospital.

Overnight, a 77-year-old woman named Fatma Gungor was pulled alive from the rubble of a seven-storey apartment block in the city of Adiyaman, some 212 hours after the first earthquake, media reports said.



Patients affected by the earthquake are seen by medical personnel in a makeshift hospital set up at Turkish Bayraktar warship anchored in a port near Iskenderun city, southern Türkiye, on Tuesday. AP

Wearing an oxygen mask, covered in a gold foil blanket and strapped onto a stretcher, Gungor was carried by rescue workers down from the ruins of the building to a waiting ambulance, footage from state broadcaster TRT showed.

Afterwards, Gungor's relatives hugged the rescue team, made up of military personnel and members of the disaster management authority AFAD.

Nine other survivors were rescued in Türkiye on Tuesday as the focus of the aid effort shifted to helping people now struggling without shelter or enough food in the cold.

Erdogan has acknowledged problems in the initial response to the 7.8 magnitude quake that struck early on Feb 6 but he has said the situation is now under control.

"We are facing one of the greatest natural disasters not only in our country but also in the history of humanity," Erdogan said.

More than 2.2 million people have left the worst-hit areas already, Erdogan said, and hundreds of thousands of buildings have become uninhabitable.

Those rescued on Tuesday included two brothers, aged 17 and 21, pulled from an apartment block in Kahramanmaraş province, and a Syrian man and young woman in a leopard-print headscarf in Antakya.

UN authorities have said the rescue phase is coming to a close, with the focus turning to shelter, food and schooling.

"People are suffering a lot. We applied to receive a tent, aid, or something, but up to now we didn't receive anything," said Hassan Saimoua, a refugee staying with his family in a playground in Türkiye's southeastern city of Gaziantep.

Saimoua and other Syrians had found refuge in Gaziantep from the war at home. Now, rendered

homeless by the quake, they have assembled makeshift tents in a playground using plastic sheets, blankets and cardboard.

"The needs are huge, increasing by the hour," said Hans Henri P Kluge, the World Health Organization's director for Europe. "Some 26 million people across both countries need humanitarian assistance."

"There are also growing concerns over emerging health issues linked to the cold weather, hygiene and sanitation, and the spread of infectious diseases - with vulnerable people especially at risk."

'Dad, aftershock!'

Families in both Türkiye and Syria said they and their children were dealing with the psychological aftermath of the quake.

"Whenever he forgets, he hears a loud sound and then remembers again," Hassan Moaz said of his 9-year-old in Aleppo, Syria. "When he's sleeping at night and hears a sound, he wakes up and tells me: 'Dad, aftershock!'"

A first convoy of UN aid entered rebel-held northwest Syria from Türkiye via the newly-opened Bab al-Salam crossing.

The search for survivors was about to end in the north west of Syria, said the head of the White Helmets main rescue group, Raed al Saleh.

Russia also said it was wrapping up its search and rescue work in Türkiye and Syria and preparing to withdraw.

The Turkish toll was 35,418 killed, Erdogan said. More than 5,814 have died in Syria, according to a Reuters tally of reports from Syrian state media and a UN agency.

Survivors joined a mass exodus from the disaster zone, leaving their homes and unsure if they can ever come back.

Hamza Bekry, a 22-year-old Syrian who had lived in Antakya, in southern Türkiye, for 12 years, having fled the conflict in his homeland, but he was now preparing to follow his family to Isparta in southern Türkiye.

"It's very hard ... We will start from zero, without belongings, without a job," Bekry said.

Agencies

India doesn't know how many people it has

NEW DELHI

IN two months, India is projected to become the world's most populous country with over 1.4 billion people. But for at least a year, and possibly longer, the country won't know how many people it has because it hasn't been able to count them.

India's once in a decade census, due in 2021 and delayed due to the pandemic, has now got bogged down by technical and logistical hurdles and there are no signs the mammoth exercise is likely to begin soon.

Experts say the delay in updating data like employment, housing, literacy levels, migration patterns and infant mortality, which are captured by the census, affects social and economic planning and policy making in the huge Asian economy.

Calling census data "indispensable", Rachna Sharma, a fellow at the National Institute of Public Finance and Policy, said studies like the consumption expenditure survey and the periodic labor force survey are estimations based on information from the census.

"In the absence of latest census data, the estimations are based on data that is one decade old and is likely to provide estimates that are far from reality," Sharma said.

A senior official at the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation said census data from 2011, when the count was last conducted, was being used for projections and estimates required to assess government spending.

A spokesman for the ministry said its role was limited to providing the best possible projections and could not comment on the census process. The Prime Minister's Office did not respond to requests for comment.

Two other government officials, one from the federal home (interior) ministry and another from the office of the Registrar General of India, said the delay was largely due to the government's decision to fine-tune the census process and make it foolproof with the help of technology.

The home ministry official said the software that will be used to gather census data on a mobile phone app has to be synchronized with existing identity databases, including the national identity card, called Aadhaar, which was taking time.

The office of the Registrar General of India, which is responsible for the census, did not respond to a request for comment. The main opposition Congress party and critics of Prime Minister Narendra Modi have accused the government of delaying the census to hide data on politically sensitive issues,



In this photograph taken on Nov 4, 2022, commuters alight from a suburban train at the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus railway station in Mumbai. AFP

such as unemployment, ahead of national elections due in 2024.

"This government has often displayed its open rivalry with data," said Congress spokesperson Pawan Khera. "On important matters like employment, COVID deaths etc, we have seen how the Modi government has preferred to cloak critical data."

The ruling Bharatiya Janata Party's national spokesperson, Gopal Krishna Agarwal, dismissed the criticism.

"I want to know on what basis they are saying this. Which is the social parameter on which our performance in nine years is worse than their 65 years?" he said, referring to the Congress party's years in power.

