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Oil prices set for second week of gains

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Mloganzila inserting 'eat less' gastric balloons

By Henry Mwangonde

THE Muhimbili National Hospital (MNH)-Mloganzila has launched intragastric balloon services, a medical procedure where an inflatable medical device is inserted into the stomach to eat less and reduce weight without surgery.

Dr Julieth Magandi, the MNH deputy executive director, said at a press briefing that the service is given to obese and overweight patients, noting that since the services were launched, the hospital has seen an influx of people seeking it.

"We have decided to hold a camp from today (Friday) up to Monday where we expect to attend to more people," she said, noting that the launching of the services arose from an increase in non-communicable diseases where obesity and overweight, prior conditions to such diseases, is common.

Intragastric balloon insertion has no physically invasive intervention like surgery and is shorter to administer, with three people expected to obtain the services in the exercise running up to Monday.

Dr Erick Mumba, a surgeon at MNH-Mloganzila branch, said the hospital has a team of multidisciplinary professionals to ensure the services offered are private and confidential.

The hospital was earlier offering diet counseling with those with serious cases being referred abroad for surgery or balloon insertion, he said.

A survey by the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) said last year that nearly a half of Tanzanian women aged 15 to 49 years were overweight, putting them at risk of developing chronic diseases such as diabetes, cardiovascular diseases and cancer.

The data indicates that obesity among women grew to 47percent in 2020/21, up from 38.8percent in 2014/15 with the situation being worse in urban areas where 60.5percent of women were overweight compared to 40.03 percent in rural areas.

Health experts attribute it to increasing unhealthy eating habits and ignoring physical activities or formal exercise.

Weight gain is mostly caused by excessive eating and a lack of activities that engage the body, resulting in an accumulation of fat.

The MNH Mloganzila hospital facility was designed to offer auxiliary facilities as the Muhimbili facility was overcrowded.

It is an outcome of an agreement with the Korean international development agency (KOICA) signed in 2010 for a \$49.5m grant to build the hospital, preliminary information indicates.

'TEMESA could buy spares, not use agents'

By Guardian Reporter

THE Ministry of Works and Transport needs to enable the Tanzania Electrical, Mechanical and Electronic Services Agency (TEMESA) to purchase spare parts through companies that are directly linked with vehicle manufacturers instead of using agents.

Selemani Kakoso (Mpanda Rural), chairman of the standing committee on Infrastructure in the National Assembly, made this observation when discussing the ministry's implementation of the development budget for the first half of the 2022/2023 financial year (July-December).

He said the ministry needs to ensure that units and departments execute their duties properly in the construction and maintenance of infrastructure like roads, bridges, ferries, airports, houses and government buildings. Discussing the maintenance of vehicles, he expressed concern that using agents delays the work, similarly emphasizing the greater provision of funds to sort out a number of unfinished projects. He was persuaded of government commitment to provide funds for on-going projects, having witnessed some projects being completed and others in the final stages of execution, he said/ Godfrey Kasekenya, the deputy minister, assured the committee that the government will finish up all the projects as part of implementation of the 2020 CCM election manifesto.

In collaboration with the Treasury, the ministry will ensure that funds are timely paid to contractors, he stated, while Gairo MP and committee member Ahmed Shabib commended the Tanzania National Roads Agency (TanRoads) for its building and repair of roads countrywide. The Dar es Salaam-Morogoro highway at its Gairo section has been recently repaired, he pointed out.



President Samia Suluhu Hassan engaged in talks in Davos, Switzerland, earlier this week with award-winning British film actor, producer, director and humanitarian Idris Elba (3rd-R) and his wife, Sabrina Dhowre Elba (2nd-R). Elba was in April 2020 appointed UN Goodwill Ambassador for the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD). This is an international financial institution doubling as a UN specialised agency charged with addressing poverty and hunger in the rural areas of developing countries. His IFAD-related focus is on issues related to food security, climate change and environmental conservation. Photo: State House

Isaka to Mwanza SGR part at quarter stage

By Guardian Reporter

CONSTRUCTION work on the Isaka-Mwanza section of the standard gauge railway (SGR) has reached 23.4 percent, it was disclosed yesterday.

Masanja Kadogosa, director general for the Tanzania Railways Corporation (TRC) made this affirmation before Works and Transport minister Prof Makame Mbarawa, stating that TRC was intensely conducting supervision on the contractor to ensure the project is completed on time.

The minister expressed satisfaction with implementation of the Isaka-Mwanza section stretching 341 kilometres, urging residents in Lake Zone regions to grab opportunities arising from the project.

As SGR construction proceeds, stakeholders need to develop initiatives that are in line with the continuing work, or speed up economic activity when the modern train services start, he said.

"There are several opportunities opening

up when the railway is being built," he said, emphasizing that it is high time for stakeholders to come up with effective plans to exploit economic opportunities before and after completion of the project.

He asked railway workers to be mindful of civic duty and not sabotage the project, as theft of construction materials delays its completion, thus increasing costs to the government.

In wider remarks, the minister said that the government is improving transport infrastructure across the country, linking Tanzania with neighbouring countries, with the construction of tarmac roads, ships in Lake Victoria, SGR and improvement of airports to connect regions and neighbouring countries.

Adam Malima, the Mwanza regional commissioner, hailed the minister for making regular visits in the region to monitor implementation of infrastructure projects. He vowed enhanced security at project areas to control theft of construction materials.

"The government is building the Kigongo-Busisi Bridge (3200m) in Lake Victoria that will link Mwanza Region with neighbouring countries of Rwanda, Burundi and Uganda," he added.



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AU, regional groupings ponder expansion of credit for AfCFTA



Moussa Faki Mahamat, chairman of the African Union Commission (AUC) made this observation at a meeting of

By Guardian Reporter

AFRICAN governments need to make greater efforts to facilitate access to capital and crowd-funding to support small and medium enterprises in Africa, through the use of government guarantee funds (GGFs) and privately driven guarantee funds (PDGFs), a top African

Union administrator had appealed. Moussa Faki Mahamat, chairman of the African Union Commission (AUC) made this observation at a meeting of the commission, representatives of regional economic communities and strategic development partners at midweek in the Kenyan capital of Nairobi, where investment

incentives and agro-sector subsidies were also emphasised. Subsidising agricultural production for cereals, vegetables and palm oil would reduce the costs of production and enhance global competitiveness, he said, pointing at the need to provide investment incentives to agribusiness, green and blue economy

to reduce the soaring costs of basic foodstuffs coupled with rising inflation. The commission's coordination committee dwelt over accessing government guarantees for SMEs via strategic funds within the multilateral financial system and bilateral arrangements,



Ethiopia's tourism optimistic after peace deal with Tigray

ADDIS ABABA

ETHIOPIA'S tourism authorities say the industry lost \$2 billion during the past two years because of the COVID-19 pandemic and the war in the Tigray region. With the November peace deal between the Ethiopian federal government and the Tigray People's Liberation Front moving forward, the Ministry of Tourism is ramping up efforts to revive tourism.

Ethiopia's Epiphany festival, known as Timkat in Amharic, is expected to attract thousands of Christians during its two-day celebration, which ends today.

Rhoda Berger and her friend Fatima Arnous traveled from France and Germany and are taking part in Ethiopia's Epiphany festival at Jan Meda, Addis Ababa. The two-day celebration, known as Timkat in Amharic, ends today. It is expected to attract thousands of Christians.

"I'm half Ethiopian, half German so I've been in Ethiopia before, last time was 2020, so three years ago," Berger said. "I was actually trying to come last year but then I decided not to because of the conflict and COVID as well. But then, yeah, I really wanted to and I missed it a lot because I have family here and friends here, so I really wanted to come back and I was just waiting until the situation got a bit better." Her friend is in Ethiopia for the first time. "When I read ... newspapers and when I was talking to people and everything, everybody tells me yeah, you have to be careful ... But I guess it's everywhere the same situation and I wanted to visit the country and that's why I'm here," Arnous said.

Members of the tourism sector hope the tides are turning for the industry.

Henok Abebe, who has worked as a tour guide for over 10 years in the city of Gonder, the epicenter of Timkat celebrations, saw work opportunities dwindle to nothing in the past three years as the war worsened and travel restrictions increased. Travel advisories -- specifically from western Europe, where Abebe said a majority of his guests reside -- deeply hurt his business.

During that time, Abebe and his fellow tour guides turned to local tourists. But at one point, when Tigrayan fighters had entered the Amhara region, Abebe left to join the fighting.

AGENCIES



Zanzibar President Dr Hussein Ali Mwinyi has a word with his fellow Muslim faithful shortly after Friday prayers at Nour Muhammad Kwamchana Mosque in Unguja West's 'B' District yesterday. Photo: Zanzibar State House. Photo: Zanzibar State House

Nigeria train attack: 20 rescued in Edo, two traditional chiefs arrested

BENIN CITY

Two weeks after an attack on a train station in Nigeria's South Edo state, Nigeria's security operatives have rescued the 20 kidnapped passengers and arrested two traditional rulers and five other suspects. Gunmen attacked passengers who were waiting for a train at Igueben train station on

January 7, 2023. They abducted 20 passengers including children and demanded \$425,000 ransom.

The Edo State government on January 19, 2023, confirmed the arrest of two village chiefs in connection with the train station attack and five other suspects.

Chris Nehikhare, state's Commissioner for Communication and Orientation, said that seven

suspects had also been arrested in connection with the incident.

"Five people and two village chiefs have been arrested in connection with the incident and they are helping with investigations," he said. The Edo Commissioner of Police Mohammed Dankwara had reported that the joint security forces in the state had rescued 12 kidnapped

victims in addition to the four earlier rescued a day after the incident. The remaining two were rescued on January 19, 2023.

"The joint security forces, acting on technical intelligence provided to the command on the kidnapped victims, stormed Igboha Forest where they rescued the victims," he said. This is the second attack

on train passengers in Nigeria. The first attack was on March 28, 2022, when terrorists bombed the Abuja-Kaduna train, killed 14 passengers and abducted 64 others. "After the Abuja-Kaduna train incident, one would have expected the Nigeria Railway Corporation (NRC) to provide security in their facilities," Edo State Governor Godwin Obaseki said.



Information, Communications and Information Technology minister Nape Nnauye (in sunglasses) briefs journalists in Dodoma city yesterday shortly after making an assessment tour of progress in the construction of the ministry's office complex in the national capital's Mtumba suburb. Photo courtesy of Maelezo

AU, regional groupings ponder expansion of credit for AfCFTA

FROM PAGE 1

while a statement from the East African Community secretariat emphasized appeals on policy measures to enable SMEs to access such facilities.

A World Bank write up says that access to finance, particularly credit, is widely recognized as problematic for small and medium enterprises (SMEs), hampering their growth and development.

To address this challenge, many governments around the world intervene in SME credit markets through credit guarantee schemes (CGSs), offering risk mitigation to lenders by taking a share of the lenders' losses on SME loans in case of default.

The global lender says CGSs can contribute to expand access to finance for SMEs, the crowd funding available from multilateral credit agencies and special environment change mitigation funds, whose operations are taking root in many African countries.

Experts say the adoption of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) is likely to boost the use of these funds as lenders seek economies of scale for productive investments and services, like the Green for Growth Fund (GGF). What the AU commission was emphasizing is having a common set of fiscal governance principles enabling risk management arrangements, as well as operational conduct rules for CGSs, as they enable improved outreach and financial sustainability.

"Developed through extensive consultations with stakeholders, the principles draw from both the

literature on good practices for CGSs and sound practices implemented by a number of successful CGSs around the world," the lender states, in which case the continental secretariat seeks a generalized regime of investment incentives to make crowd funding or lending work optimally.

With Africa having the world's largest free trade area, with a market of 1.2bn persons, the continent is creating an entirely new development path, which requires that it, to harness the potential of its own resources, the commission chairman noted. "Economic prospects for Africa in 2023 look promising," he said, highlighting that Africa is coming out as resilient and is bound to transform the extraction of raw materials (primary), the manufacturing sector (secondary) and the service industries (tertiary sector) into a much more sustainable economic model.

Dr Peter Mathuki, secretary general for the East African Community (EAC), said that regional economic communities play a critical role in engaging stakeholders at the national and regional levels. This is highly necessary in the implementation of initiatives under Agenda 2063, which includes AfCFTA.

Highlighting the resilience of EAC economies during the Covid-19 pandemic that ravaged economies worldwide, he said that intra-EAC trade stood at \$10.1bn in September 2022, representing a 20 per cent share of intra-regional trade to global trade.

Six people appear in court over misuse of public funds

By Guardian Correspondent, Dodoma

THE Prevention and Combating of Corruption Bureau (PCCB) has arraigned six people over misuse of public funds, causing a loss of 264.5m/- to Chamwino District Council.

They were brought before the Dodoma Resident Magistrate Janeth Musaroché. They are the Director of Joroji Construction LTD, John Bahem and his co-workers—Heri Mwafute, George Mwakamele, Seleman Msafiri, Shaban Mpwapwe and Noel Lukuwi.

It was alleged that the suspects were members of the district council's evaluation committee that was responsible for provision of a tender to construct water infrastructures in Manzase village in 2013.

The head of PCCB in Dodoma Region, Sosthenes Kibwengo claimed that the suspects were charged with six counts, including economic sabotage, which is against provisions of the anti-corruption Act.

The other offences according to Kibwengo include lying to the employer, misuse of power and office for personal gains and embezzlement of

public funds using government documents.

He told the court that the suspects committed all the offences in 2013 whereas PCCB conducted an investigation and discovered the loss.

"The office of the Director of Public Prosecution (DPP) resolved to bring the matter to the court for the law to be allowed to take its course," he stated.

Kibwengo asked community members to cooperate with PCCB to help the anti-corruption bureau identify embezzlers of public funds who are derailing development projects in the country.



The office of the Director of Public Prosecution (DPP) resolved to bring the matter to the court for the law to be allowed to take its course



Former Prime Minister Mizengo Pinda (R) shares a light moment with Angellah Kairuki, Minister of State in the President's Office (Regional Administration and Local Governments), in Dodoma city yesterday as they headed for a meeting on the government's record in implementing development projects. Right behind the minister is Kongwa legislator and immediate past National Assembly Speaker Job Ndugai, while left is Dodoma regional commissioner Rosemary Senyamule. Photo: Correspondent Ibrahim Joseph

'Tablets provided by government for teachers must reach the beneficiaries'

By Guardian Reporter

THE ruling CCM party has given one-week ultimatum for the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology to ensure that the tablets provided by the government for teachers reach the beneficiaries.

Party's ideology and publicity secretary, Sofia Mjema, said when launching the distribution of the tablets last November, Prime Min-

ister Majaliwa ordered to ensure that the gadgets reach the desired beneficiaries, but it is not the case.

Sophia who is also the party's member of National Executive Committee (NEC- CCM) said: "A special period was set aside for the release of these tablets which ended on January 15, this year, but the party has received complaints that until today there are some groups that have not received the tablets. But there are also some districts

that have not distributed the tablets at all."

"There are other places where you find you have 10 teachers and all of them need and deserve to get them, but you find that eight of the teachers are left out."

"The party directs the Ministry of Education to ensure that this exercise is completed and all the beneficiaries who deserve to make sure that they get the gadgets. The ministry should also make sure

that these complaints do not exist and supervise well the exercise," Sophia said.

She also said that the release of the tablets is a continuation of the government's efforts to empower and build the capacity of teachers to have tools and strengthen the use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT).

The party official said that in continuing to empower teachers with ICT skills on September

15, last year that the tablets used during the 2022 Population and Housing Census (PHC) were to be distributed to all ICT teachers after the activity is over. "This move should be affected as it was agreed," she said.

Juma Kipanga, Deputy Minister for Education, Science and Technology, said the tablets used during the 2022 PHC, about 6,600 be distributed to teachers in Zanzibar and 293,400 in mainland Tanza-

nia. However, he said that the ministry has added more than 100,000 tablets, thus making the number sufficient.

According to him, the beneficiaries of tablets allocation are all teachers, examination councils, quality controllers, instructors of teaching colleges, community development colleges and technical colleges as well as ward education coordinators and district and regional education officers.



Lands, Housing and Human Settlements Development minister Dr Angelina Mabula (L) presents 'work-tools' to John Kalupale, a member of the National Housing Corporation board of directors whose launch she had just graced in Arusha city yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Asraji Mvungi

'Speed up construction of office building at Mtumba'

By Polycarp Machira, Dodoma

MINISTER for Information, Communication and Information Technology, Nape Nnauye has directed the National Housing Corporation (NHC) to speed up construction of the ministry's office building located at Mtumba.

Nape issued the directive yesterday when he visited the area and inspected the building with the aim to establish the level at which the construction work has reached.

Speaking to journalists immediately after the inspection, he said that the construction is progressing well despite the low speed, contrary to the government's expectations.

"The construction work is not bad but the progress is not at the initial speed and I have requested them to increase the tempo in effort to meet the deadline" he said. He said initial plans were that the construction was to be completed in April, 2023, but the constructor's speed indicates that it could be completed in August or October, this year.

The minister insisted "I request you to increase the number of people to work here, you have to finish by April as you promised and if that fails, it should be ready by June, this year."

Nape also extended his sincere thanks to the President of Tanzania Samia Suluhu Hassan for continuing to provide funds to facilitate the construction of various office building including the Ministry of Information building.

"I am very grateful to President Samia as she is continuing to provide funds for implementing construction of these buildings you see, there are many buildings that

have been emerged but never stuck because there is a constant flow of fund" he said.

Along with the building inspection, the Minister has also planted a tree and has asked all ministry's administrators to plant trees and make sure that it grows well in order to protect and preserve the environment. On her part the Project Manager from NHC engineer Grace Musita said that the project started on October 2021 and supposed to be implemented in a period of 24 months hence expected to be completed on October this year.

She pointed out the challenges that hindered the speed of construction includes of some problems in procurement system and the availability of construction materials especially cement and steels. "We have had some challenges in the procurement system, inflation in construction materials as well as the availability of such materials has been a challenge toward maintaining the speed we started with," said Eng. Musita.

"However, in order to ensure that we finish the project within the time, we decided to order materials directly from the factory as well as importing some of them to avoid a risk of spending a long time waiting" she added.

She also explained that the cost of the entire project will cost 23.9bn/- to its completion and they have already received 7.9bn/- approximately to 35 percent of the whole amount. She said the construction of the structure has been completed for 100 percent, for now we are in the finishing stage where we have already started the process of getting finish materials such as colors, tiles, aluminum profiles etc. and we are expecting to finish the work early.

South African farmers cull 10 million chicks due to country's power cuts

CAPE TOWN

SOUTH Africa's poultry farmers say they've had to cull almost 10 million chicks because of the country's power crisis. The record blackouts have slowed down production, creating a backlog in processing and no room for the chicks. Farmers' groups warn if the power cuts are not resolved soon, South Africa's longer-term food security could be affected.

South Africa's struggling state-owned power company, Eskom, this week shortened power cuts that, since December, had forced homes and businesses to go without electricity for up to 10 hours per day.