Teachers' travails

The United Nations has projected India's population could touch 1,425,775,850 on April 14, overtaking China on that day.

The 2011 census had put India's population at 1.21 billion, meaning the country has added 210 million, or almost the number of people in Brazil, to its population in 12 years. India's census is conducted by about 330,000 government school teachers who first go door-to-door listing all houses across the country and then return to them with a second list of questions.

They ask more than two dozen questions each time in 16 languages in the two phases that will be spread over 11 months, according to the plan made for 2021.

The numbers will be tabulated and final data made public months later. The entire exercise was estimated to cost 87.5 billion rupees (\$1.05 billion) in 2019.

However, teachers have returned to school after the pandemic disruption and have to conduct nine state elections in 2023 and national elections in 2024 besides the census and this would again disrupt teaching. Payments have also become an issue. Arvind Mishra, a senior official at the All-India Primary Teachers Federation which counts 2.3 million members, said teachers are bound by law to help conduct elections and the census but government must increase the fees they receive.

"They must roll out a systematic payment mechanism for the drill," said Mishra. "Teachers deserve respect and they can't be running around demanding reimbursement for conducting the largest counting exercise on earth."

A former top official of the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI), the government agency that runs the highly successful national identity program Aadhaar, however sought to downplay the significance of the decennial census data saying the identity program is a "de facto, real-time" census.

According to UIDAI, 1.30 billion people were enrolled under Aadhaar on Dec 31, 2022, against a projected population then of 1.37 billion. The gap would mostly be children who are not enrolled and deaths that are not updated, the former UIDAI official said.

Pronab Sen, a former chief statistician of India, said the sample registration system (SRS) which estimates birth and death rates shows the population growth rate with reasonable accuracy.

Agencies

Study: Deep-sea mining may disrupt whale communication

JOHANNESBURG

NOISE produced by mining the seabed for nickel, cobalt and other metals for the green energy transition could interfere with whales' ability to navigate the ocean depths and communicate with one another, according to a study released on Tuesday.

Potato-sized rocks filled with battery metals blanket vast swathes of the ocean floor at depths of 4 to 6 kilometers. Several companies have proposed to essentially vacuum those nodules from the seabed and process their metals for use in electric vehicle batteries.

The peer-reviewed study, funded by Umwelstiftung Greenpeace, a foundation arm of the environmental organization, argues that more research is needed to assess the risk deep-sea mining could pose to large marine mammals, although researchers did not collect field data themselves.

The International Seabed Authority (ISA), a Jamaica-based United Nations body, may approve deep-sea mining for international waters as soon as this summer.

Leaders in France, Fiji, Canada and Germany have voiced concerns about the practice.

Supporters of deep-sea mining say it would lessen the need for large mining operations on land, which are often unpopular with host communities. Detractors say far more research is needed to determine how deep sea mining could affect aquatic ecosystems.

The Metals Company Inc and

others are pushing ahead with plans to extract these nodules from the Clarion Clipperton Zone, an ocean region in the northern Pacific where the ISA has granted 17 seabed mining exploration licences. An estimated 22 to 30 cetacean species, including endangered blue whales, live in the area, according to the study.

"The sounds produced from mining operations, including from remotely operated vehicles on the sea floor, overlap with the frequencies at which cetaceans communicate," said the study, published in the journal *Frontiers in Marine Science*.

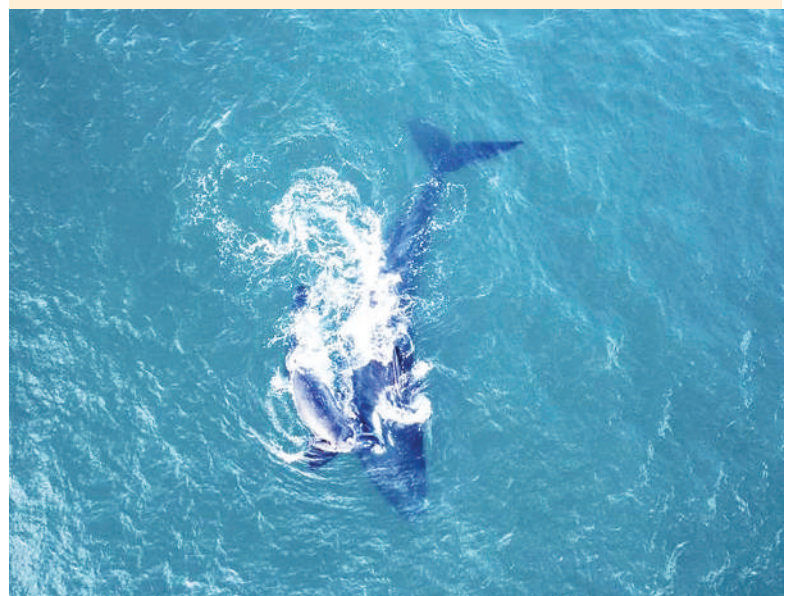
Previous research on ocean noise has found whales can suffer negative effects from deep-sea mining. One study found man-made noise could increase the risk of humpback whale mothers being separated from their calves because their normal vocalizations are quiet.

Vancouver-based The Metals Company said it is studying acoustic data collected over three years with independent researchers to determine "what the true impacts could be" on whales.

"The Greenpeace paper is purely speculative, based upon zero in-field data and funded by the industry's most vocal opponent," Dr. Michael Clark, environmental manager for The Metals Company, said in a statement.

Automakers Renault SA, BMW and Rivian Automotive Inc oppose deep-sea mining.

Agencies



This aerial view shows southern right whales (Eubalaena australis) swimming off the coast of Infanta, near the Breede River estuary, on Oct 21, 2022. AFP



FC Saint Eloi Lupopo striker, George Mpole.

Mpole optimistic ahead of debut in DR Congo Premier League

By Correspondent Nassir Nchimbi

TANZANIAN attacker George Mpole that has joined FC Lupopo of DR Congo has expressed patience despite missing out on playing time in the 2022/23 CAF Confederation Cup.

FC Lupopo came up against USM Alger of Algeria in the Group A match which took place in Algeria last weekend and went down 3-0.

Mpole, who scored 17 goals in the NBC Premier League last season when featuring for Geita Gold FC and won the golden boot award, edging Fiston Mayele of Yanga, will likely not feature in this year's continental tournament with FC Lupopo.

The striker had played for Geita Gold FC in the First Preliminary Round of the tournament, with the side crashing out following defeat to Hilal Alsaheil of Sudan via an away goal rule.

In the first leg in Khartoum, Geita Gold FC went down 1-0 to Hilal Alsaheil and the rematch which was played at Azam Complex Stadium in Dar es Salaam ended in a 2-2 draw to send Geita Gold FC out of the showpiece.

Despite missing last weekend's game, Mpole said that since joining FC Lupopo he has opened his eyes to many issues.

The attacker noted the issues include the kind of competition he met for a place in the club's first XI, conceding the competition increases in his football career.

"Each team has strong competition, I have had a good opportunity to study the quality of my colleagues so that when I start my duties in the league I know where to start," Mpole revealed.

The forward pointed out: "I feel that I have a lot to do for this team because when I was introduced, I saw that many fans, as well as the players and the technical bench, showed great hope in me... that makes me work hard in training."

He said since he joined the team, he has learned how to keep time carefully and make sure he does things that will leave memories for others coming into the game.

The goal-getter noted: "For example, in this team's training, every player is working hard, you would think they are trying to impress with the intense they put in, this is the nature of their training, they also really appreciate the time to do the basic things."

Mpole stated: "I have realized that football is a short career, so, I have resorted to working hard so that others can learn from me and other footballers I have played with."

The forward is yet to play for FC

Lupopo after joining the squad in December 2022, with the club sitting second in the DR Congo Premier League, known as Linafoot, with 22 points.

The second-placed club has taken part in 10 games, posting a win in seven, one draw, and two losses, trailing the top-flight leader AS Vita Club, which has posted 31 points from 11 games.

Mapinduzi Cup tourney needs improvement

By Correspondent Ismail Tano

THIS season's Mapinduzi Cup tournament came to an end in Zanzibar on January 13, witnessing the Isles' outfit, Mlandege FC, clinching the top honour with a win over Mainland Tanzania side, Singida Big Stars FC, in the final held at Amaan Stadium.

The tournament concluded one day after the commemoration of the Zanzibar Revolution held on January 12.

This tournament has been taking place every year to honour the Zanzibar Revolution, bringing together various outfits from Mainland Tanzania, Zanzibar, and sometimes abroad.

Aigle Noir of Burundi was this season invited to take part in the competition.

The tournament hardly included teams from outside Tanzania in the previous three seasons.

The Burundi club's participation in this season's showpiece has been very productive and happened to be part of the attraction.

However, the showdown is seemingly not being taken seriously although it is organized by Zanzibar's government.

Prize money totaling 23m/- presented to this year's tournament winners has been a good reward for the competition.

There are though still opportunities that can boost the competition concerning the participating teams, the tournament's purpose, and soccer fans' enthusiasm for the tournament.

Mapinduzi Cup tournament has also been cited as a platform for talented footballers hailing from Zanzibar to showcase their virtuosity and secure transfer to outfits elsewhere in East Africa.

Yanga's midfielder, Feisal



Singida Big Stars FC's Rodrigo Figueiredo (C) seeks to outsmart Zanzibar's KMKM FC defender during a 2023 Mapinduzi Cup tournament duel in the Isles in January. PHOTO: COURTESY OF SINGIDA BIG STARS FC

Salum, is one of the talented footballers that were in view when the players took part in the showdown.

The player began garnering popularity when turning out for Zanzibar's JKU in the showdown before turning into one of the most cherished footballers domestically.

If there is an improvement in the Mapinduzi Cup tournament, the showpiece can be very productive for the country.

Currently, the showdown is played from the middle of December until January 13. It is a short period that forces the Mainland Tanzania and Isles' premier leagues to be briefly stopped to pave way for the competition.

With that, there is a possibility for expanding the showdown ensuring it kicks off at the beginning of the season and climaxes on January 13 without disrupting schedules for both Mainland Tanzania and Isles' premier leagues.

A friendly procedure ought to moreover be in place to ensure clubs from neighbouring countries take part in the event.

A few clubs from Mainland Tanzania and Zanzibar battle it out in CAF Champions League and CAF Confederation Cup ev-

ery season, leaving many clubs idle once the domestic top flights are halted during the African club competitions.

With the lack of competition, something can be done to improve the quality of the Mapinduzi Cup tournament and make it competitive and attract clubs to participate in the showdown.

Zanzibar's government, in cooperation with Zanzibar Football Federation (ZFF), can have a good schedule for the showdown from the beginning of the season until the middle of the season without disrupting top flights.

In short, teams can be left to participate in league ties and other assignments and then continue with the Mapinduzi Cup tournament by playing their respective matches in the playoffs until the conclusion of the competition.

Mainland Tanzania's clubs can smoothly move to Zanzibar to take part in the Mapinduzi Cup tournament and later return to feature in Premier League ties.

Mapinduzi Cup tournament's marketing team can find ways to ease costs for travel, accommodation, and other related issues, to be incurred by clubs from outside the country that will take part in the showdown, to facili-

tate their participation.