However, Eskom says the rolling blackouts will continue for at least another year to prevent a total collapse of the grid.

The record power cuts are crippling South Africa's economy and harming production, including foods.

Izaak Breytenbach, general manager of the South African Poultry Association, said the power crisis means they can't run slaughterhouses, or abattoirs, on the usual 24-hour schedule.

"When we take chickens into an abattoir there's a water bath with electric stunner and that is the main approved method of killing the chickens," he said. "And then in that whole process where we do the cut-up of the chicken, the temperature is controlled in the abattoir."

Breytenbach says the lack of power to run the machines dropped production by a quarter, creating a backlog and overcrowding on poultry farms.

The association says farmers were forced to cull 10 million chicks in just weeks.

Breytenbach warned if government doesn't resolve the power shortage soon, the price of chicken will increase even more than last year, when Russia's war on Ukraine caused feed prices to jump.

"We've seen material increase of chicken prices of about 17% in the period 2021 to 2022," he said.

The drop in production could lead to a chicken shortage in South Africa and job losses in a country with a 33% unemployment rate.

Ensuring food quality and safety Theo Boshoff, CEO of South Africa's Agricultural Business Chamber, said the entire food production chain is affected by the power cuts.

"It's right up and down the value chain," he said. "If you think about primary agriculture; irrigation especially during this time is peak summer. The cold chain is absolutely critical so that's where the biggest risk lies of course to ensure food quality and safety."

Boshoff said the chamber is doing a survey to determine the cost to South African agriculture.

He said farmers met on January 13 with Agriculture Minister Thoko Didiza to discuss the problem and request an exemption from power cuts.

"It's a tough ask in the current climate," he said. "We don't have enough generation online currently so if you have an exemption for one sector that means you'll need to cut from another sector."

He said the ministry agreed to appoint a task force on the issue and is expected to report back next week.

South Africa's aging power plants were forced to introduce power cuts since 2008 amid corruption scandals involving the state-owned power company, Eskom.

The shortage worsened in the past two years with Eskom having to cut power more than 200 days in 2022, the most ever in a calendar year.

South African President Cyril Ramaphosa this week cancelled his trip to the World Economic Forum in Davos to hold urgent meetings on the blackouts.

Despite the shortage, the government last week announced an 18% power price increase this year but was unable to say when the power cuts will end.



Iringa district commissioner Mohamed Hassan Moyo plants a tree during the inauguration of a district-level tree planting campaign held at Magubike village yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Steven William

Ivorian researcher awarded for her study to protect yams

ABIDJAN

ADJATA Kamara is one of the 20 winners of the For Women in Science initiative of the LOreal Foundation and UNESCO, which aims to give visibility to women researchers worldwide.

The 25-year-old Ivorian was chosen for her work on biopesticides to protect yam crops, a root that is highly prized in sub-Saharan Africa.

Her passion for research stems from her childhood when her father's mango crops were ravaged by fungi.

"It allows me to show my research to other women, to other countries and it puts a little pressure on me because I tell myself that now, I have to be a role model for young girls in science," said Adjata.

Adjata explains that her goal is to develop "biopesticides based on plant extracts, fungi and beneficial bacteria," in order to treat without chemicals this anomaly that disrupts the production of a plant that

is the basis of staple food in several regions of Africa. "I work on the development of biopesticides based on plant extracts, bacteria and also fungi. But these bacteria and fungi are said to be beneficial and so I'm trying to find methods to control the fungi that attack post-harvest yams," said Adjata.

Adjata is one of the twenty laureates of the For women in science's young talent prize from sub-Saharan Africa - excluding South Africa - who will receive between 10,000 and 15,000 euros to help them in their work.

"From an early age, my father had a mango plantation. And this plantation was attacked by mushrooms, but at that time we did not know it. And as the years passed, there was a drop in production. And from then on, I wanted to know why these mangoes were being attacked (by fungi), and why production was falling. And it's since then that I devoted myself to it and that I loved science," said Adjata.

Inclusive development vital for economic progress, dons argue

By Correspondent Daniel Semberya

THE sixth phase government under President Samia Suluhu Hassan has been hailed for implementing policies and strategies that help to maintain the good trend of inclusive economic development.

This was said by the director of policy at the Blavatnik School of Government (CMG), Stefan Dercon in Dar es Salaam yesterday during a public seminar titled: "Gambling on development: Why some countries win, and others

lose." The event was organised by the Economic and Social Research Foundation (ESRF).

"I am happy that in the last two years there is a set of stability, a set of policies emerging again, also there is recognition of the private sector which is an important part of development because the state can't do everything.

He said adding that the government was doing a lot to attract investments from abroad, something which promotes development.

Meanwhile, Prof Dercon ad-

vised that if the government really wanted to achieve progress it should be self-aware and be much more deeply committed to focus on implementation.

He said that it is important to have policies and laws that will help maintain the efforts and vision and thus help achieve intended goals.

He further suggested that in order for the country to attain robust economic development, it should engage the private sector and stakeholders in implanting various development priorities

instead of being at the centre of everything.

"Secondly, the government should ensure that it keeps a deep commitment to peace and stability. The current government needs to link back to where the government was before the previous regime and make progress," he noted. But Tanzania should be more aware that development is attained in a peaceful area where the population spends their time engaging in economic activities freely without fear.

He said that the developmen-

tal ideology of the late President Mwalimu Julius Kambarage Nyerere - have little doubt as he was committed to the development ideology of self-reliance and State-led development.

Prof Jehovanness Aikaeli, Research Fellow Centre for Behavioural Studies at the University of Dar es Salaam echoed Prof Dercon, saying economic development growth needs to target alleviation of poverty among people.

He also said: "If we want to progress as a country we need to implement the development that

is inclusive. It is commendable to build good infrastructures, but they should be helpful to mitigate poverty from the rural poor."

Danford Sango, from ESRF's department of governance and capacity development said the objective of the public seminar was to learn more skills and experiences from others on how the government can achieve economic progress and development.

He said that an elite bargain focusing on development, peace and stability is vital for the government to achieve progress.



A motorcyclist (seated) visibly dazed after being involved in a crash with a 'Bajaj' along the Makabe stretch of Goba Road in Ubungo municipality, Dar es Salaam, yesterday. He sustained leg injuries. Photo: Correspondent Sabato Kasika

Uganda approves construction licence for crude pipeline project to Tanzania

KAMPALA

UGANDA has issued final tender to company controlled by TotalEnergies to construct a \$3.5 billion oil pipeline through to Tanzania.

The final approval will provide a way forward to the construction of the pipeline that will be used to transport the country's crude to international.

The signature follows a Monday approval by the Uganda's cabinet allowing the construction of the pipeline by the East African Crude Oil Pipeline Company Limited.

TotalEnergies is the largest shareholder in EACOP with a 62% stake. Other investors include the state-run Uganda National Oil Company and Tanzania Petroleum Development Corporation, which have 15% each, while China's CNOOC (0883.HK) holds 8%.

France's TotalEnergies and the China National Offshore Oil Corporation signed a \$10-billion agreement earlier this year to develop Ugandan oilfields and ship the crude through a 1,445-kilometre

(900-mile) pipeline to Tanzania's Indian Ocean port of Tanga.

The project, which includes drilling in Murchison Falls, Uganda's largest national park, has run into strong opposition from activists and environmental groups that say it threatens the region's fragile ecosystem and the livelihoods of tens of thousands of people. Uganda's President Yoweri Museveni has vowed to proceed with the project regardless of the EU resolution, warning that the government would look for other partners in case TotalEnergies chose to "listen to the EU Parliament".

The project aims to extract the huge crude reserves under Lake Albert, a 160-kilometre-long natural border between Uganda and the Democratic Republic of Congo, and ship the oil through what would become the world's longest heated pipeline.

Museveni has in the past hailed the project as a major economic boost for the landlocked country, where many live in poverty.

Indian parliamentarians visit Serengeti National Park

By Beatrice Philemon

TWELVE visiting Indian parliamentarians led by the Speaker of the Parliament, Lok Sabha, yesterday visited Serengeti National Park, something which highlights that Tanzania's tourism potentials will be well-known in the South Asian country.

A press statement issued yesterday by the India High Commission to Tanzania states that, the Speaker of the National Assembly, Dr Tulia Ackson and the Indian delegation visited Serengeti National Park where they were briefed about the park and the best practices adopted by Tanzania for wildlife conservation.

The Indian Parliamentary delegation was in Tanzania by the invitation of Speaker, Dr Tulia.

The Indian MPs who were in Tanzania included Utpal Kumar Singh, Secre-

tary General, Lok Sabha, Chirag Kumar Paswan, MP (Lok Sabha), Manoj Kumar Kishorkumar Kotak, MP, (Lok Sabha), S. Phangnon Konyak, MP (Rajya Sabha) and other senior officials from the Parliament.

On January 18, this year, Speaker Lok Sabha held detailed discussions with Dr Tulia in Dar es Salaam and Speaker of House of Representatives of Zanzibar, Zubeir Ali Maulid also joined the meeting.

The two sides had fruitful interactions covering a range of issues that included regular parliamentary exchanges, sharing of best practices in parliamentary spheres and issues of mutual interest on trade and investment, development partnership and capacity building, education, agriculture, health, culture were discussed.

Acknowledging that parliamentary institutions are nodal pillars of democratic governance the two sides agreed to in-

crease the frequency of parliamentary exchanges to further boost India-Tanzania bilateral relations.

Dr Tulia hosted a lunch in honour of the Speaker and the members of the Indian delegation. Also upon arrival in Dar es Salaam in the morning of January 18, Speaker, Lok Sabha visited Commonwealth War Memorial and paid his respects to Indian soldiers who laid their lives during World War I by laying a wreath.

The Commonwealth War Memorial in Dar es Salaam commemorates the sacrifice of the soldiers of different nations including about 1500 Indian soldiers who laid their lives in the line of duty during World War I.

Also during the visit, Speaker Lok Sabha interacted with a group of Tanzanian alumni of Indian institutes at the High Commission of India.

He alumni shared their fond experiences of education in India and how it played a crucial role in their lives. These professionals are tirelessly contributing towards the growth and development of Tanzania, providing strength to India-Tanzania relations.

He also got a chance to interact with members of the Indian diaspora from different walks of life including from politics, business, art, culture and others.

The India's Speaker thanked the Indian community for their role in building India's profile and reputation in Tanzania and for their contribution in strengthening India-Tanzania relations.

India and Tanzania have enjoyed a long tradition of friendship and cooperation marked by mutual understanding, political maturity, vibrant economic ties, wide ranging and substantive development

partnership and historical people to people linkages. As the bilateral relations continue to grow and as efforts are being made to diversify traditional engagements and venture into new areas of shared interest, the visit of the parliamentary delegation gave a new thrust to bilateral relations with both countries reaffirming to continue their commitment towards intensifying economic, strategic and diplomatic relations. It indicates.

Speaker Lok Sabha addressed a gathering of Tanzania India Business Forum (TIBF), which has been working for promotion of bilateral trade and investment since 2013.

The speaker encouraged TIBF to work for further enhancing bilateral trade and also to bring a new generation of entrepreneurs from both sides as stakeholders of India-Tanzania economic engagement.

Ndalichako submits declaration on health, safety at workplaces to the parliamentary committee

By Guardian Correspondent, Dodoma

MINISTER of State, Prime Minister's Office (Labour, Youth, Employment and Persons with Disability) Prof Joyce Ndalichako has submitted a declaration on health and safety at workplaces adopted by member countries of the International Labor Organisation (ILO) to the Constitution and Legal Affairs Parliamentary Committee.

The declaration was adopted at the 110th ILO General Meeting held in Geneva in 2022 where the minister attended the conference accompanied by the Chief Executive Officer of the Occupational Safety and Health Authority (OSHA) Khadija Mwenda and other officers.

Presenting the declaration before the committee, Minister Ndalichako said it is important to get opinions from committee members to properly advise the Prime Minister's Office and OSHA on issues related to health and safety.

"We thought it would be good to present to you this declaration which has been passed by member countries of the ILO including Tanzania. The declaration speaks on the issues of health and safety at workplaces, a legal obligation and a basic right for workers," remarked Prof Ndalichako.

She mentioned the ILO principles on the rights of workers at workplaces as the freedom to gather and jointly discuss issues related to their rights, abolition of all forms of forced and child labour and elimination of discrimination in employment and workplaces.

According to the declaration passed last year, the issue of safety and health at the workplace becomes the fifth pillar of workers' rights of workers at workplaces, she added.

Chairman of the committee, Joseph Mhagama, thanked Minister Ndalichako for the efforts she is making to ensure the committee is empowered to carry out its responsibilities of supervising the ministry.

OSHA Chief Executive Officer, Khadija Mwenda commended the committee for their guidelines and advice towards improving safety and health issues at workplaces, saying her institution will continue to work hard in implementing the government directives.



Charles Magori (C), head of business and marketing at Sanlam General Insurance Company, presents a car in Dar es Salaam on Thursday to Gildas Rwiza for emerging the firm's Best Agent. Left is Sanlam CEO Hamis Suleiman. Photo: Correspondent Jumanne Juma

Delays in payments affect construction pace of Tandale market, contractor says

By Correspondent Joseph Mwendapole

CONTRACTOR of the Tandale Market project in Kinondoni District, Dar es Salaam, NAMIS Corporate Ltd has said that delays in payments is one of the major challenges which has affected construction pace of the project.

The construction of the market started September 2019 and according to the contract with Kinondoni Municipal Council, the contractor was supposed to finish the project within one year (2020).

James Msumari, NAMIS project

manager said yesterday that they commenced the project on September 14, 2019 without any initial payment for the construction.

"We received the first payment 10 months after we had started the construction. The delay of payment continued for several other months, something which affected the jobs we were staying for three and even seven months without being paid after submitting our proposals," he explained.

Msumari said apart from the payment delays, the company also encountered several challenges, includ-

ing addition of works that are out of contract agreement.

He mentioned some of the challenges as they were supposed to build an emergency market in order to move the traders who were in the market to enable the construction to start on time.

"We were told to build an emergency market, which was not included in the contract, so that we could move the traders in order to start construction. We managed to move them and started construction, but those costs were not in our contract," he said

He said the limited space of the construction area has also contributed to a large extent to the delay in the completion of the project as they are forced to store many construction materials outside the area.

"The area is very narrow and sometimes you bring huge consignment of material, you keep them far from the site and then you take it from there to the site. And sometimes we even have to do the construction in phases to save some raw materials in the area," he said

He said they mix construction con-

crete far from the site and then transport them to the area due to limited space in the construction area, something which incur more costs.

However, he said that despite all difficulties the construction has reached 80 percent and he promised to complete the project by June this year.

Regional Commissioner of Dar es Salaam, Amos Makalla recently visited the market to inspect the progress of the construction and wanted the contractor to increase the speed of construction so that he finishes as soon as possible.

Makalla said that the government had already paid the contractor 7bn/ out of the 10bn/ which and asked him to increase the number of technicians to quickly complete the project.

"NAMIS is a very big company and you have already been paid seven billion shillings out of 10 billion shillings, the market was supposed to be completed in 2020 but you have asked for an extension of the contract until June this year, now I order you to add more technicians and work to be done every day so that the market is completed," Makalla said.



Youth from needy families take part in practical training at a vocational training college on Pemba Island earlier this week. A total of 600 Zanzibar teens have thus far benefited from the Skills Development Fund, a programme run by the Tanzania Education Authority. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

More than 140 people missing in a shipwreck in DR Congo

KINSHASA

AT least 145 passengers are missing after a motorized boat overloaded with goods and animals sank overnight in a river in the northwestern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), authorities said on Thursday.

About 55 people survived the disaster, authorities said. The boat was heading for neighbouring Republic of Congo when it capsized on the Lulonga River on Tuesday night near the town of Basankusu.

Jean-Pierre Wangela, president of civil society groups in the region, told reporters that at least 145 people were missing. He blamed the sinking on an overload but said residents had few other options.

"There are no other means of transportation currently in our province and here in Basankusu territory," he said.

Shipwrecks causing dozens of deaths are all too common in remote areas of the DRC, where travel by road is sometimes impossible. Many boats are overloaded with goods and people who cannot swim. Rescue operations are extremely limited in remote parts of the country.

In October, more than 40 people died on the Congo River in Equateur Province in similar circumstances.

Muheza DC hands over 910 tablets to teachers to stimulate digital learning

By Correspondent Cheji Bakari, Muheza

MUHEZA District Commissioner Halima Bulembo has handed over 910 tablets to teachers and education officers in the council so as to stimulate digital teaching and learning.

The tablets are among those used during

the 2022 Housing and Population Census and are an implementation of a directive issued by President Samia Suluhu Hassan to disburse the tablets to schools.

Speaking during the handing over exercise, DC Bulembo said the move will help improve the education environment as well as easing teaching and learning activities.

"The tablets will help widening your education's scope whereby if you use it effectively it will allow you to browse and download teaching and learning methodologies and approaches articles that will sharpen your knowledge and skills as well as pupils benefits," she said.

She further urged them to avoid using

them browsing and downloading unnecessary materials and using them to capture community events like wedding celebrations by pointing out that doing so is going against the provision's intention.

"Anyone who will try using these tablets against the government's objective, disciplinary measures will be taken against

him/her which include to be confiscated," he said.

She also directed that if anyone who was given the tablet unfortunately dies, is dismissed from the job or shifts to another working station, the tablet should be handed over to the school's headmaster or head of department.

Manyara to collect 2,500 tonnes of sunflower for oil processing

By Guardian Correspondent, Babati

OVER 2,500 tonnes of sunflower is expected to be collected by sunflower oil processors in Manyara Region with the aim of alleviating the country's shortage of edible oil.

This was revealed here on Tuesday this week by the Secretary of Manyara Region Sunflower Processors Association (MASUPA), Julian Kambayta in an interview with this paper.

Kambayta said the tonnage is in accordance to the set target whereby 239 sunflower oil processors will collect the crop from various farmers' groups recognised by MASUPA.

He said every sunflower oil processor has his own farmers from who they will buy the crop at an agreed price which he declined to reveal.

He noted that even if the crop's price drops they will not buy it under 800/- per kilo.

"We have connected the processors to sunflower producers in groups to make easy for them to source the raw material," said Kambayta.

Meanwhile, Assistant Registrar of Cooperative societies in Manyara Region, Absalom Cheliga said all AMCOS in the region are supposed to produce profitably.

"AMCOS should own small factories and every factory in production to adhere to the value

chain," Cheliga said.

He admitted on the shortage of edible oil hence, he said, if the sunflower crop is accorded priority, it will help in alleviating the country's shortage of edible oil.

Earlier, Acting Manager of the Rift Valley Cooperative Union (RIVACU) in Manyara Region, Vivian George said they have more than 3,000 farmers as members who grow sunflower.

He said in order to make sunflower cultivation a success, they have quality modern seeds for farmers from Agricultural Seed Agency (ASA).