This tournament has been held for almost 17 years, therefore, it is time the organizers improve the value of the showdown by organizing it efficiently. Mapinduzi Cup tournament can be an alternative to the East and Central Africa Club Championship, alias Kagame Cup, which has rarely been held recently.

Plenty of football fanatics in the region lately hardly recognize the excitement of the Kagame Cup, which involves many famous East African teams, given the competition is not as popular as it was in the past.

There may be difficulties in bringing the approach to fruition based on either the experience or the performance of the soccer authorities in Zanzibar.

However, it will be possible should there be better strategies for improving the showdown, which is popular but has not been valued.

The systematic and guided promotion of the Mapinduzi Cup tournament can also make soccer enthusiasts witness new talent every few weeks from the beginning of the season to January.

Outfits will not necessarily be required to wait until January to watch promising footballers in the Mapinduzi Cup tournament, given it will be taking part in the season.

There will be the emergence of new talents from Zanzibar clubs and the rest in the region, given all participating sides will use the showdown to introduce their young players.

Having sides from neighbouring countries battling it out in the Mapinduzi Cup tournament will bring about a competitive spirit that lacks in Zanzibar teams.

It will as well give the Isles squads good preparations for continental club competitions each season.

USA institution to support talent identification initiative

By Correspondent Cheji Bakari, Tanga

TALENT can be defined as a special, natural ability of either mind or body given to a person for use and improvement. In other words, talent is a gift or sometimes genius someone is born with.

Retrospectively, a talented person is someone who has already showcased good performance in his/her career.

A talented one is described as a person who possesses outstanding potential in a particular domain, either over a range of activities and situations or within a specialized and narrow field of expertise.

Arts can take many forms but in all cases, to be a successful artist an individual needs a combination of talent and hard work.

Hard work and determination to learn a certain skill will help the individual produce wonderful pieces.

Leo Tolstoy defined art as the activity by which a person, having experienced an emotion, intentionally communicates it to others.

In sports or arts, talent describes a person who demonstrates exceptional ability compared to reference groups of similar lifestyle habits and the training already realized, which indicates that he or she will achieve exceptional performance.

Science is increasingly concerned with this path and the associated promotion of talent. To understand and map the development from athletic novice to elite performer, there are numerous models for long-term performance building.

In one of the first stages of the models, children with performance conspicuities are usually screened based on various attributes, to be able to distinguish talent from non-talent and to find suitable children for a specific sport.

On January 13, Tanzania through the Ministry of Culture, Arts, and Sports welcomed a delegation from the USA that came with good information on searching for and developing youths' talent in arts and other sports.

Deputy Minister for Culture, Arts, and Sports Pauline Gekul hosted the meeting between her ministry and the visiting stakeholders, a US-based Non-Government Organization namely Global Youth Support Centre (GYSC), in Dar es Salaam.

The stakeholders expressed the center's intention to search the hidden sports and artistic talents among Tanzanian youths aged between 14-15 and take them to the USA to develop them.

Pauline assured the stakeholders that the government is continuing to create favourable environment for culture, arts, and sports, a move aimed at investing in talented youths.

"This is a potential opportunity for our youths, our ministry is ready to cooperate with Global Youth Support Centre so our youths can benefit from this program," Pauline revealed.

Oswald Bwechwa, Global Youth Support Centre program coordinator, said that the first batch of about 40 youths have been selected and got an opportunity to go to the USA to attend special training to



Dar es Salaam's Vijana basketball outfit's players take part in training at the Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete Youth Park's courts recently. PHOTO: CORRESPONDENT JUMANNE JUMA

develop their talents.

The meeting was also attended by National Arts Council (BASATA) Executive Secretary, Kedmon Mapana, and Tanzania Film Board Executive Secretary, Kiagho Kilonzo.

Other officials are National Sports Council (NSC) Secretary-General Neema Msitha and former minister and legislator, retired captain John Chiligati.

The GYSC is a community-based organization committed to serving immigrant youths, whether they are refugees, exchange students, immigrants, or other, living in the greater Milwaukee area, USA.

The center's core values are making sure youths are learning and acquiring skills, and using the power of creativity and technology as tools to help them achieve academic and career goals.

The identification of sports talents includes finding the right sport and is of great importance for Tanzanians because, in one way or another, it will inspire the Ministry of Culture, Arts, and Sports to put much effort into scouting for hidden talents from all corners of the country.

Sports academies and schools will also have great work by putting much effort to search for and train more youths.

Talent is regarded as the consistency of general ability resulting from genetic predispositions, affected by life experiences either at home, school, or the workplace.

Such a gift should therefore be developed to increase its productivity or performance.

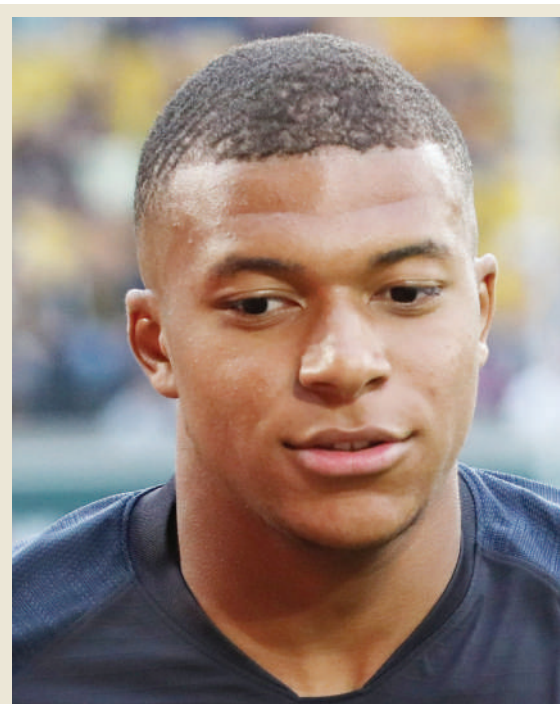
Special attention will be paid to entering into sports in general as a basis of a talent development process.