Kambayta said the tonnage is in accordance to the set target whereby 239 sunflower oil processors will collect the crop from various farmers' groups recognised by MASUPA



Hawa Bayumi (R), external affairs manager with ALAF Limited, addresses a press conference in Dar es Salaam yesterday on a Safal-Cornell Kiswahili Prize for African Literature event set to be held in the city next week. She is with ALAF External affairs officer Theresia Mmasy. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

Safal Group unveils Kiswahili Awards 2023 in Dar

By Guardian Reporter

SAFAL Group, through its subsidiaries, has officially launched the Safal-Cornell Kiswahili Prize for African Literature where shortlisted manuscripts will be awarded in a grand ceremony next week.

The move is in a bid to comple-

ment the government's efforts in intensifying the promotion of Kiswahili language, with Tanzania taking center stage.

Speaking to reporters in Dar es Salaam, the Alaf External Affairs Manager, Hawa Bayumi said the Prize is supported by Safal Group through its subsidiaries Mabat

Rolling Mills of Kenya, Alaf Tanzania, the Africana Studies Center at Cornell University and the Ngugi wa Thiong'o Foundation.

She said that the Safal-Cornell Kiswahili Prize for African Literature was founded in 2014 by Dr Lizzy Attree and Dr Mukomwa Ngugi to recognise writing in Af-

rican languages and encourage translation from, between and into African languages.

Bayumi said that the chairman of this year's judges panel, Professor F. E. M. K Senkoro recently when giving the decision of the Judges said that the receipt of a very large number of manuscripts of novels

and poetry from various parts of Africa, especially East Africa, is sufficient evidence that Africa has a great treasure of creativity, especially among young people.

"Many of the manuscript shortlisted have six candidates where winners will be announced on the 25th of January in Dar es Salaam,

where the guest of honor is expected to be Prime Minister Kassim Majaliwa.

The six shortlisted candidates are from Tanzania and Kenya, where the overall winner is expected to walk away with 5,000 dollars.



Visiting Om Birla, Speaker of the lower house of India's bicameral Parliament (Lok Sabha), addresses members of the Tanzania-India Business Forum in Dar es Salaam on Thursday. Right is the India's High Commissioner to Tanzania, Binaya Srikanta Pradhan. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

Indian envoy pledges to boost trade relations with Tanzania

By Beatrice Philemon

TANZANIA and India have agreed to continue working together in enhancing trade relations this year to make business more active between the two countries.

India High Commissioner to Tanzania, Binaya Pradhan made the remarks in Dar es Salaam yesterday when speaking at the one day meeting organized by Tanzania India Business Forum (TIBF) and it also involved the Indian parliamentary delegation led by Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla.

The High commissioner informed the gathering that trade between the two countries has grown substantially in the past few years.

He also stated: "We have enjoyed excellent cooperation that both the countries are having in enhancing the trade, social and cultural ties between the two countries."

TIBF's Chairman, Gagan Gupta pointed out to the delegation about the role of the forum in promoting the trade relationship between India and Tanzania and welcomed the delegation to Tanzania.

Lok Sabha Speaker of Indian Parliament, Om Birla expressed his gratitude on the visit to Tanzania and remarked on the historic ties of the two countries going back to a couple of hundred years.

"India is always willing to offer all technical assistance to Tanzania in all the major fields," he said.

The Indian envoy also said the prestigious and premier technology institution in India, the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) is setting up a branch in Tanzania for the benefit of the students in the country.

Similarly a leading hospital is investing heavily in a cancer hospital in Dar es Salaam. India is also an agricultural country and India would be happy to assist Tanzania in setting up centers of learning and research in the various aspects of agriculture including organic farming.

The event was attended by the leading business leaders of Tanzania including the chairpersons of the Confederation of Tanzania Industries (CTI), Tanzania Private Sector Foundation (TPSF) and others.

Foodland project out to boost food supply chains in Africa

By Guardian Correspondent, Zanzibar

THE implementation of a Foodland project in various countries including Tanzania will help reinforce food production and resilience of food supply chains, foster nutrition and sustainable agro-biodiversity in Africa.

Deputy vice chancellor (academic, research and guidance) at the Sokoine University of Agriculture (SUA), Prof Maulid Mwatawala when opening the 3rd annual meeting of the project on Thursday here to evaluate the progress and outcomes of the initiative.

Prof Mwatawala said the project connects production of food and consump-

tion so as to as many projects have been implemented by focusing only on production with others relying on supply and consumption alone, something which always fails to bring intended goals.

"So, with the project which has been funded by the European Union (EU), we will know the actual production and consumption demand, promote sustainable efforts to increase food production and strengthen food security and thus fight stunting and malnutrition," he said.

He said that the implementation of the project involves mixed stakeholders who are researchers, entrepreneurs,

academicians and innovators so as to bring quality research findings so as to help boost the agriculture sector, increase production and productivity.

Prof Susan Nchimbi, head of the project for Tanzania said the initiative's major objective is to instill knowledge and skills to people to strongly engage in agriculture and increase productivity while also protecting the environment.

"We have experienced that in some years, we produce a lot of food but the next year, farmers produce little, so the project is aimed to balance things and ensure that we know the actual needs and enable players to produce enough nutritious food to sustainably cater the demand," she said.

She said that the project will have biodiversity of food and crops while investing heavily in educating farmers and consumers on what crops to grow as well as the importance of eating nutritious food.

Coordinator of the project at Bologna University in Italy, Prof Marco Setti noted that benefiting both African and European consumers, the project aims to provide them with traditional-based, healthy, nutritious foods, while encouraging the diffusion of African diets and aiding the fight against malnutrition, particularly in women and children.

He said that by bridging food production with consumption, the project will reinforce the productivity and resilience of food sup-

ply chains and create new market opportunities at both the local and global scales.

He said that is good progress in research in all implementing countries except Ethiopia where the implementation of various works had been delayed.

"We have already produced 30 findings and submitted them to the EU who is the financial supporters of the project and we are still proceeding with the work," he added.

Foodland project commended implementation in September 2020 involving 26 partners from 13 countries in Africa; the project is implemented in Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda, Ethiopia, Tunisia and Morocco.

Peacekeepers hand over medical items, conduct free care in CAR

By Guardian Correspondent, Bangui

TANZANIAN peacekeepers serving on the UN Security Council authorised United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilisation Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) have handed over assorted medical facilities and offered free medical treatment to residents at Potopoto dispensary in Mabele Kadei district, CAR.

Speaking at the handing over of medicine, Senior Medical officer of batch 66(TANBAT6), Captain Nashiru Bakari Mzengo said that move was part of their duties to ensure people get good health services.

Captain Mzengo handed over medicine on behalf of the head of (TANBAT6) Lieutenant Colonel Amiri Steven Mshana who could not attend due to official duties.

He said Tanzanians in collaboration with other peacekeepers conducted free medical treatment to cement good collaboration with the residents.

Both residents of Central Africa and the Potopoto dispensary management hailed Tanzanian peacekeepers for their readiness to support, saying since their arrival, they had received so much assistance.

"We thank the people of Tanzanians in the UN mission here in central Africa who have helped a

lot including treatment because the majority of us cannot afford to buy medicine," they said.

They said despite their busy schedules, they have been able to support themselves with free medicine adding that it was a sign of love for them.

"This symbolizes a great love to us and our entire nation how Tanzanian peacekeepers are good to central Africa people," they said.

They thanked for medical handing over that will help to support them and the free treatment for all.

"We thank you for handing us medicine and the free treatment that will help our people especially those who have low capability. Tanzania has been closer to us showing love in protecting people's health," they said.

Currently, more than 2,600 Tanzanian military and police personnel currently serve in six UN operations, performing a range of vital tasks such as protecting civilians and community policing.

The UN deployed a transition team to set up MINUSCA and prepare for a seamless transition of authority from MISCA to MINUSCA. As of 30 September 2021, it has more than 15,000 troops, police and civilian personnel on the ground.

For the year 2022, there were six peacekeeping missions taking place in different parts across the world.



Capt Nashiru Bakari Mzengo (L), a senior medical officer with the contingent of Tanzanian peacekeepers serving on the United Nations mission in the Central African Republic, attends to a patient earlier this week at a dispensary in the CAR's Mabele Kadei District. Photo courtesy of Capt Mwijage Inyoma

Africa's economic growth to outpace global forecast in 2023/24 - AfDB biannual report

By Special Correspondent

AFRICA is set to outperform the rest of the world in economic growth over the next two years, with real gross domestic product (GDP) averaging around 4% in 2023 and 2024.

This is higher than projected global averages of 2.7% and 3.2%, the African Development Bank Group said in Africa's Macroeconomic Performance and Outlook report for the region, released in Abidjan on Thursday.

With a comprehensive regional growth analysis, the report shows that all the continent's five regions remain resilient with a steady outlook for the medium-term, despite facing significant headwinds due to global socio-economic shocks. It also identified potential risks and called for robust monetary and fiscal measures, backed by structural policies, to address them.

The Macroeconomic Performance and Outlook report will be released in the first and third quarters of each year. It complements

the bank's existing annual African Economic Outlook report, which focuses on key emerging policy themes relevant to the continent's development.

The report shows that estimated average growth of real GDP in Africa slowed to 3.8% in 2022, from 4.8% in 2021 amid significant challenges following the Covid-19 shock and Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Despite the economic slowdown, 53 of Africa's 54 countries posted positive growth. All the five regions of the continent remain resilient

with a steady outlook for the medium-term.

However, the report sends a cautionary note on the outlook following current global and regional risks. These risks including soaring food and energy prices, tightening global financial conditions, and the associated increase in domestic debt service costs. Climate change—with its damaging impact on domestic food supply and the potential risk of policy reversal in countries holding elections in 2023—pose equally challenging

threats.

The report advocates bold policy actions at national, regional, and global scales to help African economies mitigate the compounding risks.

In remarks during the launch, African Development Bank Group President Dr Akinwumi Adesina said the release of the new report came at a time when African economies, faced with significant headwinds, were proving their resilience.

"With 54 countries at different

stages of growth, different economic structures, and diverse resource endowments, the pass-through effects of global shocks always differ by region and by country. Slowing global demand, tighter financial conditions, and disrupted supply chains therefore had differentiated impacts on African economies," he said. "Despite the confluence of multiple shocks, growth across all five African regions was positive in 2022—and the outlook for 2023-24 is projected to be stable."



NBC Bank Kahama Branch manager Simon Ntwale (L) briefs Vice President Dr Philip Mpango (R, in glasses) earlier this week on how the bank has been contributing to the implementation of the national standard gauge railway (SGR) project. This was at the launch of the execution of Phase Four (Tabora-Isaka stretch) of the project. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

VP launches Shinyanga regional referral hospital construction at Mwawaza village

By Guardian Reporter

VICE President Dr Philip Mpango has inaugurated construction of the Shinyanga Regional Referral Hospital at Mwawaza village in Negezi ward, a project that has so far spent 9.5bn/-.

Speaking to the hospital staff, civil servants and Shinyanga residents, the VP said that construction of the hospital is a continuation of government efforts to improve provision of health care and bring the services closer to the people.

Dr Mpango added that installation of modern medical equipment such as CT-Scan aims to reduce treatment costs as some patients were forced to seek the services at the Muhimbili National Hospital (MNH) in Dar es Salaam and Bugando Medical Centre (BMC) in Mwanza.

He urged the residents and hospital workers to ensure good care of the hospital buildings as well as the installed equipment. He said the government will disburse another 6bn/- to facilitate construction of a laboratory and women and children wards.

The VP highlighted that plans are underway for construction of a 5 kilometres road to tarmac level to facilitate transportation services for people going to the new health

care facility. He said the central government has already disbursed 7bn/- for the project.

He directed the Prevention and Combating of Corruption Bureau (PCCB) to closely monitor provision of services at hospitals to ensure fair treatment to all the patients. He said health workers should avoid asking for bribes from patients because they have the right to medical treatments.

Dr Mpango directed security organs to control drug theft at hospitals and health centres, calling upon Regional Medical Officers to ensure operationalisation of elder's windows at each of the hospitals.

The Vice President urged the Minerals ministry and the Ministry of State, Prime Minister's Office (Labour, Youth, Employment and Persons with Disability) to ensure that employers adhere to the available safety regulations especially at mines.

He urged the ministries to continue educating mine workers on the importance of using personal protective equipment (PPE) to protect themselves from dust, which is among the main causes of Tuberculosis (TB).

Health Deputy Minister, Dr Godwin Mollel said that installation of modern medical equipment has enabled the regional hospital to save 403m/- that were to be used to treat patients at other hospitals.

Job cuts in tech sector spread, Microsoft lays off 10,000

WASHINGTON DC

MICROSOFT is cutting 10,000 workers, almost 5% of its workforce, joining other tech companies that have scaled back their pandemic-era expansions.

The company said in a regulatory filing Wednesday that the layoffs were a response to "macroeconomic conditions and changing customer priorities."

The Redmond, Washington-based software giant said it will also be making changes to its hardware portfolio and consolidating its leased office locations.

Microsoft is cutting far fewer jobs than it had added during the COVID-19 pandemic as it responded to a boom in demand for its workplace software and cloud computing services with so many people working and studying from home.

"A big part of this is just over exuberance in hiring," said Joshua White, a finance professor at Vanderbilt University.

Microsoft's workforce expanded by about 36% in the two fiscal years following the emergence of the pandemic, growing from 163,000 workers at the end of June 2020, to 221,000 in June 2022.

The layoffs represent "less than 5 percent of our total employee base, with some notifications happening today," CEO Satya Nadella said in an email to employees.

"While we are eliminating roles in some areas, we will continue to hire in key strategic areas," Nadella said. He emphasized the importance of building a "new computer platform" using advances in artificial intelligence.

He said customers that were accelerating their spending on digital technology during the pandemic are now trying to "optimize their digital spend to do more with less."

"We're also seeing organizations in every industry and geography exercise caution as some parts of the world are in a recession and other parts are anticipating one," Na-

della wrote.

Other tech companies have also been trimming jobs amid concerns about an economic slowdown.

Amazon and business software maker Salesforce earlier this month announced major job cuts as they prune payrolls that rapidly expanded during the pandemic lockdown.

Amazon said that it will be cutting about 18,000 positions and began notifying affected employees Wednesday in the U.S., Canada and Costa Rica, with other regions to follow, according to emails from executives. The job cuts, which began in November, are the largest set of layoffs in the Seattle Company's history, although just a fraction of its 1.5 million global workforce.

Also Wednesday, the U.K.-based cybersecurity firm Sophos confirmed it had laid off 10% of its global workforce – 450 employees – on Tuesday. Sophos, known for threat intelligence and detection, was acquired

in 2020 by the private equity firm Thoma Bravo for \$3.9 billion.

Facebook parent Meta is laying off 11,000 people, about 13% of its workforce. And Elon Musk, the new Twitter CEO, has slashed the company's workforce.

Nadella made no direct mention of the layoffs on Wednesday when he put in an appearance at the World Economic Forum's annual meeting happening this week in Davos, Switzerland.

When asked by the forum's founder Klaus Schwab on what tech layoffs meant for the industry's business model, Nadella said companies that boomed during the COVID-19 pandemic are now seeing "normalization" of that demand.

"Quite frankly, we in the tech industry will also have to get efficient, right?" Nadella said. "It's not about everyone else doing more with less. We will have to do more with less. So we will have to show our own productivity gains with our own sort of

technology."

Microsoft declined to answer questions about where the layoffs and office closures would be concentrated. The company sent notice to Washington state employment officials Wednesday that it was cutting 878 workers at its offices in Redmond and the nearby cities of Bellevue and Issaquah.

As of June, it had 122,000 workers in the U.S. and 99,000 elsewhere.

White, the Vanderbilt professor, said all industries are looking to cut costs ahead of a possible recession but tech companies could be particularly sensitive to the rapid rise in interest rates, a tool that has been used aggressively in recent months by the Federal Reserve in its fight against inflation.

"This hits tech companies a little harder than it does industrials or consumer staples because a huge portion of Microsoft's value is on projects with cash flows that won't pay off for several years," he said.

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**Taking A New Look
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Local universities, global quality standards issue has mixed agenda

CONCERNS for the quality of education offered in the country, this with regard to higher learning institutions or universities in particular, are on the agenda again. The concern however was softened by the fact that it was two edged, as first the government demands that the quality of university education in the country equal that issued by foreign universities. This was the preliminary part of instructions to the new board of the Tanzania Commission for Universities (TCU) issued by the minister for Education, Science and Technology. The second, counterbalancing aspect was on substandard foreign universities.

While the board enterprises the work of strengthening supervision to attain the goal of being at par with the best of average high level higher learning institutions abroad, they would also seek to work on the other issue. The commission was tasked with forming a team of experts to verify the quality of awards issued by some foreign universities, with some notable queries being directed at haphazard issuance of doctorate qualifications. The committee will have to look at institutions issuing incompetent doctorate certifications, to list them clearly.

Obviously the more difficult task will be the local aspect, as measuring the quality of education isn't just what course are given (and these can be rectified or improved) but also whether those tasked with handling the courses are competent enough. If there is a problem in that regard, some of the complexity of the second assignment will feature in the first as well. If lecturers aren't competent enough, is it due to the universities where they conducted their post-graduate studies, or is it perhaps due to their own lack of effort? Is there a divide?

Still the whole idea of making university education here the same as

foreign universities will face problems of benchmarks, as foreign universities vastly differ from one another. Traditionally our education system was based on British standards, for instance Cambridge school leaving certificate exams were the benchmark for Anglophone post-colonial Africa until half a decade into independence when we came up with our own standards and moved to abrogate regional bodies tasked with supervising those standards, organizing exams, etc. So there is no framework at the moment for regional benchmarks, only external examiners.

The work of external examiners is like internal auditors, where they work within defined parameters, looking at internal consistency of what is brought before them, fully aware of the benchmarks of their employer. External auditors obey a different set of instructions and can look for more information while internal auditors will be contended with interviewing their peers, finance department officials. External examiners assist a university to assess itself and do not represent a statutory benchmark that the university is supposed to attain.

As a matter of fact, it is not equality with foreign universities which can actually provide a practical agenda for improving the quality of local universities, but employers at the local level. The trouble at this end is that often the problems are compounded by the graduate's weaknesses, as all graduates don't exhibit the same level of competence, thus the kind of solutions needed depend on the skills required rather than education generally. Perhaps modern tools like remedial training online, or in-class short courses can do when instructed by employers, as it is difficult to see how universities move to change standards overnight.

Posts body has clear openings in rising regional e-commerce

TELECOMMUNICATIONS is increasingly becoming the nerve centre of postal activities rather than its old preoccupation of moving things with addressed on their cover, and a postage stamp paid at the window. A substantial amount of commerce is being conducted by electronic means, and the posts know perfectly well that their future lies in how they adapt to this market. They also need to positively use their public sector credentials to a certain advantage, for dependability, while during the reform period this status was a disadvantage.