This enables personality profiles consisting of individual constellations of motivation variables, interests, skills, and experience to be studied together and incorporated into the talent development process.

These developments help the youths commit fewer errors and are more productive and enhance their performance.

Usually, the process of recognizing current participants, at an early stage of their development, possessing the potential to excel in a particular sport in adulthood is called the talent identification and development process.

That talent identification will further motivate children to choose either one or more sports by their personality traits which can take place both transitively and intransitively.



Lethargic and ego-ravaged PSG show how much they need Kylian Mbappe

By CHRIS BASCOMBE

ELEVEN years into Qatari ownership, Paris Saint-Germain still resembles an extravagant collection of luxury items more than a football team.

Money has brought immense talent to Paris, but the colossal transactions have been unable to inject the timeless qualities so fundamental to the ultimate European success - togetherness and team spirit. For 74 minutes they were more brooding than blood brothers, and Champions League glory might elude them again after a first leg defeat to Bayern Munich, despite Kylian Mbappe's substitute cameo reminding the Germans the work is far from done.

Until Mbappe arrived, Munich were too smart, too quick and too confident in an assured display, Kingsley Coman's volley giving them the advantage they deserved. It had been coming for longer than the 53 minutes required to beat Gianluigi Donnarumma.

The dynamic in the build-up to the round of sixteen tie in Parc de Princes offered more evidence that rather than find a head coach to harmonise PSG's disparate personalities, a babysitter would be more appropriate.

Like his esteemed predecessors, PSG coach Christophe Galtier finds himself trying to convince the leaders in his dressing room that the most pressing tactical question is not who is taking the penalties.

When English referee Michael Oliver awarded a free-kick on the edge of the Bayern penalty area on the stroke of half-time, one wondered if play might need to be temporarily delayed while a UN negotiator established whether it was the turn of Lionel Messi or Neymar to take it. Messi hit the wall, which presumably means Neymar will argue the Argentinian must wait until April for his next attempt.

Ordering this ego-ravaged squad not to engage in tantrums is as futile as ordering Neymar to stay on his feet. Bayern will be grateful Oliver approached such indecency with a sense of familiarity and a roll of the eyes when, midway through the first half, the official meandered to check Neymar did not require emergency services having been challenged by Benjamin Pavard.

Bayern, predictably dominant in the Bundesliga, seemed the worst opponents at the wrong time for PSG and began in the French capital as if they owned the ball. Too often, PSG looked like their stars were compiling personal showreels, their dribbles constantly surrendering possession.

In contrast to their hosts, Bayern looked structured and as if working to a plan which went beyond hoping one of their stars would produce a match winning moment. Julian Nagelsmann's frustration during a dominant but goalless first half was how little PSG keeper Donnarumma was tested. That would change with the half-time introduction of Alphonso Davies. His cross picked out Coman for a sumptuous volley. Donnarumma knows he could have done better, although he later made a series of saves to keep his side in touching distance to launch a late rally.

If the balance of play had offered Bayern comfort. The sight of Mbappe, on the bench on his return from a hamstring injury, raised concerns the Germans were not making their superiority count. Mbappe was introduced before the hour. He gave Munich keeper Jan Sommer his first taste of action in the latter stages, and had a couple of celebrations ended when the video assistant referee ruled for offside. His presence shifted momentum, culminating in a late red card for Pavard as Bayern finished nervously.

Galtier can argue the high profile absentee from his starting XI was the greatest contributor to earlier lethargy given PSG were different when Mbappe arrived. They may look different at the Allianz Arena. They will have to. With so much talent there are a few teams so capable of ensuring individual moments of brilliance compensate for the glaring lack of a team ethic.

THE TELEGRAPH

Clash of Barca and Manchester United underlines soaring revivals

BARCELONA

BARCELONA host Manchester United today in a match-up which has twice graced the Champions League final but this week has the relative ignominy of taking place in the Europa League play-off round.

The Catalans crashed out of Europe's premier competition at the first hurdle, while Manchester United finished runners up in their Europa League group, leading their paths to cross.

Despite the tie's diminished stature, both fallen giants are on the rise and among the teams in the best form across the continent.

Barcelona and Manchester United are both building under exciting coaches in Erik ten Hag and Xavi Hernandez and aiming to return to Europe's elite eminently.

The teams last met in 2019 when United's harsh decline in the barren decade after Sir Alex Ferguson's reign was in full swing and Barcelona's deep slide was about to begin.

Five-time Champions League winners Barca won the quarter-final clash 4-0 on aggregate, but their only player from their starting line-ups then likely to face United at Camp Nou is goalkeeper Marc-Andre ter Stegen.

Barcelona have gone through a profound squad renewal since -- with their spending last



Erik ten Hag

Xavi Hernandez

summer increasing the criticism they received after dropping into the Europa League.

In Robert Lewandowski the Catalans signed a lethal striker, while Jules Kounde and Andreas Christensen have established themselves as key elements of Europe's best defence.

Barcelona have conceded just seven goals in La Liga this season, keeping 16 clean sheets from 21 matches, and Xavi's side are unbeaten in 16 games across all competitions.

The coach, who starred for Barcelona in midfield in their 2009 and 2011 Champions League final victories over Ferguson's Red Devils, is returning his side to their former glory.

Barcelona beat Real Madrid to win the Spanish Super Cup in January and will face their eternal rivals in the Copa del Rey semi-finals.

Last season he took over in November and led the team from mid-table to a second-place finish. Barcelona have not won La Liga since 2019 but stretched their lead over rivals Real Madrid in the current campaign to 11 points on Sunday.

"It's over a year now since Xavi came and many things have changed, probably also the mentality and the way we defend," said Ter Stegen this week.

"(Xavi) has a plan, maybe it's taken longer than he expected, but you see results step by step. We have a better idea of what to do on the pitch and this is key to success."

- Red Devils rising - Manchester United, who signed Real Madrid's defensive midfielder lynchpin Casemiro in the summer, along with Ajax duo Antony and Lisandro Mar-

tinez, have rapidly improved under coach Erik ten Hag.

The Dutch coach started work at Old Trafford last summer and after a rocky start, including a 4-0 thrashing by Brentford and a fractious relationship with club legend Cristiano Ronaldo, has turned things around.

The Portuguese forward parted ways with United during the World Cup and Ten Hag's side have only been beaten once in their last 17 matches -- a 3-2 defeat by Premier League leaders Arsenal.

Ten Hag has helped striker Marcus Rashford find his best form, with 13 goals in his last 15 games, and the team has climbed to third in the table.

"The manager's a joy to work with," said Rashford in October, even before his spectacular run of form began.

Ten Hag also guided Man-

chester United into the EFL Cup final and the FA Cup fifth round, maximising their chances of earning their first silverware since winning the Europa League in 2017.

Bruno Fernandes, who has also recovered his best form, also praised Ten Hag's impact.

"The idea of the manager is (imprinted) on the team, you can see it," explained the midfielder.

"Confidence was low (before) and that creates uncertainty but obviously I think this season the main thing is the results. You get more confident."

Both Barcelona and Manchester United arrive with high morale but after they butt heads one will be condemned to suffer another bruising European exit, their revival set back.

AFP

Tottenham's biggest problem is Harry Kane's supporting cast has gone missing

By SAM DEAN

WHEN Harry Kane dropped into midfield, Simon Kjær came with him. When Kane jumped for a ball, Kjær jumped for him. When Kane sprinted in behind, Kjær ran with him. The AC Milan defender may be 33, well beyond his physical prime, but in Tuesday's Champions League meeting with Tottenham Hotspur he had a sole purpose and he stuck to it relentlessly: stop Kane.

Few defenders in recent seasons have been so successful in a one-to-one contest with the England captain, even if Kjær was occasionally fortunate with some refereeing decisions. And from Milan's perspective, the strategy worked perfectly. Kjær kept Kane out of the game and, in doing so, effectively shut down the entire Spurs attack.

It was a measure of the situation at Spurs that, without Kane being able to influence the match, Antonio Conte's side had no other ideas at the San Siro. No creativity, no chances, no real prospect of scoring a goal. They played well otherwise, but when the ball reached the final third

there was a complete lack of invention and incisiveness.

On Tuesday night, Kane was flanked by Son Heung-min and Dejan Kulusevski from the start. By the end he had Richarlison and Arnaut Danjuma for company. Those are four experienced, quality forward players -- but none of them even came close to offering genuine offensive threat.

The most worrying part for Spurs is that this is not even unusual. Kane's support act has simply not provided the goals and assists that are expected -- and needed -- at a team of Tottenham's ambition. The performance in Milan represented a continuation of the theme, and underlined how reliant Conte's side have become on Kane to make the attack function.

This season, Kane has been directly involved in 22 goals for his club in all competitions (19 goals, three assists). That is twice as many as Son, who has eight goals and three assists, and more than twice as many as all of his other attacking team-mates.

Richarlison and Kulusevski, especially, have not provided the number of decisive mo-

ments that would have been expected by Spurs supporters, and indeed by Conte, at the start of the season. Both of those wide forwards have played 20 games this season, in all competitions, and both of them have scored only two goals.

There are mitigating factors in both cases: Richarlison and Kulusevski have had injury issues this season, and have been unable to feature as consistently as they would have hoped. But their returns are still unquestionably disappointing, and there is little to suggest those figures are going to change any time soon.

At which point it

is worth remembering that Richarlison cost £60 million when he joined from Everton this summer, and that Kulusevski is set to cost around £30 million when his loan deal from Juventus becomes a permanent move. That is almost £100 million worth of attacking talent, delivering a combined total of four goals in a combined total of 40 appearances.

Son, it should be noted, has not been much better. Against Milan he was ineffective again, as has frequently been the case this season, and his drop-off from the previous campaign has left Kane increasingly isolated as the team's main threat. To put it

bluntly, Milan had no reason to be worried by Son on Tuesday night. With Kane shackled, Son and Kulusevski were hardly in the game.

Does it matter who scores the goals? Perhaps not, if Kane is able to routinely fire Spurs towards victories. But a common theme among the best sides in Europe is that the attacking threat is varied and multi-dimensional, and the loss in Milan only served to emphasise how the Spurs frontline is neither.

In the Premier League this season, Arsenal's wide forwards have contributed 28 goals and assists between them. At Manchester

City, that figure stands at 24. For Spurs, it is a comparatively meagre 16. It is not hard to see where they are falling short compared to the league's leading sides.

These are not straightforward times at Spurs, who have lost seven of their last 14 matches in all competitions and are now in the midst of a sudden injury crisis. The team needs goals and Kane, evidently, needs help. Until the other attackers start to share the burden, Spurs will struggle to find the consistency they crave in the second half of the season.

THE TELEGRAPH

Gwiji by David Chikoko



Clash of Barca and Manchester United underlines soaring

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SportPesa Tanzania's Board of Directors Chairman Tarimba Abbas (R) hands over a dummy cheque of 248,672,790/- to Japhet Msangawale of Sumbawanga, Rukwa, who emerged as the winner of the Supa Jackpot game organized by the firm, at the handover ceremony at the firm's offices in Dar es Salaam yesterday. PHOTO: CORRESPONDENT

Rukwa resident wins Supa Jackpot game

By Guardian Correspondent

RUKWA'S Japhet Msangawale has emerged as the winner of a betting game, known as Supa Jackpot, organized by sports betting firm, SportPesa Tanzania.