The reason was that the postal service newcomers were entrepreneurs offering cut price services while traditional posts were used to high state-based charges and levies, similarly reflecting plethoric staffing and often unreliable delivery records. Some of the negative factors have now shifted to the courier companies and other online shopping outfits, with some receiving money and delivering no goods. Starting to track them down becomes a problem, so it is possible those who wish to use such services regularly opt for the posts. Some of these issues were being discussed at a midweek meeting devoted to marking 43 years of the Pan African Postal Union (PAPU), an event held under the theme of using the post to promote cross-border e-commerce in Africa. Regulators and postal bodies, along with private sector stakeholders, examined the challenges e-commerce developers and users face in seeking to penetrate expanded global digital markets. There were no easy answers there.

The more acute shortfalls that the meeting examined are a poor technological backup, language capacities and licensing of operations. Chances that the language problem can be used by more countries learning to use Kiswahili as a business language are scant, so it is possible there will be fewer cross border e-commerce firms on this side of EAC borders or SADC, but those doing e-commerce will have better avenues. They will face less competition at the local level, as other operators may have to rely on those who are well connected, etc.

The Tanzania Communications Regulatory Authority (TCRA) briefed participants on how I was conducting a quarterly joint service quality evaluation, to ensure that Internet service providers (ISPs), telecommunications companies, broadcasting agencies and the entire communication sector across the country offer services at required quality levels. More significantly, broadband connection and speedier internet service quality is spreading all over the country. Mid last year, there was a debate on comparative internet costing for EA states, and during the budget some effort was done to diminish charges; the talk on quality is right.

It is even possible that the postal body is actually doing a good job in that direction, as some well positioned individuals made observations in that regard at the meeting. One was the PAPU secretary general who said that it was fascinating to see how the Tanzania Posts Corporation (TPC) was a shining example in post service delivery in the region.

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Zimbabwe underground water needs to be used less

By Special Correspondent

THAT Harare has the most stressed underground water supplies in the whole of SADC, and is the area in the region most likely to suffer something close to disaster as boreholes dry up, so reliant are many residents on wells and boreholes, will come as no surprise.

Almost since it was founded in 1890, almost 133 years ago, many city residents have been reliant on underground water, and those same 13 decades have seen determined and almost continuous attempts to drain and destroy the wetlands in the city, so recharging the small aquifers scattered around the city is made ever less likely.

Since the first piped municipal water supply, fed by the little Cleveland Dam in the headwaters of the Mukvisi, only arrived in 1913, and people were connected in phases, the first quarter century of the city saw almost all residents totally dependent on wells, mostly private although with public wells in Africa Unity Square and Market Square. And contamination of wells was recognised as a serious problem right then, just as contamination of aquifers is recognised as a serious problem to this day.

Those hundreds of wells across what is now the central business district and the Avenues, one in almost every occupied stand, have all gone.

They dried up and were filled in as a danger, but no one really panicked since the Cleveland Dam water, and later the water from the Prince Edward works at Seke Dam and then from Morton Jaffray at Lake Chivero filled the gap.

But the suburbs, even in the inner ring around the old township bounded by the railway line and Josiah Tongogara Avenue, were still reliant on wells for household water right up into the late 1940s. And those wells have now basically all gone, being dried up holes suitable for filling with rubbish, garden waste and anything else the standowner wanted to get rid of.

The sites occasional re-emerge when someone is redeveloping a stand and the builders suddenly hit a tube of rubble.

For a while the aquifers were under less pressure, but the arrival of water rationing in the late 1980s after a two year drought, and then the decreasing delivery of municipal water in the last two decades have seen a boom in boreholes.

There are a fair number of companies that make a decent working profit in Harare drilling boreholes, and the rigs can be seen everyday on the roads going to the next site. In theory, the city council has to approve a new well or borehole, and



the respectable borehole drillers go through the approval motions. It is not hard to get approval, the council mainly wanting to know where the things are, rather than having any interest in how much water they are pumping and what that water is being used for.

In a swathe of upper-income and middle-income suburbs most of the water goes on irrigating large gardens with lush lawns and plants. Gardens that were designed for temperate latitudes with rain in every month are the model for gardens in a city where almost all the rain falls over five months.

You see some of those with boreholes even having irrigation for their verges, and putting up those little notices that they have borehole water.

Admittedly there are also the factories, and even commercial complexes, that have drilled boreholes because they need a 24/7 water supply, and the city council cannot provide that, and there are flat complexes and complexes of cluster housing that have drilled so residents can have household water, since the council cannot supply.

The Government is busy drilling essential boreholes in high density suburbs in Harare Metropolitan, again to ensure that residents have a place where they can bring their drums and buckets and get the minimum amount of water for drinking, cooking and washing since again the council cannot supply.

But the amount of water spread over an acre or more of "English

garden" to keep it looking like something out of a British gardening magazine would provide the basic water supply for dozens of households, so even with Harare City Council's bad record of treating surface water and pumping it to residents, there is possibly enough for the vital purposes.

As the recent seminar on underground supplies in Harare revealed, the city is drying up. The water table everywhere is falling.

Drillers have to go ever deeper to find water, and almost all the old wells, and many of the older boreholes, are just dry tubes into the ground. Added to this is high levels of contamination of boreholes, let alone wells.

A lot of that comes from surface contamination, as one organisation has discovered by putting safety seals on boreholes, but a fair amount comes from underground sources.

Those same large gardens usually belong to people who use septic tanks, processing their own sewage in their backyard.

This is usually safe, although these days has been extended to far smaller plots that the original minimum of 4 000 square metres, and that opens up new avenues of contamination, as does the leaky sewers becoming more prevalent. Those hurling dangerous chemicals on the ground, or into pits, add extra contamination and risk.

An idea of how water can be used effectively comes from Namibia, where residents are fanatical about water conservation. Anyone travel-

ling though that central semi-arid urban belt, which includes the capital Windhoek, will look in vain for large lawns.

Gardens are small, even in the grand houses of the very rich, and are populated by succulents, scores of species, and other clever methods of getting a good looking garden with near zero irrigation. So it is possible. While one day Harare City Council might fix up its own piped water supply and restore the city to delivering continuous piped water, it is unlikely there will be enough for heavily irrigating large gardens, so a different garden culture is needed.

At the same time underground supplies will probably always be needed, although hopefully to supplement the piped supply rather than replace it, so we need to keep the aquifers.

We also need to make sure these are recharged, and that rainfall runoff sinks into the soil, rather than gushing to the streams and eroding roadsides.

This means we need to stop destroying wetlands, or even stripping them of vegetation, and allow them to perform one vital function of holding water that eventually sinks into the ground.

All this can use some Government action, but a lot of the missing council action needs to be put in place, not just to fix services but also to ensure that the underground water that remains is used sustainably, that is not faster than aquifers are recharged, and then allow these aquifers to recharge.

Know this: Helping someone to commit a crime is also criminal

By Telesphor Magobe

LAST week we briefly looked at extramarital affairs and their legal consequences and said they fall under the category of civil wrongs and not criminal offences and the damages awarded are meant to compensate the injured party and not to punish the wrongdoer.

We then said since sections 72 and 73 of the Law of Marriage Act (R.E. 2019) state that a married person is entitled to damages for adultery and for enticement respectively, it is good not to mess around with another person's spouse because doing so may end up in one compensating the aggrieved party several million shillings.

We took all this trouble to help laypersons understand some of the legal provisions they may be unfamiliar with to avoid unnecessary liability.

Today, I invite you to look at parties to criminal offences. When several people are gathered for any purpose, let's say peers or friends, they may talk about many things and may also agree or disagree on many things. While they talk, some may support what is being said or counselled and others may oppose it.

Sometimes people talk about how to handle or discipline their spouses or children and as you may be aware, there are those who are fond of internalising bad counsel and implement it or just decide to commit or participate in the commission of an offence or the omission, which constitutes an offence.

In the eyes of the law, if a person commits an offence and another person supports him or her or if a person is counselled to commit an offence or to omit from doing an act, whose omission is an offence, then both persons let's say X and Y shall be guilty of the offence.

So, it is important to understand well what the law we are subject to permits, prohibits or directs us to do because in this way we will be in a better position to decide what to



So, it is wiser to hold our views in case uttering them are deemed to have counselled or encouraged other people to commit offences.

do or not to do in any situation we find ourselves in.

Section 22 of the Penal Code (R.E. 2022) states that a person who commits an offence is taken to have committed and be guilty of it if - (a) the person does the act or makes the omission which constitutes the offence; (b) if what the person does or omits from doing, does it for the purpose of enabling or helping another person to commit the offence.

For instance, V may find two persons, W and Y, fighting and then V pretends he or she calms them down, but in fact in doing so he or she enables W to attack Y. In this case, V has helped W to attack Y and if W is found guilty of the offence and is convicted of it, then V too shall be liable for it.

The person is also taken to have committed and be guilty of the of-

sequences in all respects as a conviction of committing the offence."

Section 23 provides that when two or more persons form a common intention to prosecute an unlawful purpose and happen to fulfil it, then each of them is deemed to have committed that offence.

Section 24 provides that when a person counsels another person to commit an offence, which is then committed because of such counsel, then the person who counselled another person is deemed to have counselled the other person to commit the offence.

So, it is wiser to hold our views in case uttering them are deemed to have counselled or encouraged other people to commit offences.

In R v Mugisha s/o Katulebe and 5 others (Criminal Case No 126 of 2016), the High Court of Tanzania held that to make the doctrine of



Good laws alone won't bridge gender gaps, we need more awareness

By Carlos Banda

REFORMS such as the famous women's rights movement of 1848 to 1917 which envisaged today's right to vote plus other entitlements that followed reminds us that women are not supposed to be viewed as a fragile group in the society that should wait for a rescue by a knight in shining armor.

Changes in lifestyle in today's world propelled by changes brought forth by technology and massive interaction amongst societies across the globe demand that women have a stake in making history as leaders, pioneers, philanthropists, innovators, policy and decision-makers, business owners, land owners and so much more alongside men in the running of societies and nations.

"Women need a seat at the table, they need an invitation to be seated there, and in some cases, where this is not available, they need to create their own table. We need a global understanding that we cannot implement change effectively without women's political participation," said Meghan Markle, Duchess of Sussex.

The words of Markle clearly point to the relevance of having women being enabled, empowered and given a voice to bring light and progress alongside men as both parties need each other's contribution in ensuring global economic stability.

It is so much so in the developing countries like Tanzania which need radical reforms to allow women on the same table with men as part of the decision-making to bring change and progress that impacts the lives of men, women and children.

According to the 17th Economic Update by the World Bank entitled 'Empowering Women: Expanding Access To Assets and Economic Op-



portunities', shows that Tanzania's female labour force participation rate rose from 67 per cent in 2000 to 80 per cent in 2019, which is a record above 63 per cent in Sub-Saharan Africa and among the highest on the continent.

Despite the significance of such progress for women attributed to reforms aimed at empowering women, it is argued in some circles that female population still faces setbacks in accessing and controlling resources such as land, houses and financial services.

The bottlenecks are largely caused by a number of factors, one being cultural hegemony whereby the male is dominant over the female and secondly, the presence of unfriendly economic structures and bureaucracies in terms of procedures needed for women to have access and control of economic facilities.

Najma Hussein Abdallah Haji, the Executive Director of Zanzibar Women Chamber of Commerce and Member of the Generation Equality Forum Advisory Committee, argues

that women contribute significantly to the national economy considering the fact that the 2022 Housing and Population Census showed that Tanzania has a total of 31,687,990 women which is 51.3 per cent of the total population compared to men who stand at 30,053,130 or 48.7 per cent.

She says that women and youth who make up a large portion of the micro-economic sector achieve little or no progress in entrepreneurial activities due to the fact that the present structure financial services

and institutions do not provide a friendly environment for women to excel.

This includes access to loans and fiscal aid with restrictions which demand women to have collateral in terms of immovable assets like land, hence resulting in women's failure to access funds and services in order to expand their capital and businesses.

Haji also notes that in the cultural aspect, movements that are channeled in helping women economically have been viewed as a threat to male dominance. This, she argues, has led to misrepresentation and misinterpretation of what women's empowerment is all about, adding that even the use of the word 'gender' is associated with women alone while it is a reference to both sexes, male and female.

Thus, as a result, women in communities have been forced to remain home with no means to generate income but rather depend solely on their husbands as bread winners. In this formula, when a husband dies, the woman and her children become vulnerable and often lose inheritance to husbands' relatives and become financially crippled and in some cases homeless.

Hassan Hamisi Juma, Executive Director of the Association of Non-Government Organizations in Zanzibar (ANGOZA) says there are already initiatives including legal frameworks that are geared at helping women gain access to land ownership but notes that the problem is that most individual males and communities fail to accept this economic right for women.

"The fact that such laws and regulations that protect women's rights are not observed is a major hin-

drance to realizing gender equality and the reforms that intend to help more women have access to and control of resources," he said.

The 17th Economic Update by the World Bank shows that Tanzanian women continue to face serious constraints with regard to access to land, labour and productive assets. It indicates that 25 per cent of men are sole owners of land versus just 8 per cent of women while 7 per cent of women are sole homeowners compared to 26 per cent of men. Tanzania's rates of both landownership and homeownership are below the average for Sub-Saharan Africa due, largely, to low rates among women.

According to Juma, the most convenient solution apart from leaders acknowledging and implementing initiatives to address such challenges, educational reforms are also necessary to increase awareness on women's rights, empowerment and gender equality.

"Narrowing provision of such awareness on equality should begin in schools where a special topic on gender issues is taught and continued in terms of advancing understanding of the agenda along educational ladder from primary to university," he said.

"Having such awareness is paramount in having a future where disregard for gender rights is not a norm and a future where generational equality is a real life practice rather than an agenda spoken and understood by the minority."

In light of the ongoing debates and discussions on gender equality, it is important for us as a nation to understand that alleviating poverty is possible when all groups are involved in production, access and ownership of resources.

Today's proverb: "Zeal without knowledge is a running away horse."

The author is a lawyer based in Dar es Salaam. He can be reached at tmagobe@gmail.com

Malaysia's TVET ecosystem in dire need of all-of-society engagement

By Nadya Subramaniam and Fauwaz Abdul Aziz

TECHNICAL and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in Malaysia originated from the colonial and early post-colonial governments' need for trained and skilled manpower to run state agencies and projects.

Over the last few decades, the TVET system has shifted notably towards efforts to collaborate with industry players. The Ministries of Education, Higher Education and Human Resources have been the more recognised public faces in matters of TVET.

Up to 10 other ministries (Youth and Sports, Women, Family and Community Development, Agriculture and Food industries, Defence, Works, and Rural and Regional Development, among others) and as many as 20 government bodies have had their own TVET programmes operating independently and with different standards (for capacity planning, recruitment and training and curriculum development).

There are also sub-ministry bodies, such as the Rubber Industry Smallholders Development Authority (RISDA) and MARA. Hundreds of private TVET providers with little-known operations, performance and standards exist.

Although the National Occupational Skills Standard (NOSS) serves as the national curriculum for the recruitment and training of TVET instructors and trainees, some ministries operate independently and keep to their own standards. Some bodies operate in silos, while others compete with each other.

Masterplan lacking

Here, we see the entanglement of parallel, overlapping or even competing jurisdictions and standards, and the lack of one



TVET students from Tech Terrain College in Malaysia visited as part of The Asia Foundation's research work on improving technical and vocational education in the country. Credit: The Asia Foundation/ Whitney Legge

lead agency to champion and coordinate the national TVET agenda.

This results in a duplication of offerings, especially apparent in situations where public and private TVET institutes in close geographical proximity to each other compete for students. In one particular district in northern Malaysia that we visited, for example, one local TVET institution providing automotive courses complained of having to compete fiercely with several other local TVET training providers in close proximity to one another for students interested in acquiring the same skills certification.

The divergence caused by the multiplicity of stakeholders has led to differing preferences in employers. Some employers will hire based on the reputation of the TVET training provider (such as the Penang Skills Development Corporation, PSDC), while others prefer to hire skilled workers based on the accrediting body of the certification.

Other employers prefer TVET

graduates with certificates accredited by the Malaysian Qualifications Agency (MQA), which is under the Ministry of Higher Education, over those accredited by the Human Resources Ministry's DSD. An institute chairman reported to us that his institute saw a decrease in applicants after the Department of Public Services in charge of civil service employment withdrew recognition of a particular DSD certification.

Currently, important political actors - state governments, district and municipal/town councils and economic programmes such as the five Regional Economic Corridors, have yet to clearly and systematically integrate and engage in projects to develop national TVET.

Clearly, too many organisations involved in the management of TVET have led to confusion, lack of clarity, weak enforcement and needless duplications, thereby exacerbating the already poor image of TVET among the key stakeholders (namely, industry, parents, stu-

dent and the community at large).

The Human Resources Ministry's Department of Skills Development (DSD) regularly engages with the industry to gain their input. The Sistem Latihan Dual Nasional (National Dual Training System, SLDN) was established to increase collaboration with industry and provide work-ready TVET graduates.

In fact, several small, private TVET institutes - often with an industry parent or partner organisations - do provide skilled workers who meet industry needs, thus ensuring their students' employability.

Large-scale collaborations with industry have shown some success; the Malaysian Plastics Manufacturers Association (MPMA) collaborated with the Economic Planning Unit (EPU) in 2012 and 2017 for talent development in the plastics industry, using both local and international expertise. Based on a recent Auditor General's Report, current employer satisfaction with TVET graduates' outcomes is at 88.5% per cent.

Solving the Conundrum

However, a common point raised by our interlocutors is that industry players are seldom, inadequately and unsystematically engaged in the development of TVET programmes. Industry players, on the other hand, say they do not see clear returns on their investment when they collaborate with ministries and other stakeholders on TVET. They are especially wary about the complicated bureaucracy involved.

A survey found that more than one-fifth of 507 locally based companies said they either would not allow trainees from the SLDN programme to perform on-site operations side-by-side with their employees (17.8 per cent) or were not sure if they would allow the trainees to do so (10.2 per cent).

An overwhelming majority of the companies (82.2 per cent) said they would not participate in the SLDN programme, while 13.4 per cent said they were not sure. Only 4.4% said

they would.

The lack of adequate collaboration has led to a mismatch of skills for the needs of the industry. Now, employers have to spend time and resources retraining their fresh hires, leading to their unwillingness to offer high salaries to fresh TVET graduates. It frustrates existing trainees and deters many others from joining TVET programmes because, at the end of the day, they might not even be hired.

Despite the positive commitment and various initiatives and developments, TVET in Malaysia is still plagued by the lack of synergies, efficiencies and shared aspirations among its key players and stakeholders. However, we believe there is a way out of the woods.

Most generally, an overall improved audit of the TVET system, covering all ministries and the governance system, needs to be done. The institutional framework should then be rationalised to focus on skills development efforts that align with national socio-economic priorities. That said, strategic collaboration across ministries and industry support must be improved.

There is also a need for shared responsibility and more autonomy among states and district and local authorities, as well as for greater engagement with the regional economic corridors. A whole-of-government as well as a whole-of-society approach should be adopted for forging partnerships and strengthening the TVET system. To this end, increased inter-ministry data sharing would be important to support effective decision-making.