Msangawale, a farmer who resides at Sumbawanga Village, had correctly predicted the results of 13 soccer ties that took place in various leagues worldwide last weekend and was presented with prize money totaling 248,672,790/- by the company for his victory.

The Supa Jackpot winner received his prize money on an occasion that took place at SportPesa Tanzania offices in Dar es Salaam yesterday.

SportPesa Tanzania Board of Directors Chairman, Tarimba Abbas, congratulated Msangawale for laying his hands on the 248,672,790/-. The Rukwa resident won the prize money on Sunday night.

Abbas stated: "I have the sincere pleasure to introduce Msangawale and hand him a cheque for the money he won on Sunday night, as we empower Tanzanians who bet with SportPesa company."

The SportPesa Tanzania boss added: "This winner is a young man aged 25, who was, for about three years, trying to fulfill his dream, and today, that dream has become true, having won money through the Supa Jackpot game whose matches are played on weekends."

"We have been inviting you regularly when introducing people who have won prize money from various games including Multibet bonus, Mid-week Jackpot bonus, Casino, and the bet spinner winner Peter Mbawala from Dodoma, who raked in 147m/- in December 2022," Abbas stated.

The official disclosed: "I request Tanzanians to have confidence in SportPesa the same way young Japhet did and won this Supa Jackpot because many winners have been found through our products."

"It is part of our main promise that when the winner is found, the payment is made immediately, if you ask him here, the money is already in his account," the official noted.

Msangawale thanked SportPesa Tanzania for his victory, adding the firm has turned into an avenue for him to win a large amount of money that would probably not have ended up in his pocket.

The winner noted: "I take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude to SportPesa for bringing me to Dar es Salaam, and for the first time I have boarded a plane, something I had never expected in my life."

Msangawale revealed: "At first I didn't believe I would get this money but, after winning, I received a text message congratulating me for winning the Supa Jackpot and later that night I got a call from the customer service provider who informed me about my win and told me that I will be called to get instructions on how to come to Dar es Salaam, verified, confirmed, and then paid my money."

The winner added: "I am very relieved by the way SportPesa has been close to me in terms of communication since I won on the night of last Sunday. SportPesa has given me all kinds of cooperation and ensures that I get my entitlement on time."

SportPesa Tanzania has, from the time the company began operating domestically, garnered eight Jackpot winners and Msangawale is the ninth winner.

Each of the winners ought to pay tax, thus, Msangawale has had a tax deduction amounting to 24,867,179/-.

Stakeholders upbeat about 2023 Tigo Kili International Half Marathon



Kenyan athlete Agness Ngolo, winner of the women's category of the 2022 Tigo Kili Half Marathon, crosses the finish line of the race at Moshi Cooperative Stadium in Kilimanjaro. PHOTO: CORRESPONDENT JUMANNE JUMA

By Guardian Correspondent

VARIOUS businesspeople and tourism stakeholders in Kilimanjaro are upbeat about the positive economic benefits that will be brought about by the upcoming Tigo 'Kili' International Half Marathon that will be held in Moshi in northern Tanzania on February 26.

Commenting on how the Tigo 'Kili' International Half Marathon, a 21km race sponsored by Tanzania's leading lifestyle company, Tigo Tanzania, will help them, some Moshi-based businesspeople and stakeholders said that they expected an increase in sales, new business networking, and exposure due to the high number of participants who will be attending the event.

The Executive Director of the Moshi Kibo Palace Hotel, Beatrice Laswai, said that she expects booming business at her hotel in terms of hotel bookings from visitors who will come from different areas, both locally and internationally.

She explained that for several years now, Setways and Kibo Palace Hotel have been sponsoring the event,

heaping praises on the race as having played a great role in boosting their businesses.

Beatrice stated: "The Moshi Kibo Palace Hotel is expected to accommodate more clients than usual this season, thanks to the Tigo 'Kili' International Half marathon 2023."

She pointed out that they had prepared special offers on drinks in collaboration with Tanzania Breweries Limited (TBL), whereby they will have special events, dubbed 'Happy Hour', over the weekends during the marathon season.

She also appealed to her customers to use Tigo services, particularly the 'Pay via Tigo-Pesa/Lipa Kwa Simu' which has no transaction fees, instead of walking with cash to avoid unnecessary disturbances.

She further explained that Setways and the Moshi Kibo Palace Hotel had enrolled a total of 70

of their staff members to participate in this year's Tigo 'Kili' Half International Marathon.

Beatrice was adamant they understood the important role the event plays in boosting the economy as well as maintaining their staff's health and well-being.

"My appeal to the organizers is to have more of such races in a year instead of hosting it once a year as our region benefits immensely economically through the marathon," Beatrice said.

General Manager of the legendary Coffee Tree Hotel, owned by the Kilimanjaro Native Cooperative Union (KNCU), Godfrey Massawe, the founder and Managing Director of Springlands Hotel, owned by the Moshi-based ZARA Tours, Zainab Ansell, an official from Keys hotels, and Abdi Massawe, Manager of the Q-Wine Hotel in Moshi,

explained that apart from increasing customers in their hotels, they also expect to get new business networks with customers from different countries who will be participating in the race.

Acting Chief Park Warden (Tourism) at the Kilimanjaro National Park (KINAPA), Imani Kikoti, explained that the Tigo 'Kili' International Half Marathon supports them in advertising the uniqueness of Mt. Kilimanjaro globally as scores of people from various countries usually come to grace the event.