As for the role of industry in TVET, it is a consensus among many observers and stakeholders that TVET needs to become industry-driven. The industry should be accorded a prominent role in steering the national TVET agenda, instead of merely being invited to collaborate.

TVET institutions, meanwhile, should be empowered and incentivised to engage with their stakeholders, especially industry partners, expand partnerships with the industry beyond student internships and curriculum development, and inculcate innovative learning through student mentorship, project-based learning and guest lectures.

Pakistan's 10-billion-dollar flood funding questioned

By Zafeen Ebrahim

TERMING the recent international donors' conference held in Geneva a "success" after Pakistan was able to secure 10 billion US dollars, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has promised "every penny" of the pledges will be used towards rehabilitation of flood-hit people.

"It's looking for an opportunity to take credit for something to try to win back some goodwill," said Michael Kugelman, director of the Wilson Centre's South Asia Institute, who found the self-congratulatory messaging purely "political" of a government, which he said, was "weak, unpopular and struggling to rein in a cascading economic crisis".

Still, he agreed, the Sharif government deserved credit for shoring up so much support in an "era of donor fatigue and global economic stress".

But in his own country, Sharif's words have met with much wariness.

Janib Gul Mohammad, a farmer from Fateh Ali Buledi village in Kamber Shahdadkot, one of the worst affected districts in Sindh province, doubted he would even "get a rupee out of the billions of dollars" received on his behalf.

"Our rulers are clueless about how hungry our kids are," said Mohammad, whose family has had to ration and reduce their consumption of roti (flat bread) from "two to three to just one at every meal". He and his family of 13 are among the more than 33 million Pakistanis affected by last year's unprecedented floods caused by record monsoon rains and the melting of glaciers that killed more than 1700.

Seven months since the rains began, thousands continue to live in open areas, tents, and makeshift homes in Sindh and Balochistan, the two worst-hit provinces stalked by a cold spell, disease and food shortages making life even more perilous. According to the UN, an estimated 5 million people remain exposed to or living close to flooded areas. A post-disaster needs assessment (PDNA) has estimated the damage exceeded 30 bn USD - a tenth of Pakistan's entire GDP.

The moot, attended by officials in Geneva on January 9, was from over 40 countries and included private donors and international financial institutions.

The top donors like the Islamic Development Bank pledged 4.2bn USD; the World Bank 2bn USD; the Asian Development Bank 1.5bn USD; the European Union 93million USD; Germany 90m USD; China 100m USD; Japan 77m USD; the United States announced another 100m USD on top of a similar amount already committed to Pakistan and Saudi Arabia 1 bn USD. In addition, Qatar pledged 25m USD, Canada 18.6m USD, Denmark 3.8m USD, France 386.5m USD, Italy 24m USD and Azerbaijan 2m USD had promised these funds over the next three years.

Reminding that pledges were not commitments, Kashmala Kakakhel, a climate finance expert, said she would like to get a clear distinction between the new money and one that is rebottled to address the impact of floods but doubted the government will "ever tell".

Although the multilateral funders have been relatively generous, Kugelman said it could be stemming from, in part, "a desire to support the emerging global norm

of climate justice". But, by "only offering pledges, not actual aid, they have given themselves a safety net and a possible way out in case they decide they are not ready to commit to such large figures," he said,

The pledges made by bilateral donors may seem smaller, said Kugelman, but this could be because they had helped earlier on. Giving the example of the United States, he said it made one of the smaller pledges at the donor's conference but was one of the most generous bilateral donors since the floods struck.

However, of the 10bn USD pledges, 8.7 billion are loans that the government has "conveniently underplayed", said Wilson Centre's expert. And these may take several years to arrive, he added.

Ashfaq Soomro, heading the Research and Development Foundation, a Sindh-based nongovernmental organization which had been at the forefront of assisting flood-affected communities, is not sure if getting more loans is a good idea at all. In this critical time of economic crunch, he said, the government should have "built a strong case for climate justice" to get grants instead.

"I am very concerned that the government is not only forcing us further into a debt trap but risks defaulting on repayment." According to the former finance minister Miftah Ismail, Pakistan owes the world nearly 100 billion USD and has to repay 21bn USD to lenders during the current fiscal year. "We have no resources to repay our lenders. We will just have to try to borrow from one creditor to pay off another," he wrote in Dawn.

Nevertheless, Soomro said, when



A father and son remove their belongings from their flooded home in Taluka, Shujabad, District Mirpurkhas. Credit: RDF

the funds do arrive, maximum effort should be made for them to go into livelihood recovery and economic revival - like rehabilitating agricultural land and subsidizing agricultural inputs. This, he said, will generate employment and avert a looming food crisis. At the same time, Soomro said, the aid agencies should ensure their money is spent wisely and smartly to reduce climate disasters.

Kakakhel said she was struck by the finance minister's statement that to turn pledges into an inflow of money, Pakistan needs to quickly prepare project feasibilities. "Why have an emergency donor conference at all if you are treading the same old traditional path of seeking loans?" she asked.

She further added that, "if 90 percent of the pledges are to be projected anyway, that means the additional cost associated with climate resilience will also need to be built into the project budgets, inflating the loan amounts. Whether

that will actually happen or not is anybody's guess."

But even if pledges become commitments, Ali Tauqeer Sheikh, a climate expert, was not sure if Pakistan would be able to put all of it to use, given its "track record on delayed implementation of development projects". Pakistan, he pointed out, was littered with "more than 1,200 unfinished projects worth Rs1.6 trillion [6.67 billion USD]".

That is why, said Dr Fahad Saeed, a climate scientist, the government must come up with not only "well planned but out-of-the-box solutions, and quickly". He suggested investing in models that streamlined philanthropy and involved the private sector and even start-ups. Decisions made today, he said, needed to be backed by research and science. "Drafting policies inside power corridors or in five-star hotels will not get the desired results; we need to go out, collect evidence and come up with robust

solutions to battle climate change."

Getting down to brass tacks, Lieutenant-General Nadeem Ahmed, former deputy chairman of the Earthquake Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Authority (ERRA), shared a formula that he said would be a sure-shot success if followed through. "All infrastructural projects may be handled through relevant lines departments whereas the more people-centred recovery programmes can be undertaken by a dedicated special management unit in the province with full autonomy so that it can bypass laborious bureaucratic processes, procedures, and approvals.

"Both systems need to be interactive and coordinate with each other for the sequencing and prioritisation of their respective project domains to ensure one is not causing harm to the other," said the retired army officer, who was also a former chairman of the National Disaster Management Authority.

IPS UN Bureau Report

Recycling firm launches digital platform for collecting 'dead' car batteries in Dar

By Guardian Reporter and Agencies

A Tanzanian recycling firm has launched a digital platform for collecting dead car batteries for recycling, saving the environment and humanity from harm.

"Most of the dead batteries remain in backyards of houses with people not knowing what to do with them," said Allen Kimambo, the chief executive officer and founder of Zaidi Recyclers, a digitally driven social innovative and incentive enterprise that enhances circular economy transition in Tanzania.

"Don't get frustrated anymore when you have a dead car battery," Kimambo said recently shortly before his company launched the new service called NiBOOST with Zaidi App.

"The campaign is part of the new digital platform called Zaidi App in the city of Dar es Salaam, he said, adding that his company saw this as an opportunity to launch a digital platform where users of batteries at their convenience in places like offices or homes can just request dead car batteries collection and earn money.

"You go through the Zaidi App and can request NiBOOST services through WhatsApp, SMS or you can call. Once we get your call we come to you very quickly

and you're covered," he said, noting that if one needs a new battery, the company guarantees the client to be supplied with a new and genuine battery.

Kimambo said the service is currently running in Dar es Salaam before it spreads to other major cities in the country such as Mwanza and Arusha.

He said Zaidi Recyclers is looking for partners to scale up this campaign, disclosing that the company has a partner in Zambia that has shown interest in doing what Zaidi Recyclers is doing.

According to Kimambo, most of the dead batteries are just dumped haphazardly, harming the environment and human beings instead of being delivered to proper recycling companies.

"Most People do not have the awareness of where to dispose of dead car batteries," he said, explaining that the NiBOOST with Zaidi App campaign also works to create awareness of the seriousness of the dead car batteries in Tanzania.

With the collected batteries, Zaidi Recyclers has an agreement with professional recycling companies in Tanzania that collect the dead car batteries for recycling without harming the environment and the people.

Kimambo, a chemical and processing engineer by profession, said unsafe, informal lead battery recycling and handling



Allen Kimambo, the chief executive officer and founder of 'Zaidi Recyclers,' displays the digital platform for used car batteries for recycling.

can cause serious illness and even death as it causes lead contamination which ends up in surrounding soil and groundwater. Without ap-

propriate awareness on this matter, these challenges can cause serious contamination issues to both humans and the environment, he

said.

"When handled with the appropriate expertise, dead car batteries can be safely recycled to prevent

these challenges and to encourage a circular economy approach to all material types. The plastic, lead and other parts of a car battery can be dismantled and used for other purposes, or disposed of safely," said the CEO of Zaidi Recyclers which he founded in 2016.

On the Zaidi App, there are several solutions for other waste streams, including electronic and electric devices, car batteries, paper and toner cartridge waste, and it plans to have a garbage fee payment service in the near future.

"You can also exchange your dead battery for a new one and enjoy a quick boosting service when you're stuck anywhere in the city," he said.

Kimambo said solid waste generation has been steadily increasing in Dar es Salaam, noting that the Dar es Salaam City Council estimates that the city of Dar es Salaam could be generating more than 12,000 metric tons of solid waste per day by 2025.

He also said the global demand for electronic devices is exponentially growing, therefore increasing the waste generated from using these devices.

"E-waste pollutes soil and water once discarded in an inappropriate manner, but can also cause damage to human health and wellbeing including respiratory issues, oxidative stress, DNA damage and possibly causes various cancers," said the chemical and processing engineer.

China, UN hold year of rabbit exhibition in Ethiopian capital

ADDIS ABABA

WITH distinctive Chinese New Year songs and cultural performances along with aromatic Chinese tea and cuisines, a special ceremony, held Tuesday at the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa in Addis Ababa, the capital of Ethiopia, marked the approaching Chinese Lunar New Year.

With the Year of the Rabbit right around the corner, the event marked the start of an exhibition featuring Chinese art performances, history, and cuisines, which runs through Jan. 24, inside the premises of the UNECA.

Hosted by the Chinese Mission to the African Union and the UNECA, the exhibition brought together members of the diplomatic community from China and other African countries, and the UN family in Ethiopia, among others.

Chief of Staff at the UNECA Sweta Saxena said during the opening event that the ever-growing cultural exchange activities between China and Africa foster socioeconomic ties between the two sides.

Chief of Staff at the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) Sweta Saxena speaks during an opening event of the exhibition themed Happy Chinese New Year and an Extraordinary Decade of China in the New Era, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on Jan. 17, 2023. (Xinhua/Michael Tewelde)

"In Chinese culture, rabbit is a symbol of longevity, peace, and prosperity," she said. "I hope it will usher us into an era of a long friendship between China and Africa that brings peace and prosperity."

Saxena said exchanges between China and Africa have expanded and deepened in culture, media and communication, science and technology, think-thanks, and facilitated dialogues among youth and women. Rakeb Million, one of the visitors, said she was deeply enchanted by the performances.

"Personally, it is my first-ever experience celebrating the Chinese New Year and I feel very happy to be here. I have seen different cultural practices today and I really like all their cultural activities, especially tea making ceremony -- very neat, simple, and exquisite," she said. "What amazed me the most is their sense of togetherness and closeness. They (Chinese people) look very beautiful as they celebrate the New Year together."

The exhibition, in particular, created synergy between Chinese and African cultures as students from the Confucius Institute at Addis Ababa University (AAU) presented a combination of both Chinese and African cultural performances and dances.

Heran Adane, a Chinese language student at the AAU Confucius Institute, was one of the performers at the event.

"Today, we have presented different performances, which include singing Chinese songs, performing Ethiopian cultural dances and songs, martial arts, and other different activities," she said. "The Chinese New Year is such a unique event and we are enjoying it."

Hu Changchun, head of the Chinese Mission to the AU, said the Year of the Rabbit will bring warmth, peace, happiness and hope to the people of Africa, China and beyond.

"In the new year, the Chinese side stands ready to work with the UNECA, all African friends and partners to make positive contributions to building an even closer community with a shared future for China and Africa," he said.

The Year of the Rabbit falls on Sunday Jan 22, this year.



By Guardian Reporter

THE Ashden organisation has announced eight entries for the 2023 Ashden Awards for African organisations.

The awards will supercharge climate innovation creating a fairer future and widening access to clean energy.

Ashden head of awards Stephen Hall said they are keen to reward innovation that puts the power in the hands of communities and supports the most marginalised and disadvantaged.

"Africa is home to extraordinary innovation, and also many communities most threatened by climate change. With leaders elsewhere dragging their feet on climate action, it's no surprise people in Africa are forging ahead with homegrown solutions," Hall said.

"We promise to do all we can to raise the profile of our winners on the global stage and connect them with opportunities for funding and investment. So if you're a trailblazer creating a fairer zero carbon future, or you know someone who is, please

Ashden announces entries for African organisations

spread the word or apply to the 2023 Ashden Awards."

The awards are seeking trailblazing, empowering initiatives in low-income countries and the UK.

There are five awards open to African organisations, with one focused on solutions from the continent.

The awards include the Ashden Award for Integrated Energy Africa, Ashden Award for Energising Agriculture, Ashden Award for Natural Climate Solutions and Ashden Award for Skills Powering Energy Access. Ashden Award for Energising Refugees and Displaced People.

Applications opened on January 18 and will close on March 8 with winners announced after a rigorous judging process.

The entry is free and winners receive a grant of up to £25,000,

and connection to new funders, investors and partners.

Four of the five international awards will boost efforts to widen access to clean energy.

These include awards for organisations supporting smallholder farmers by energising agriculture, helping refugees and displaced people boost their incomes through clean energy, and giving people the skills and opportunities to enter the clean energy workforce.

Another award purely focused on Africa, is for solutions in integrated energy, work that connects diverse on and off-grid systems for clean energy to be accessible and affordable for everyone.

A final international award is for natural climate solutions.

This recognises work strengthening the incomes, well-being

and security of Indigenous peoples and local communities allowing them to act as guardians and restorers of their land.

The recent Ashden Awards winners include YICE Uganda, an organisation that empowers marginalised people to carry out climate-friendly Agriculture and Kakuma Ventures, which brings jobs and internet access to refugee camp residents in Kenya.

Organisations should visit the Ashden website to find application forms, detailed descriptions of each award, the award process and award criteria.

The winning innovation will tackle inequality, causes and effects of global heating.

More than 200 businesses, charities and public sector projects have been boosted by an Ashden Award since the prizes were launched in 2005.

Anti-vax appeal-court asked to stop South Africa's Covid-19 vaccination



By Estelle Ellis

THE Covid Care Alliance, Transformative Health Justice and a non-profit organisation called Free the Children - Save the Nation have asked the Pretoria High Court to halt the government's efforts to vaccinate South Africans against Covid.

Respondents in the case are President Cyril Ramaphosa, Health Minister Joe Phaahla, the director-general of the Department of Health, the South African Health Products Regulatory

A worker monitors the Johnson & Johnson Covid-19 vaccine production line in Gqeberha on 25 October 2021. (Photo: Waldo Swiegers / Bloomberg via Getty

Authority and National Treasury.

The attorney for the applicants, Riekie Erasmus, said on Tuesday that the case has been referred to the deputy judge president to assign the matter.

The case is being brought in two parts. The first is an urgent interdict, while the second is an application for a court-ordered investigation into the vaccination process, side-effects and possible deaths.

According to papers before the court, the applicants want the government to stop the approval, pro-

urement, promotion, advertising, encouragement, mandating, distribution, administration and funding of the Covid-19 vaccine in all public and private health facilities.

The applicants also want an order to prevent the government from saying that the Covid vaccine is effective in any way, and to stop all efforts to encourage people to get vaccinated against the virus.

The court will also be asked to order that no Covid vaccines be given to anybody and that all vaccination stations be closed.

In addition, the urgent application seeks to stop the distribution and procurement of vaccines, further approval of paediatric Covid-19 vaccines or emergency vaccines.

The court is also asked to order the government to make a public announcement detailing the procedure to be followed by people who have suffered vaccine-related adverse events.

The second part of the application, which will be heard at later date, asks for an order in the following terms:

An investigation into the medical and scientific safety and efficacy of Covid-19 vaccines being administered in South Africa;

The provision of 50 vials of the Pfizer, Moderna, and Johnson & Johnson vaccines to the applicants;

The provision of 20 PCR tests from different batches to the applicants;

They also ask the court to appoint experts, at the government's cost, to analyse these - with the experts being decided on by the applicants; and

The court is asked to order both the government and the applicants to find five people willing to be vaccinated for the first time, and to submit blood samples.

The applicants want an investigation into medical conditions that some people reportedly developed after receiving the Covid-19 vaccine, and into the deaths of people who died after being vaccinated, and the "appearance of unexplained foreign-looking substances in the blood of vaccinated people in South Africa".

They also ask for information on cases of myocarditis and a rare blood clotting disorder triggered by the vaccine, and if "spike proteins" are passed on from vaccinated people to the unvaccinated.

The applicants want information on the administration of the Vaccine Injury Compensation Scheme in South Africa.

Furthermore, the court was asked to provide access to all agreements concluded with any of the manufacturers of Covid-19 vaccines, and if any incentives were paid.

The case comes while the government has renewed its efforts to vaccinate South Africans against Covid after the highly transmissible XBB.1.5 subvariant was identified in a sample from the country. **DM/MC**

By Busani Bafana

AFRICAN countries, many reeling under high debt and experiencing economic recession, could benefit from the reallocation of Special Drawing Rights (SDR), financial instruments of the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

SDRs are interest-bearing units of accounts created by the IMF in 1969 to increase the official reserves of member countries. External shocks that have hit the world in the last two years have reversed socioeconomic gains and efforts to protect vulnerable communities in Africa, says Adam Elhiraika, Director of the Macroeconomics and Governance Division at the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA).

Normally, many African countries would get concessional finance, borrow money from the markets or mobilise it domestically - all options the global pandemic has compromised.

The ECA, in collaboration with African ministries, is advocating for the issuance of new SDRs and the re-allocation of existing SDRs to countries most in need.

"We need to reform the G20 Common Framework to make access to international financial markets and debt restructuring effective and inclusive," Elhiraika told IPS in an interview.

He added that: "Africa would benefit from having a permanent seat at the G20 through its African Union, just as European Union and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) are represented. This will bring the voice of more than one billion people into the G20 processes, including discussions around debt restructuring and inequality of the SDR quota system."

To date, nearly USD 1 trillion US dollars has been allocated by the IMF, including USD 456 billion and SDR equivalent to USD 650 billion, approved in August 2021 to help low and middle-income countries cope with the impact of COVID-19.



Adam Elhiraika, Director for the Macroeconomics and Governance Division at the Economic Commission for Africa. Credit: Daniel Getachew

Africa wants IMF special drawing rights re-allocated to finance its development

According to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), African countries need more than 200 billion USD to counter the socioeconomic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Excerpts:

IPS: Why is it necessary to reallocate SDRs, and how would this reallocation benefit African countries?

AE: SDR is a supplementary reserve asset which the Board of the IMF unconditionally allocates

to all or part of its membership when it determines that there is a need to boost global liquidity. Allocations are based on economic size hence poorer countries receive less than rich countries. For instance, Africa collectively received 5.1 percent of the recent SDR650 allocation. Consequently, while the SDR allocation provided very welcome liquidity to African countries to cope with the pandemic crisis, the considerable financing needs associated with the pandemic and the overlapping crises currently facing Africa (including the climate, food, and

energy crises) mean that Africa needs more than its current allocation.

The recent SDR allocation has mostly been used by African countries to bridge their post-COVID liquidity challenges. More specifically, most countries in Sub-Saharan Africa allocated part of their SDR holdings to address their pandemic response or social spending needs. At least 41 Sub-Saharan countries made use of SDRs for various public spending, including vaccine procurement and pandemic relief, ration cards, welfare payments, wages,

and budget support.

Further, the median SDR utilization rates of G7 countries are about 5.9 percent, which means that G7 members alone could potentially reallocate \$266 billion of SDRs to vulnerable countries. So, recycling/reallocations of the unused SDRs from countries with strong external positions, such as G7 and G20, could provide much-needed and affordable resources to vulnerable African countries.

Already, African countries are constrained by high debt, is tapping SDRs a viable route to affordable financing for economic

development and SDGs?

SDR reallocations are made by countries that choose to make their own SDRs available to other countries that need them by lending them to an institution like the IMF. Tapping into SDRs is one of the options for improving Africa's access to affordable external finance.

African ministers have been advocating for an acceleration of the implementation of SDR re-allocation mechanisms aligned with the needs of African economies. This includes considering channelling unused SDRs by G20 through regional banks, such as the African Development Banks, to support the development financing of Africa. Since the interest rates associated with SDR lending are much lower than prevailing market rates, on-lending SDRs via market mechanisms can lower the cost of borrowing and leverage critical investments in countries with market access.

IPS: The ECA has advocated for the reform of the IMF and Global Financial Architecture; why and what benefits would this reform have for African countries in need of development finance?

AE: Recent global shocks, including the COVID-19 pandemic and the recent war in Ukraine, have exacerbated the already constrained Africa's fiscal space. While Africa has benefited from bilateral and multilateral support, particularly during the pandemic, the global financing architecture is still grossly inadequate for low-income countries and Africa.

In consultation with African finance ministries and others, the High-Level Working Group is working to identify structural challenges within the Global Financial Architecture impacting African economies. Furthermore, it also working to advance near and long-term policy recommendations for the IMF's consideration which proposes a new working agenda for the IMF to better respond to the challenges Africa faces in the current global financial architecture.

IPS UN Bureau Report

BUSINESS

ILO organises knowledge sharing forum in Zanzibar

By Guardian Reporter

The International Labour Organization (ILO) through the Better Regional Migration Management (BRMM) programme is organising its first high level labour migration advisory group (LMAG) knowledge sharing forum in Zanzibar.

Ministers, permanent secretaries and directors general from the Ministry of Labour and National Statistics Offices as well as employers and workers organisation and private employment agencies leadership from seven countries in East Africa will come together from 24 to 25 January, to share their experience and learn from each other on how to improve labour migration governance in the region.

According to a statement issued by ILO, the Forum will also offer an opportunity to take stock of the progress made under BRMM I and zoom on the needs of ILO's constituents and agree on the building blocks of BRMM II, including its management structure.

Migration in the East and Horn of Africa is a multifaceted and complex phenomenon.

"It has always been part of its socioeconomic landscape. The flow of people into, between, and out of the countries in the region is best described as mixed migration flows, which include refugees, asylum seekers, and migrant workers," says ILO.

"Lack of economic prospects, environmental change, protracted conflicts, and political and communal violence are the primary drivers of migration, resulting in the displacement of millions."

East and Horn of Africa region is also a major destination for migrants from Africa and other regions.

"As a result, this flow has put a

strain on the region's governments, who are struggling to manage the large number of migrants crossing their borders and moving through their countries," ILO says.

"The men, women, and children that make up these migrant flows often use unsafe modes of transportation and smuggling networks during their journey, exposing themselves to injury, assault, detention, exploitation, and abuse."

To overcome some of these challenges and improve labour migration governance in the East and Horn of Africa, ILO say is implementing the Better Regional Migration Management Programme funded by the United Kingdom Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office from September 2021 to March 2025.

The BRMM programme aims at strengthening the capacities of countries in East and Horn of Africa (Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Uganda, and Tanzania) to govern labour migration by using evidence-based policies, enhancing migrant workers' qualifications and skills, and actively engaging social partners.

The Labour Migration Advisory Group (LMAG) will guide the work of the BRMM and other ILO labour migration projects and programmes in the region.

The LMAG will also serve as a knowledge-sharing, cooperation, as well as capacity-building platform for countries to share expertise and experiences on labour migration governance in order to add value to regional labour migration efforts.

"The International community must do better to ensure the world's 169 million migrant workers are able to realize their basic human and labour rights," says ILO Director-General, Gilbert F. Houngbo, on International Migrants Day, 2022.



The headquarters of the International Labour Organization.



Habib African Bank registers 2.5bn/- net profit during 2022

By Guardian Reporter

HABIB African Bank recorded a cumulative annual net income after income tax of 2.5bn/- last year, an increase of nearly 30 percent to 1.9bn/- recorded during the year 2021.

Cumulative basic earnings per share also increased to 974/- last year from 737/- in 2021, according to unaudited financial statements for the fourth quarter of last year.

The statements show that the increase of net profit resulted into an increase of cumulative operating income which grew to 4.1bn/- last year from 2.7bn/- in

2021.

However, on quarterly basis, operating income slowed to 204mn/- during the fourth quarter of last year from 1.2bn/- during similar quarter of 2021, which resulted into a loss of 489mn/- in Q4, 2022 from a profit of 1.1bn/- during similar quarter of 2021.

According to the statements cumulative net interest income increased to 10.4bn/- last year from 8.3bn/- in 2021 while on quarterly basis, net interest income went up to 2.7bn/- from 2.2bn/- recorded during comparative quarter of previous year.

Cumulative non-interest income slightly increased to 4.8bn/- last year from 4.7bn/- recorded during comparative year while on quarterly basis, non-interest income slightly slowed to 1.2bn/- in the fourth quarter of last year from 1.4bn/- in Q4, 2021.

The bank's net asset reached 304bn/- during the last quarter of last year from 306bn/- during the third quarter while total liabilities slowed to 262.6bn/- from 263.5bn/- respectively.

According to the statements, loans, advances and overdrafts went up to 170.9bn/- during the third quarter from 168bn/-

during the third quarter of last year while customer liability on acceptances reached 11.5bn/- from 10bn/- respectively.

The bank reduced its investment in government debt instruments to 62.5bn/- during the fourth quarter of last year from 65.3bn/- during the third quarter while balance with Bank of Tanzania (BoT) slowed to 22.2bn/- from 25bn/- respectively.

Customer deposits amounted 238bn/- during the fourth quarter from 239bn/- during the third quarter while special deposits was 4.7bn/- against 6bn/- respectively.

Oil prices set for second week of gains

SINGAPORE

Oil prices were set to post a second straight weekly gain on Friday, spurred largely by brightening economic prospects for China which should boost fuel demand in the world's second-biggest economy.

Brent futures for March delivery gained 26 cents, or 0.3%, to \$86.42 a barrel by 0655 GMT, while U.S. crude advanced 43 cents to \$80.76 per barrel, a 0.5% gain.

Both closed 1% higher on Thursday, near their highest closing levels since Dec. 1.

Chinese November oil demand climbed to the highest level since February, data from the Joint Organisations Data Initiative showed on Thursday.

OPEC said on Tuesday that Chinese oil demand would rebound this year due to relaxation of the country's COVID-19 curbs and drive global growth.

Oil prices were also supported by hopes that the U.S. central bank will soon end its tightening cycle.

Federal Reserve Bank of New York President John Williams said on Thursday the U.S. central bank is seeing signs of inflationary pressures cooling off from torrid levels.



"The two largest economies in the world are needing more crude. The oil market has been down on global recession fears, but it still is showing signs it can remain tight a little while longer," said Edward Moya, senior market analyst at OANDA.

Also extending support to prices was a weaker dollar index, which was headed for a second consecutive weekly decline. A weaker dollar makes crude,

priced in the currency, cheaper for foreign buyers.

"Oil traders are potentially buying the dip now, amid optimism around China and the United States," said Tina Teng, analyst at CMC Markets.

According to most economists in a Reuters poll, the Fed will end its tightening cycle after a 25 basis point hike at each of its next two policy meetings, and then likely hold interest rates

steady for at least the rest of the year.

A number of other Fed officials have expressed support for a downshift in the pace of rate rises.

A rebound in Chinese economy and the Russian oil industry's struggles under sanctions could tighten energy markets in 2023, International Energy Agency (IEA) head Fatih Birol said on Thursday.

BancABC cuts cumulative losses by nearly 60 percent

By Guardian Reporter

BancABC Tanzania has managed to cut its cumulative annual losses after income tax to 3.7bn/- last year from 9.5bn/- recorded during 2021, the bank's unaudited financial statements for the fourth quarter of 2022 has shown.

On quarterly basis, net loss after income tax also slowed to 2.3bn/- during the fourth quarter of last year from 3.6bn/- recorded during similar quarter in 2021.

According to the statement, yearly cumulative net interest income grew to 21bn/- last year from 20.2bn/- while non-interest income nearly doubled to

8.9bn/- from 4.7bn/- respectively.

The growth of non-interest income resulted into strong growth of cumulative other operating income which grew to 6.8bn/- last year from 2.2bn/- in 2021. On quarterly basis, other operating income jumped to 2.4bn/- during Q4, 2022 from 522mn/- recorded during the last quarter of 2021.

Number of employees also increased by 10 to 177 last year from 167 recorded in 2021, with number of branches remained six. Total shareholders fund remained flat at 25bn/-.

According to the statement, the bank's total assets increased slightly to 329.2bn/-

during the fourth quarter of last year from 324bn/- during the third quarter due to increase in loans, advances and overdraft, other assets, interbank loan receivables, investment in government securities.

Investment in government securities amounted to 43.9bn/- during the fourth quarter of last year from 40bn/- during third quarter while interbank loan receivables jumped to 100bn/- from 98.5bn/- respectively.

Loans, advances and overdrafts amounted to 129bn/- during the fourth quarter from 128bn/- during the third quarter while other assets slightly gained to 29.4bn/- from 28bn/-

respectively.

Deposits from other banks and financial institutions increased to 69.8bn/- during the fourth quarter of last year from 67.3bn/- during the third quarter while customer deposits slightly slowed to 138bn/- from 139bn/- respectively.

In September last year, the bank which is part of Atlas Mara, launched a customer drive deposit campaign where customers will get up to 11 percent interest up-front for one year, on structured fixed deposit accounts.

The statements show borrowing slightly went up to 91.8bn/- from 90.8bn/- respectively.



East Africa economic growth slower to 4.2 pc in 2022, according to AfDB

By Guardian Reporter

EAST Africa economic growth slowed to 4.2 percent last year from 5.1 percent in 2021, the African Development Bank (AfDB) Group said in Africa's Macroeconomic Performance and Outlook report, released in Abidjan on Thursday this week.

However, it is projected to recover to the pre-pandemic average above 5.0 percent in 2023 and 5.4 percent in 2024.

"While the production structure in East Africa is relatively diversified, countries in the region are largely net importers of commodities. They thus bear the brunt of high international prices in addition to recurrent climate shocks and insecurity, particularly in the Horn of Africa," the continental bank said.

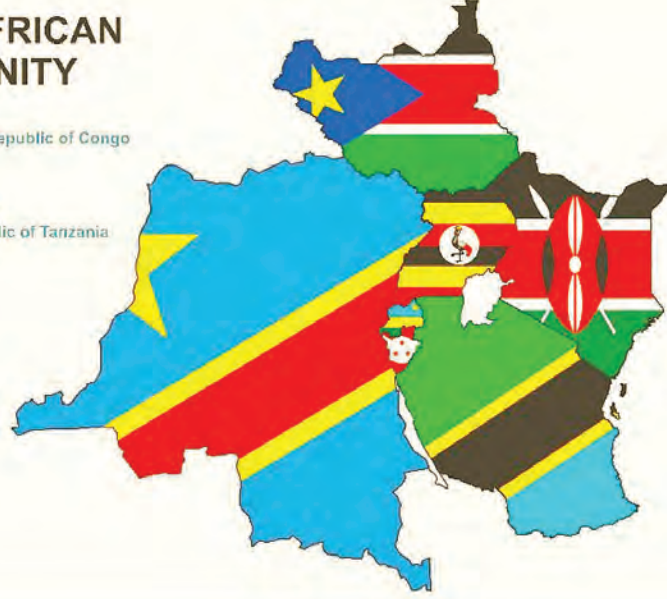
According to AfDB estimates, Seychelles recorded the fastest growth in 2022 in the region by growing at 8.3 percent, followed by Rwanda with 6.9 percent, DRC by 6.6 percent, Ethiopia by 5.3 percent, Uganda by 4.7 percent, Kenya by 5.5 percent, Tanzania by 4.6 percent and Burundi by 3 percent.

During this year, AfDB is projecting Tanzania economic growth of 5.1 percent while Rwanda is expected to be the fastest growing economy at 7.8 percent, followed by DRC by 6.7 percent, Ethiopia by 5.8 percent, Uganda by 5.8 percent, Kenya by 5.5 percent and Burundi by 4.3 percent.

Meanwhile, Africa is set to outperform the rest of the world in economic growth over the next two years, with real gross domestic product (GDP) av-

EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY

Burundi
Democratic Republic of Congo
Kenya
Rwanda
South Sudan
United Republic of Tanzania
Uganda



eraging around 4 percent in 2023 and 2024.

This is higher than projected global averages of 2.7 percent and 3.2 percent. With a comprehensive regional growth analysis, the report shows that all the continent's five regions remain resilient with a steady outlook for the medium-term, despite facing significant headwinds due to global socio-economic shocks.

It also identified potential risks and called for robust monetary and fiscal measures, backed by structural policies, to address them.

The report shows that estimated average growth of real GDP in Africa slowed to 3.8 percent in 2022, from 4.8 percent in 2021 amid significant challenges following the Covid-19 shock and Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

"Despite the economic slowdown, 53 of Africa's 54 countries posted positive growth. All the five regions of the continent remain resilient with a steady outlook for the medium-term," it says.

However, the report sends a cautionary note on the outlook following current global and regional risks. These risks including soaring food and energy prices, tightening global financial conditions, and the associated increase in domestic debt service costs.

"Climate change with its damaging impact on domestic food supply and the potential risk of policy reversal in countries holding elections in 2023 pose equally challenging threats," says AfDB report.

The report advocates bold policy actions at national, regional, and global

scales to help African economies mitigate the compounding risks.

In remarks during the launch, African Development Bank Group President Dr. Akinwumi Adesina said the release of the new report came at a time when African economies, faced with significant headwinds, were proving their resilience.

"With 54 countries at different stages of growth, different economic structures, and diverse resource endowments, the pass-through effects of global shocks always differ by region and by country. Slowing global demand, tighter financial conditions, and disrupted supply chains therefore had differentiated impacts on African economies," he said. "Despite the confluence of multiple shocks, growth across all five African regions was positive in 2022 and the outlook for 2023-24 is projected to be stable."

Niale Kaba, Minister of Planning and Development of Côte d'Ivoire, said: "The release of this report by our bank, the African Development Bank Group, at this time of the year is an excellent opportunity for Africa and its global partners. We need these regular updates to assess our countries' macroeconomic performance and prospects. This reliable information will help decision-making and risk management for potential investors in Africa."

At the launch, economist Jeffrey Sachs, Director of the Center for Sustainable Development at Columbia University commended the report which he said showed that African economies are growing and growing consistently.

Bitcoin holds steady near \$21K even as equities slide

NEW YORK

Bitcoin held steady near its most recent \$21,000 perch, and a leading crypto analyst said the market had already priced in the looming bankruptcy filing of crypto brokerage Genesis Global Capital and other recent industry debacles stemming from the collapse of disgraced crypto exchange FTX.

The largest cryptocurrency by market capitalization was recently trading at about \$20,980, up 0.8% over the past 24 hours, even as investors mulled conflicting economic reports.

"Most of the negative news should be priced in" because Genesis has been in trouble since the end of last year, Edward Moya, senior market analyst at foreign-exchange market maker Oanda, wrote in a Thursday note.

On Wednesday, Bloomberg reported that Genesis, a CoinDesk sister company, was in confidential negotiations with various creditor groups, with Genesis warning it could seek bankruptcy protection if it fails to raise capital. Bitcoin's price tumbled as low as \$20,370, a roughly 5% drop from the previous day, after the US Department of Justice foreshadowed an announcement that it was charging Hong Kong-based crypto exchange Bitzlatto with laundering \$700 million.

But the announcement turned out to be "anticlimactic, at least in contrast to what the markets were guessing would happen," said Michael Safai, managing partner of crypto trading firm Dexterity Capital. Safai told CoinDesk that the crypto market's recent positive sentiment could lift further if institutional traders maintain BTC's trading range between \$20,000 and \$21,000 over the next couple of days.

Ether (ETH) was recently changing hands at around \$1,550, up 1.1% from Wednesday, same time. The CoinDesk Market Index (CMI) recently climbed 1.8%.

Meanwhile, traditional markets continued to stumble this week, with the S&P down 0.7% for the day. The S&P, which has a hefty technology component, is off 2.1% for the past five days, as investors remain fretful about the prospect of recession and big banks kicked off the earnings season with mixed results.

Crypto-exposed stocks were also varied: Exchange Coinbase (COIN) was down 1.5% for the day, while bitcoin miner Marathon Digital Holdings (MARA) was up 6.2%.

Bitcoin's strong 2023

The dip of the past two days has hardly dented bitcoin's sterling performance so far this year. BTC has gained 26% since Jan. 1, rising from weeks-long doldrums around \$17,000.

Martin Leinweber, digital assets product specialist at MarketVector Indexes, attributed bitcoin's recent rally to the weakening U.S. dollar, slower inflation and a short squeeze.

According to Coinglass data, traders liquidated some \$492 million of short positions on Jan. 13, sending BTC above \$20,000.

However, Leinweber said that it's still hard to call a market bottom because "normally in a bear market violent rallies tend to fool investors into believing that this is a sustainable one," considering liquidity isn't fully returned yet.

"You very rarely see these V-shaped bottoms," he told CoinDesk. "You see a rounding U-form, which just takes a little bit of time and there's a little bit of volatile in between. That's the best-case scenario. But I think you still need the right macro backdrop for risk assets in general to rise and the crypto can outperform."