"Apart from boosting businesses in our region, the Tigo 'Kili' International Half Marathon helps in advertising our great mountain Kilimanjaro as the brand name of the race is Kilimanjaro, the name of our famous tourist attraction- Mt Kilimanjaro- which is also known as the 'Roof of Africa,'" Kikoti explained.

Speaking during the launch of the marathon at the Kibo Palace Homes in Moshi Municipality recently, the Director of Tigo in the Northern Zone, Henry Kinabo, explained that the telecom firm has been sponsoring the Tigo 'Kili' International Half Marathon for the past eight years to promote sports tourism through Mt. Kilimanjaro which is one of the main tourist attractions in the country.

Confirming Tigo's commitment to promoting healthy living through the upcoming Tigo 'Kili' International Half Marathon 2023, Kinabo encouraged people from all walks of life to participate in sports and recreation to maintain good health.

Tigo is the main sponsor of the annual 21km Tigo Kili Half Marathon, a road race that will take place in Moshi on February 26 this year.

According to him, the number of participants in the showdown has increased from 4,500 to 6,000 this year.

The official noted that each of the 4,500 runners out of the 6,000 in the 21km race will receive a commemorative medal and all of the participants in the race will receive certificates of participation.

"For the eighth year in a row, Tigo is thrilled to be part of the iconic Tigo 'Kili' International Half Marathon, a road race that brings together elite athletes, sports lovers, friends, and family in celebration of sports, fitness, fun, culture, tourism, environmental conservation, healthy living, and lasting memories," Tigo Northern Zone Director noted.

"Additionally, over 6,604 agents and over 600 'Lipa kwa Simu' merchants are ready to serve you in Moshi, so you do not need to carry cash," he added.

Speaking on behalf of organizers, the Race Director, John Bayo, explained that all roads will be leading to Moshi for the 2023 Kilimanjaro Marathon, with over 11,000 runners set to take part in the prestigious event.

"The turnout is huge and we are looking forward to yet another big and exciting event on February 26 at the Moshi Cooperative University grounds," a statement from the organizers disclosed.

The organizers confirmed that this time round, the online registration worked out very well with more than 90 percent of participants in the 42km and 21km races registering in time.

Msuva, Ulimwengu urge Simba SC, Yanga to prepare well for CAF CL, CAF CC

By Correspondent Ismail Tano

TANZANIAN striker Simon Msuva has asked Simba SC to come up with a good plan to keep Morocco's Raja Club Athletic dangerous winger, Zakaria Habti, in check when the clubs face each other in a 2022/23 CAF Champions League Group C match in Dar es Salaam on Saturday.

Simba SC will entertain Raja Club Athletic in the duel which will take place at the Benjamin Mkapa Stadium.

Msuva, who now plies his trade in Saudi Arabia with Al-Qadsiah FC, had in the past played for Raja Club Athletic's rivals, Wydad Athletic Club, thus he has good knowledge of the Morocco football big guns.

The attacker noted: "The most important thing for Simba SC is to play cautiously while they attack without giving Raja Club Athletic a chance because if the latter will notch a goal, the game can be difficult... Simba SC should be very careful."

Msuva had severally taken on Raja Club Athletic when he was plying his trade in Morocco with first Difaâ Hassani El Jadidi and later Wy-



Simon Msuva. PHOTO: COURTESY OF SIMON MSUVA

dad Athletic Club.

The speedy striker thereafter got into a contractual dispute with Wydad Athletic Club and ultimately parted ways with the team last season to join Al-Qadsiah FC.

Although Raja Club Athletic has a few new faces due to the departures of players including Congolese striker, Ben Malango, and Soufiane Rahimi, Msuva said that the squad's playing style is still the same.

The striker disclosed:

"There are players whom I faced, for example, Zakaria is very dangerous, I don't give him a chance but I have heard that he is still doing well. I think Simba SC should create a special strategy for him, otherwise, he will punish them."

"When I was in Morocco, they had one of their strikers, Malango, I remember my last season there, I scored seven goals, he scored 16 goals... now he is in Qatar," Msuva that had as well previously turned out for Tanzania's Yanga noted.

Apart from Zakaria, Msuva revealed, Raja Club Athletic's other players to watch include Abdelilah Hafidi, Youstri Bouzok, Mohammed Nahiri, and Hamza Khabba.

The Tanzanian attacker said: "The important thing for Simba SC is to play cautiously while they attack without giving them a chance because if the latter gets a goal, the game can be

difficult."

While turning out for Wydad Athletic Club, Msuva, also a key player of the senior national team, met Raja Club Athletic twice in Moroccan Premier League, which is famously known as Botola Pro, he did not score against Raja Club Athletic.

The attacker nevertheless scored a goal against Raja Club Athletic and also had an assist when turning out for Difaâ Hassani El Jadidi.

Raja Club Athletic, who defeated Ugandan champions Vipers SC 5-0 in the opening match, has a Tanzanian player, Adrian Kitare, but he is in the outfit's youth team.

Simba SC honorary president, Mohamed Dewji, ordered that the club should lower the price of some of the tickets for the CAF Champions League second game.

Previously, the lowest entrance fee was 5000/-, but it has been reduced to 3000/-,

whereas tickets for VIP C seats sold at 20,000/- each, now the tickets cost 10,000/- each.

Dewji resorted to such a decision to ensure Simba SC fans show up in large numbers at the stadium to support their club so that it can do well.

In another development, Thomas Ulimwengu, the former striker of DR Congo's TP Mazembe, has said that Yanga can post victory in their next CAF Confederation Cup match against the Congolese soccer giants if the former will manage to use their home turf well.

Yanga endured a frustrating start in this season's CAF Confederation Cup, conceding a 2-0 defeat to Tunisia's Union Sportive Monastrienne in a Group D match held in Tunisia last Sunday.

Flexibles by David Chikoko