Vice President Dr. Phillip Mpango listens to the details on NBC bank's participation in the construction of Standard Gauge Railway (SGR) from NBC Bank Kahama branch manager Simon Ntwale during the inauguration of the construction of Tabora to Isaka section held in Kahama district. Photo by Guardian Correspondent

By Guardian Correspondent

NATIONAL Bank of Commerce (NBC) has pledged to continue cooperating with the government and contractors to ensure that strategic infrastructure projects are completed on time.

This was said after NBC Bank participated in the laying of foundation stone for the fourth phase construction of a Standard Gauge Railway (SGR) route from Tabora - Isaka held in Kahama District, Shinyanga region.

NBC Bank declares it will stand by govt in executing projects

The Vice Dr Philip Mpango when addressing the ceremony, urged the Ministry of Works and Transport, the

board of directors and workers of the Tanzania Railway Corporation (TRC) to continue fulfilling their responsibility to properly oversee the implementation of strategic projects so that they can be completed in a timely and quality manner.

He also ordered security agencies to ensure that they protect SGR railway project properties.

"I am directing the security agencies to identify the network of thefts in the SGR project to arrest all of them and take strict legal action against them," Dr Mpango said.

On his part, NBC Bank's Kahama Branch Manager, Mr Simon Ntwale, explained to Dr Mpango, how the bank has been actively involved in the construction of the SGR project, when he visited to the bank's pavilion.

"We at NBC Bank have been actively involved in enabling contractor, Yapi Merkezi to purchase the construction materials and we have also facilitated the entire exercise of compensating the community who pave the way for the construction of the project," Ntwale said.

NBC Bank through its services has also successfully purchased modern railway locomotives for the project.

Earlier, giving details of the construction of the project, Tanzania Railway Corporation (TRC) Managing Director Masanja Kadogosa, said the carrying capacity of the modern SGR will be 120 tonnes per carriage, three times as much compared to the current railway line with a capacity of 40 tonnes per carriage.

He also said that TRC hopes to upgrade the railway academy in Tabora and be able to offer a degree in engineering on railway operations.

He added that the TRC has continued to significantly save costs through railway construction contracts that do not allow for costs to increase from contractors due to the change in prices of materials and raw materials.

Absa, NCBA Kenya surpass Stanchart in value

NAIROBI

NCBA Group and Absa Bank Kenya have risen to overtake Standard Chartered Bank Kenya in the market capitalisation ranking of Kenya's listed lenders.

NCBA's market value had grown to Sh64.5 billion as of Tuesday, making it the fifth-largest bank.

The institution had an implied value of Sh44.8 billion on September 30, 2019, when it was ranked sixth.

NCBA was created on that day following the merger of the former CBA Group and NIC Group

-which was listed on the bourse and took on the new name after the business combination.

The merger saw NCBA issue an additional 793.8 million shares to the former owners of CBA Group who took a combined 53 percent stake in the Nairobi Securities Exchange-listed bank.

Absa Bank's market capitalisation also grew to Sh66.5 billion as of Tuesday, making it the fourth largest bank.

The lender was worth Sh59.7 billion on September 30, 2019, when it was ranked fifth after Stanchart whose market value

stood at Sh68.6 billion.

Stanchart's market capitalisation has since declined to Sh58.6 billion as of Tuesday, ranking it sixth.

The other listed banks maintained their positions despite posting a mix of growth and decline in shareholder wealth.

Equity Group, which has traditionally traded at the highest premium, remains the most valuable bank with a market capitalisation of Sh174.3 billion.

The bank's market value also grew by the largest amount of Sh33 billion from Sh141.3 billion

on September 30, 2019.

Equity overtook KCB in absolute profits in the year ended December 2020, extending its leadership in various measures including assets.

NCBA had the second-largest expansion in shareholder wealth at Sh19.7 billion.

This reflects the impact of the additional shares issued in the merger, the bank's improved profitability and the higher dividend payout that has seen its share price rally the most among the listed lenders in recent months.

The stock surged to a 52-week

high of Sh40.2 on Tuesday last week before easing to close at Sh39.2 this Tuesday.

NCBA nearly doubled its net income to Sh12.8 billion in the nine months that ended September.

The bank has also announced that it will be distributing up to half of its profits going forward, signalling more generous dividends than was the case before.

Absa is third, expanding its shareholder wealth by Sh6.7 billion over the review period.

The bank posted a 30 per cent jump in net profit to Sh10.7 billion in the nine months that ended

September on the back of higher income from lending.

Absa, which completed its expensive separation from its former parent firm Barclays Plc, has also joined other listed banks in reinstating dividends whose payout became erratic in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Stanbic Holdings saw its market capitalisation rise by Sh6.3 billion to Sh44.2 billion but kept its position as the seventh most valuable bank.

Co-op Bank added Sh2.3 billion to shareholder wealth to Sh72.1 billion, retaining its third rank.

WORLD

Trump, lawyers fined about \$1m for lawsuit against Clinton

LONDON

A FEDERAL judge on Thursday ordered former US president Donald Trump and his attorneys to pay more than \$937,000 in sanctions for suing former secretary of state Hillary Clinton over claims the 2016 presidential election was rigged.

US District Judge John Middlebrooks, who threw out Trump's lawsuit in September, said the sanctions were warranted because the former president had exhibited a pattern of misusing the courts to further his po-

litical agenda.

"This case should never have been brought. Its inadequacy as a legal claim was evident from the start. No reasonable lawyer would have filed it. Intended for a political purpose, none of the counts of the amended complaint stated a cognizable legal claim," Middlebrooks wrote in the 45-page written ruling.

Representatives for Trump and his lead attorney in the case, Alina Habba, could not be reached for comment by Reuters on Thursday evening.

Trump sued Clinton, the 2016 Demo-



Former US president Donald Trump announces a third run for president as he speaks at Mar-a-Lago in Palm Beach, Florida, Nov 15, 2022. AP

cratic presidential nominee, claiming that she and other Democrats sought to rig that election by falsely accusing his campaign of links to Russia.

Middlebrooks, who was appointed to the bench by then president Bill Clinton in 1997, dismissed the case in September, calling the lawsuit "a two-hundred-page political manifesto outlining his grievances against those

that have opposed him."

Trump, a Republican, sought reelection in 2020 but was defeated by Democrat Joe Biden, after which he repeatedly made false claims blaming widespread voting fraud for his loss.

He has launched a run for the 2024 presidential election, setting up a potential rematch against Biden.

Agencies

US policy of strategic defeat for Russia pushes world to disaster – Russian ambassador

WASHINGTON

The US administration's policy to ensure the strategic defeat of Russia is leading the world to a catastrophe, Russian Ambassador to the United States Anatoly Antonov said yesterday.

When asked to comment on media reports that Russia was using dangerous and reckless rhetoric in the nuclear sphere, the diplomat said no one in the country's political or military leadership "has ever spoken in such a way."

"The only thing we do is to constantly warn Washington that its policy of ensuring strategic defeat for our country on the battlefield is rapidly leading the world to a catastrophic scenario," the embassy's press service quoted Antonov as saying.

The United States and its allies have unleashed an all-out hybrid warfare against Russia on the Russian territory, Antonov (pictured) said.

When asked to comment on media reports that Russia was using dangerous and reckless rhetoric in the nuclear sphere, the diplomat denied those claims and said: "The Americans and their allies have unleashed an all-out hybrid war against Russia on our own territory."

"At the same time they are profiting from their NATO partners by forcing them to finance the renaissance of the United States' military industrial complex. The US defense industry did not see this kind of money even during the Cold War," the Russian embassy's press service quoted Antonov as saying.

In his opinion, Washington remains completely deaf to Moscow's signals.

"I would like to ask the American public a long overdue question: what else should Russia say or do to make the hotheads in the Administration come to their senses and avert the nuclear Armageddon that the White House publicly is so keen to prevent?" he said.

Agencies



'US, China must understand each other more fully'

NEW YORK

THE United States and China must understand each other "more fully" and cultivate a relationship more compatible with peace and progress in the world, former US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger has said.

That leaders from both countries met recently in Bali and stated an intention to reverse the worrisome trend in the bilateral ties is a good sign, said Kissinger in his video remarks to the annual New Year gala of the China General Chamber of Commerce – USA (CGCC-USA) held in New York on Wednesday evening.

The seasoned diplomat said

he welcomes "the decisions that have been made to foster dialogue in so many fields," adding, "China has made a number of practical steps in that direction".

"Each nation needs to understand the other more fully," said the 99-year-old veteran diplomat and strategist, who served under two US presidents, Richard Nixon and Gerald Ford.

"While working together, we can achieve great things, not just for our countries, but also for humanity," said Kissinger.

He noted that "China and the United States have different perceptions of culture and of how to conduct themselves,"



Former US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger attends a luncheon at the US State Department in Washington, DC, on Dec 1, 2022. File photo

and this "needs to be understood by both sides".

Kissinger also underscored the importance of using "intellectual, political, and historic visions" to achieve the desired relationship, adding he has "every hope and expectation that this process will lead to the results that the people all over the world expect".

Kissinger was honored with the Lifetime Achievement Award by the CGCC-USA at Wednesday's event to recognize his achievements as a trailblazer and lifelong contributor to US-China relations.

Xinhua

Zimbabwe strives to expand exports amid encouraging results

HARARE

ZIMBABWE'S exports of manufactured or valued added products increased 13 percent to 334 million U.S. dollars in the first 11 months of 2022, compared to 295 million U.S. dollars during the same period in 2021, trade promotion body ZimTrade said on Thursday.

Zimbabwe has been on a drive to ensure that extractors of raw materials benefit them before exporting so that the country earns more foreign currency.

Recently, the country banned the exportation of raw lithium ore, pushing miners to install processing plants.

Responding to questions from Xinhua, ZimTrade operations director Similo Nkala said apart from other export destinations, ZimTrade would this year conduct a market scanning in Saudi Arabia, in an effort to explore more export opportunities for local products in the Middle East.

The country has already made inroads in Asia where the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and China are among its top three trading partners. Nkala said inclusivity was key to achieving sustainable export growth and capacity development initiatives that empowered businesses would

guarantee steady foreign currency income for the country. "ZimTrade, through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, will continue to propel programs that integrate previously marginalized groups in export business," he said.

"A focus on the development of provincial clusters has not only ensured that we leverage Zimbabwe's natural endowments for export, but also allowed for smallholder farmers across the country to contribute to national exports.

"He said a good example of the initiative was a ZimTrade pilot project in southeastern Zimbabwe that saw more than 40 smallholder farmers attaining organic certification to export pineapples to Europe. "This project is expected to continue this year with 200 smallholder farmers added to the program," Nkala said. "Such projects -- like the Ndiyadzo Pineapple Project -- are meant to inculcate international certification compliance among the smallholder farmers so that they also tap into the high-end export market."

Zimbabwe's exports stood at 5.9 billion U.S. dollars for the first 11 months of 2022, up 9.2 percent when compared to the 5.4 billion U.S. dollars



Zimbabwean president Emmerson Mnangagwa

recorded during the same period in 2021.

Nkala said this boost in exports could be attributed to the various efforts made by the government, along with related agencies like ZimTrade, which facilitated export promotional activities such as outward missions and trade fair participation.

"These activities have raised the profile of Zimbabwean

products and generated interest from markets around the world," Nkala said.

"With the continued demand for organic and fresh produce in Europe and the Middle East, there is a great potential for Zimbabwe to expand their exports, with a high likelihood of surpassing the 7 billion U.S. dollar mark in 2023."

According to Nkala, exports

to UAE increased to 1.96 billion U.S. dollars in the first 11 months of 2022, compared to 1.47 billion U.S. dollars for a similar period in 2021. More initiatives were being channeled toward increasing exports in West Africa, he said.

"For example, Nigeria is one of the most populous countries in Africa offering massive opportunities for local companies to increase their products in the market," he said. "As such, ZimTrade will be conducting a market survey to identify export opportunities and to better understand the market."

Nkala believed that outward missions had played a significant role in accelerating trade, and there were plans to integrate local companies with destination buyers and foster business relationships that would lead to increased exports.

"After the market survey done in Ghana last year, ZimTrade will be holding an outward mission, taking businesses to the market for assessment and with the hope of creating trade integrations," he said.

"Other outward and inward mission destinations in the continent include Kenya, Namibia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Zambia and Mozambique."

4 nations urge EU to set end date for new CO2-emitting trucks

BRUSSELS

THE Netherlands, Belgium, Denmark and Luxembourg have urged the European Union to fix a date by which new trucks and buses sold in Europe must have zero carbon dioxide emissions.

The European Commission is set to propose tougher CO2 standards next month for heavy goods vehicles to comply with the bloc's climate change goals.

It has already set more ambitious targets for cars, including a 2035 deadline for all new cars sold in Europe to have zero CO2 emissions.

Next month's EU proposal should set a 100 percent zero emissions target for heavy duty vehicles, the four countries said. They did not specify a target date but said it must comply with the EU's goal to have zero net greenhouse gas emissions across its economy by 2050.

"The upcoming revision of the CO2 standards for HDVs (heavy duty vehicles) provides a unique opportunity to send a strong signal to the market and incentivize a timely transition," the countries said in a joint document published yesterday.

The four nations also called for a stronger 2030 emissions target for trucks and buses, adding that CO2 limits should be expanded to cover more road freight vehicles because about 35 percent of the sector's emissions are not in the EU's existing CO2 standards.

Transport accounts for nearly a quarter of EU emissions and has bucked the EU's overall trend of falling CO2 output over the past three decades, threatening its target to cut the bloc's net emissions by 55 percent from 1990 levels by 2030.

Growing demand for freight transport raised CO2 emissions from heavy duty vehicles each year from 2014 until the COVID-19 pandemic brought a temporary reduction in 2020, the EU environment agency says.

Next month's proposal will replace the bloc's current requirement for manufacturers to ensure their new truck fleets emit 30 percent less CO2 in 2030 than in 2019-2020 - a goal designed to nudge the sector towards electric or hydrogen-powered engines instead of fossil fuels.



The upcoming revision of the CO2 standards for HDVs (heavy duty vehicles) provides a unique opportunity to send a strong signal

China's auto production, sales rank first globally for 14 consecutive years

CHINA'S auto production exceed 27 million units, up 3.4 percent year on year, while sales increased 2.1 percent from a year ago to 26.86 million units, according to recent data by the China Association of Automobile Manufacturers (CAAM).

The Chinese auto industry maintained the momentum for recovery and demonstrated strong resilience, the association said.

China's auto production and sales have ranked first in the world for 14 consecutive years, and those of new-energy vehicles (NEVs) topped the global market for an eighth year in a row.

"Despite the structural shortage of chips,

the high price of power batteries and other impacts from negative factors, the Chinese auto market bucked the trend and achieved positive growth thanks to policies in stabilizing growth and promoting consumption, as well as the efforts made by all market players. The industry demonstrated strong resilience," said Fu Bingfeng, executive vice-president of the CAAM.

Over 20 million passenger vehicles have been produced and sold in China annually for the past eight years, as a result of the country's car-purchase tax cut and the rapid growth of NEVs, Fu noted.

The NEV market maintained exponential

growth in 2022, witnessing the production of nearly 7.06 million units and sales of nearly 6.89 units, surging 96.9 percent and 93.4 percent year on year, respectively, Fu told People's Daily.

The market share of NEVs in China's auto market reached 25.6 percent in 2022, 12.1 percentage points higher from a year ago, Fu said, adding that the Chinese NEV sector has gradually entered a new phase of market-based development and growth.

With emerging NEV startups and intensified efforts of auto joint ventures and mainstream Chinese automakers to develop NEVs, the competition is getting increas-

ingly intense. This year, China will work vigorously to boost market confidence, implementing a strategy to expand domestic demand and further activate market entities and consumption vitality.

It is expected that the Chinese auto market will grow about three percent in 2023 and keep the momentum for stable development, Fu said.

On Jan. 12, 1,840 vehicles manufactured by Chinese automaker Chery left Wuhu, east China's Anhui province for Shanghai, where they were loaded and shipped to Mexico two days later. This was the second shipment of Chery's automobiles to Mexico this

year, and another batch of 3,281 units is scheduled to be shipped to Türkiye and other markets on Jan. 21, the Chinese New Year's Eve, according to Chery spokesman Jin Yibo.

Jin said the company is currently shipping nearly 5,000 vehicles to Mexico each month, and its exports exceeded 450,000 units last year, up 67.7 percent from 2021.

On Jan. 10, the first 150 JH6 tractor trucks to be exported to Indonesia this year were loaded at the port of Lianyungang in east China's Jiangsu province. **People's Daily**

China, Africa working with each other along path of win-win cooperation, common development

By He Yin

THE first phase of the China-aided Africa Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC) headquarters project was recently completed, becoming a new landmark symbolizing the friendship and solidarity between China and Africa.

The Africa CDC headquarters was a flagship project of China-Africa cooperation announced by Chinese President Xi Jinping at the Beijing Summit of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) in 2018.

The timely delivery of the reliable building mirrors the high standard and level of China-Africa cooperation and explains the demeanor of China, a country that always values its promises.

This year is the 10th year since Xi put forth, in 2013, the principles of sincerity, real results, amity and good faith, and of pursuing the greater good and shared interests for China's relations with Africa.

Over the past decade, with the joint guidance and commitment of Chinese and African leaders, China-Africa relations have made historic achievements that impressed the whole world, and entered a new era of building a high-level China-Africa community with a shared future.

The two sides always follow the spirit of sincere friendship and equality, win-win for mutual benefit and common development, fairness and justice, and progress with the times and openness and inclusiveness. China and African countries have always been good friends who stand together through prosperity and adversity, good partners who share weal and woe, and good comrades who fully trust each other in a shifting international landscape.

China and Africa offer mutual assistance on their way to achieve economic progress and national rejuvenation, and are constantly expanding the areas of cooperation.

China-Africa cooperation has progressed with the times and deepened its connotation, from the 10 major cooperation plans adopted at the 2015 FOCAC Johannesburg Summit to the eight major initiatives proposed at the 2018 FOCAC Beijing Summit, and to the nine programs for cooperation announced at the Eighth Ministerial Conference of the FOCAC.

China has maintained the largest trading partner of Africa for the past 13 years. The two sides' bilateral trade in 2022 is expected to exceed \$260 billion. Fifty-two African countries and the African Union (AU) Commission have signed Belt and Road cooperation documents with China. Landmark projects like the AU Conference Center, the Africa CDC headquarters, the Mombasa-Nairobi Standard Gauge Railway (SGR), and the Ethiopia-Djibouti Railway keep emerging.

These cooperation outcomes are tangible and play an important role in promoting the economic and social development of Africa and improving people's livelihoods on the continent. They fully demonstrate the vision of China-Africa relations and the defining feature of China-Africa friendship.

China is the largest developing country in the world, and Africa is the continent with the largest number of developing countries. As changes of the world, of the times, and of history are unfolding today in ways like never before, the importance of strengthening China-Africa solidarity and cooperation is self-evident.

Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed said Ethiopia's



Chinese and Ugandan engineers discuss construction plans at the construction site of the Karuma Hydro Power Plant in Uganda, which is built by Power Construction Corporation of China. (Photo provided by Power Construction Corporation of China)

cooperation with China in such areas as infrastructure, green economy, agriculture, and industrial park construction has been exemplary and produced remarkable results, helping Ethiopia rank among the fastest-growing economies in Africa.

Angolan President Joao Lourenco said that the airports, hydropower stations, roads, ports, and many other landmark projects built with China's support have progressed smoothly in Angola and played an indispensable role in the country's post-war reconstruction and socio-economic development.

China is the first country to support the AU in joining the G20. It supports boosting the representation and voice of African countries in the UN Security Council and other international organizations. This helps safeguard the common interests of developing countries and will make the global governance system more just and equitable.

Chairperson of the AU Commission Moussa Faki Mahamat noted that Africa values China's strong support for African integration, connec-

tivity, and the development of a free trade area, and looks forward to working with China to jointly advance the building of a China-Africa community with a shared future in the new era.

For some time, a few countries have intentionally provoked bloc confrontation in Africa, forcing African countries to take sides, which is against the will of African countries and the trend of the times.

Africa should be a stage for international cooperation, not an arena for major-force rivalry. Only the countries that sincerely help Africa achieve peace and development and strive for bigger representation and stronger voice of the continent in global governance can receive the support from African countries.

South Africa's think tank, Institute for Global Dialogue, said in a recent report that a few countries have never adopted practical measures to help Africa cope with development challenges, and they only want to make African countries a tool that contains the influence of other countries.

Compared with such hegemonic diplomacy, China's diplomacy, which never interferes in other countries' domestic affairs and always pursues win-win cooperation, is welcomed by African countries.

China has always prioritized Africa in its diplomacy, and inheriting and carrying forward the China-Africa friendship has become a glorious tradition and defining feature of China's diplomacy.

Upholding the principles of sincerity, real results, amity and good faith, and of pursuing the greater good and shared interests, China and African countries will stay committed to strengthening unity and cooperation and working with each other along the path of win-win cooperation and common development. The two sides will join hands to build a high-level China-Africa community with a shared future. *People's Daily*

Russia keeps eye on US attempts to seek Latin America's arms supplies to Kiev – Kremlin

MOSCOW

RUSSIA will keep a close eye on the US attempts to urge Latin American countries to hand over weapons to Ukraine, Kremlin Spokesman Dmitry Peskov said yesterday.

The Russian presidential spokesman thus commented on a statement by a Pentagon representative that Washington was working with nine Latin American countries to urge them to hand over available Russian weapons to Ukraine in exchange for the delivery of US equipment.

Responding to a question about whether this news came as a surprise for Moscow, the Kremlin spokesman said: "In general, it is hard today to imagine anything that can be a surprise."

"Here it is very important [to bear in mind] the legal restrictions of any deliveries to third countries. This is because any deliveries are, of course, conditioned by certain commitments of those countries that receive military equipment," Peskov pointed out.

"Of course, we will keep a close eye on this situation," the Kremlin press secretary said.

Commander of the US Southern Command General Laura Richardson announced on Thursday that Venezuela, Cuba, Nicaragua and six other Latin American countries had Russian military equipment and Washington was working "to replace that with US equipment if those countries want to donate it to Ukraine."

Here it is very important [to bear in mind] the legal restrictions of any deliveries to third countries

Hamas' release of Israeli captive's video aims to press for prisoner exchange deal

GAZA

THE Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas) in the Palestinian enclave of Gaza Strip aims to press the Israeli new government to reach a prisoner exchange deal with it, by releasing a video clip of an Israeli captive, analysts said.

On Monday, the Hamas armed wing, known as the Al-Qassam Brigades, released a 44-second video clip on its website of Avera Mengistu, the Israeli captive in the Gaza Strip. "How long will my comrades and I remain here in captivity? Where is the state and people of Israel from our fate?"

Mengistu asked in the video, prodding the new Israeli government led by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to take action to rescue him and other captured Israelis. The Hamas move coincided with the inauguration of Herzli Halevi as the new Israeli army chief of staff to succeed Avigdor Kahalani.

"The new Israeli army chief of staff should prepare himself to carry the burdens and consequences of his predecessor's failure," Hamas said in the video. Commenting on the video, Mengistu's family said that the clip is new evidence that Mengistu, who crossed into Gaza in 2014, is still alive and the state "must move quickly to bring him home."

MESSAGE TO ISRAELI GOVERNMENT

Hussam Al-Dajjani, a Gaza-based political analyst, told Xinhua that Hamas apparently aimed to send a message to the new Israeli government by releasing the video clip. Hamas seeks to break the stalemate on the issue of reaching a prisoner exchange deal with Israel by putting pressure on Netanyahu, he said.

Al-Dajjani believed that Mengistu's mentioning of "comrades" indicates that Hamas is also keeping Israeli sol-



Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu (L) and Defence Minister Yoav Gallant (2nd R) promote the new army chief of staff Herzli Halevi to the rank of Lieutenant-General, during his official appointment ceremony attended by his wife Sharon (R) in Jerusalem on January 16, 2023.

diers in captivity, which means that two missing soldiers, Shaul Aron or Hadar Goldin, "might be alive." The two were held captive during the Israeli war on the Gaza Strip in 2014, while Israel said they were killed.

Compared to what Israel did in 2011 to rescue Gilad Shalit, an Israeli soldier who was detained by Hamas in Gaza for five years, by reaching a prisoner swap deal with Hamas, the inaction by the government this time will lead to a rift in Israeli society.

Al-Dajjani said that "the Al-Qassam Brigades may take some steps that would complete an exchange deal, as the aim behind it is to release hundreds of Palestinian prisoners and reach understandings that will end the blockade imposed on the Gaza Strip that has been going on for 16 years."

He said reaching a prisoner exchange deal "is possible in the presence of Netanyahu, who is a strong figure and can make decisions since he holds 64 seats in the Israeli Knesset (parliament) and has a strong government."

It is the second time that the Al-Qassam Brigades has shown video clips of Israeli captives. In June 2022, Hamas showed for the first time a short clip of Hisham Al-Sayed, a 33-year-old Israeli-Arab, who was bedridden and attached to a respirator. In the video, a TV screen, which was next to him, broadcasted the Qatari channel Al-Jazeera to demonstrate the fresh date of the video. Hamas spokesman in Gaza, Hazem Qassem, said that Israel "will not see its captured soldiers in Gaza until an honorable exchange deal is achieved."

The video clip confirms the seriousness of the Al-Qassam Brigades in seeking a prisoner exchange deal and "also shows that the Israeli government is practicing procrastination to the public on the status and health of the prisoners held by Al-Qassam," he said.

MESSAGE TO ISRAELI SOCIETY

Mukhaimer Abu Saada, a political science professor at the Al-Azhar University in Gaza,

told Xinhua that Mengistu's appearance shows the new Israeli government headed by Netanyahu "that the heavy legacy of the previous government regarding the prisoners' file is still present." Mengistu appeared in the video in good health, contrary to what Israeli officials say that he is mentally ill, Abu Saada noted, adding that the timing was related to what is happening within Israeli society. Mengistu's appearance at this time will create pressure on the Netanyahu government, because he is of Ethiopian origin, analysts said.

Abu Saada believed that the video clip "is a serious message to the Israeli community to put pressure on the Israeli government and the new chief of staff, Herzli Halevi, to move the file and reach a prisoner exchange deal before Hamas closes this file permanently."

In December, Hamas leader of the Gaza Strip, Yahya Sinwar, threatened to permanently end its prisoner exchange negotiations with Israel in response to its procrastination.

"In the face of the occupation's procrastination, we announce that we will give it a limited time, otherwise, we will close the file of exchange negotiations forever and ever, and we will find another way to liberate our families," Sinwar said at the time.

Under the previous government headed by Netanyahu, Israel once concluded a prisoner exchange deal with Hamas under the auspices of Egypt in 2011. The deal included Hamas' release of Shalit, who was captured in 2006, in exchange for the release of more than 1,000 Palestinian prisoners from Israeli prisons in two batches.

According to Palestinian human rights organizations, Israel is currently detaining about 4,700 Palestinian prisoners, including 200 who are in a chronic condition that needs continuous treatment. *Xinhua*

Xi unanimously elected NPC deputy

Xi Jinping was elected on Thursday as a deputy to the 14th National People's Congress by a unanimous vote at the first session of the 14th Jiangsu Provincial People's Congress.

He was nominated by the Communist Party of China Central Committee as a candidate for deputy to the 14th NPC, the nation's top legislative body, to represent Jiangsu province.

Xi's unanimous election by the more than 800 deputies at the provincial people's congress was greeted with thunderous applause when it was announced at the meeting in Nanjing, capital of Jiangsu, Xinhua News Agency reported.

The 14th NPC will open its first annual session in Beijing on March 5. NPC deputies are members of the highest organ of State power in China.

According to the Electoral Law, deputies to county – and township-level people's congresses are directly elected by voters, while deputies to people's congresses above the county level are elected by deputies at the next lower level. Deputies to the NPC are elected by the people's congresses of provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities directly under the central government.

The unanimous vote for Xi by the more than 800 deputies to the provincial congress represents the heartfelt aspiration of more than 85 million residents of Jiangsu province, and also demonstrates the firm confidence of the more than 1.4 billion Chinese people of all ethnic groups in Xi as they strive for a brighter future on the way to national rejuvenation, the deputies said.

They also said that Xi's election in Jiangsu fully displays the firm determination of the CPC Central Committee in advancing major national development strategies, including the Yangtze River Economic Belt and the integrated development of the Yangtze River Delta, adhering to ceaseless reform and opening-up, and making efforts to build the new development paradigm and promote high-quality growth.

Jiangsu is an eastern coastal province, with the Yangtze River passing through the southern part of the province. It is one of the leading provinces in terms of the economy, finance, education and technology in China.



Zhou Zhongyang, a deputy to the Jiangsu Provincial People's Congress, recalled Xi's inspection tour of Jiangsu in 2014, saying that during that trip, Xi urged exercising full and rigorous governance over the Party.

Ever since then, the relationship between officials and the general public has become closer and the authority of Party organizations has also increased, said Zhou, who is also Party secretary of Ercheng, a village in Zhenjiang, Jiangsu.

Led by the Party, villagers have shaken off poverty and are working to promote rural revitalization, and "we enjoy a more and more prosperous life", Zhou told Xinhua.

Liu Lei, a deputy to the Jiangsu Provincial People's Congress and a technician from Jiangsu Huamei Thermal Power Co in Xuzhou, Jiangsu, said that he was extremely excited that Xi had been unanimously elected to represent Jiangsu.

Liu recalled Xi's inspection in Xuzhou after the 19th CPC National Congress in 2017, saying during that trip, Xi stressed developing and expanding the real economy and met with model workers and technicians in his company.

"He encouraged us to do our best in realizing the Chinese dream. We will keep in mind his words and strive to promote innovation and make more breakthroughs in technology, and make contributions to China's manufacturing industry."

Coach Nasreddine Nabi showcases exceptional tactical approach - 1

By Correspondent Cheji Bakari, Tanga

DESPITE Young Africans SC, alias 'Yanga', crashing out of the 2023 Mapinduzi Cup tournament that took place at Amaan Stadium in Zanzibar from January 4-13, the outfit is viewed as the best in Mainland Tanzania's NBC Premier League this season.

The Jangwani Street club managed to record a 1-1 draw with fellow Mainland Tanzania outfit, Singida Big Stars, in the showdown's Group B last tie, earning the Singida side progression to the semi-finals.

Singida Big Stars ended first in Group B with four points from two duels, tying second-placed Yanga on points, the former for that matter booked a place in the semi-final based on having a better goal aggregate.

The other local soccer giant, Simba SC, as well bowed out of the showdown early on, after losing one tie and winning the other in Group A.

With the second phase of the 2022/23 NBC Premier League having resumed, the top-flight sides have had a chance to reinforce their squads in the January transfer window to embark on a successful spell.

Before the top flight was brought to a halt for a short time to pave way for this year's Mapinduzi Cup tournament, each of the outfits played at least three to four games and there was competitiveness in all matches.

The defending champion Yanga is keeping on enjoying the top-flight's top spot after collecting 53 points, separated from second-placed Simba SC by six points.

Simba SC has posted 47 points while third-placed Azam FC has amassed 40 points.

On December 25 last year, Tanzanians particularly soccer fans witnessed the eagerly awaited match that had Azam FC coming up against Yanga, an engaging game for the two outfits' players and coaches.

Azam FC's caretaker coach Kalimangonga Ongala and his Yanga counterpart Nasreddine Nabi deployed both verbal instructions and visual demonstrations during the well-attended clash, which took place at Benjamin Mkapa Stadium in Dar es Salaam.

The gaffers' skills, knowledge, and presence of competent professional footballers in the two clubs attracted much attention from fanatics, who turned up at the venue, and the rest watched the duel on Television.

The two sides' players showcased great technique and skills to win cheers from the spectators, finishing

the opening period with the score reading 2-2.

Nabi used his skills to ensure Yanga takes control of the proceedings, much as the side was missing the services of its gifted attacking midfielder Feisal Salum that had left the outfit's camp because of contract issues.

The gaffer deployed an alternative playing style and came up with a better approach that ultimately brought good results for Yanga as the squad notched a 3-2 victory.

Midfielder Farid Mussa netted the winner for the Premier League leaders, pouncing on a rebound within Azam FC's box and slamming the ball in with his left foot.

Azam FC shot-stopper, Ali Ahmada, had failed to hold on to a fierce free-kick taken by Yanga's midfielder, Stephane Aziz Ki, and Mussa, who was lurking around, made the most of the resulting rebound.

With such results, some local football analysts disclosed in interviews that Nabi had an exceptional approach, which is quite different from tactics deployed by other Premier League clubs' gaffers.

The analysts noted that to effectively train players, a soccer coach must take into account various issues, adding that although remarkable soccer coaches share common traits, Nabi is unique.

They stated that Nabi is positive, supportive, enthusiastic, focused, trustworthy, goal-oriented, respectful, knowledgeable, clear communicator, observant and patient, which is why the gaffer successfully guided his side to an unbeaten run in 49 matches.

One of the analysts revealed: "A good coach demands success from both players and himself and always leaves a good impression."

"Coach Nabi having an in-depth understanding of the sport and leading by example, is visionary, highly energized, and understands individual differences and is strong in character and integrity," he noted.

"The gaffer shows commitment and passion for the sport and that is why Yanga remains competent in the domestic top flight," he pointed out.

Another analyst noted: "Fanatics are watching soccer either in venues or via other media outlets that include live stream because they love the enjoyment that comes with the sport. For that matter, every coach has to create an atmosphere that fosters enjoyment among players and spectators."

TO BE CONTINUED

SOT appeals for financial support for Games

By Correspondent Joseph Mchekadona

SPECIAL Olympics Tanzania (SOT) has sent a passionate appeal to people to help the association secure 190m/- to successfully send athletes to the Special Olympics Summer Games slated for June in Germany.

Charles Rays, SOT Director, said the Games will be held from June 12-26 and Tanzania's athletes are set to battle it out in athletics and mixed unified volleyball.

Rays said 22 athletes earmarked for Special Olympics Summer Games come from SOT subprograms/regions which took part in the National Special

Olympics games that took place in Mwanza last year.

The official stated they will be accompanied by four coaches, three officials, and the team's physician.

He said they have written the government through National Sports Council (NSC) for financial support but they have not received any reply.

Rays disclosed: "We are still looking for financial support so that we can send Special Olympics athletes to the Summer Games which will be held in Germany... so far it seems gloomy as there is no money."

The official pointed out: "We have written the government for

support but so far there is no response from it."

Rays said the absence of funding for the national team's trip to Germany makes it difficult for SOT to ensure the performers start preparations.

This will be the first time that Germany is hosting the Special Olympics Summer Games and more than 700 athletes with intellectual disabilities from 170 countries will battle it out in the showpiece.

The SOT has been invited to send athletes to participate in the Special Olympics Summer Games to be held in Berlin.

Special Olympics World Summer Games are held every four

years and are the world's largest inclusive sports event.

From June 12-26, 2023 the Games will take place, being the first time that Germany will host the games.

More than 7000 athletes with intellectual disabilities from over 170 countries including Tanzania will compete together in 26 sports.

The SOT will send 22 athletes from five subprograms/regions, the athletes were selected during the National Special Olympics Games held in Mwanza in December 2021. All athletes are expected to compete in athletics and mixed unified volleyball.

2023's Kilimanjaro International Marathon launched in Moshi



Acting Kilimanjaro Regional Commissioner, Abbas Kayanda (C) officially launches the 2023 Kilimanjaro Premium Lager International Marathon at the Kibo Palace Hotel in Moshi on Thursday. Others are the TBL Group Senior Sales Manager for Northern Zone, Neema Patrick (Front row, R), the Kilimanjaro Regional Administrative Secretary, Sara Faraji (2nd R), Tigo Northern Zone's Director, Henry Kinabo (R), Kilimanjaro Police Commander, Simon Maigwa (3rd L), and Kibo Palace Hotel Director, Vincent Laswai (2nd L). PHOTO: CORRESPONDENT

By Guardian Correspondent

THE prestigious 2023 Kilimanjaro Premium Lager International Marathon was on Thursday officially launched in Moshi ahead of the February 26 event. This year's event is the 21st edition of the race.

Acting Kilimanjaro Regional Commissioner, Abbas Kayanda, representing Kilimanjaro Regional Commissioner Nurdin Babu on the occasion, said that the Kilimanjaro Premium Lager Marathon has come a long way.

According to the official, the race's 21st Anniversary is a true reflection of how committed the showpiece's organizers and sponsors are to promoting sports tourism in his region and the country.

"Last year the Prime Minister, Kassim Majaliwa, directed that the Kilimanjaro Marathon organizers include the word 'international' and we are glad that you have done so and today we are officially renaming it the Kilimanjaro International Marathon," he said.

He stressed how the move is of great significance to Tanzania considering that the world-renowned event would attract more international participants who will visit tourist attractions including Mt Kilimanjaro, the national parks like Ngorongoro and Serengeti, and the beautiful island of Zanzibar.

He said the government is proud to be associated with the Kilimanjaro International Marathon, one of the biggest international events in the East African region, as it brings together over 12,000 participants from more than 55 countries.

"The Kilimanjaro Marathon has added an enormous contribution to sports tourism and this has greatly helped the gov-

ernment in implementing the tourism and sports policies respectively," he said.

The Regional Commissioner noted that his administration will ensure proper security for all before, during, and after the marathon as Moshi town is expected to be a hive of activity over the marathon weekend.

"I congratulate all the sponsors led by Kilimanjaro Premium Lager (main sponsor of the 42km full marathon), Tigo, 21km Kili Half Marathon - and Grand Malt - 5 km Fun Run - for your enormous contribution.

"Without you and all the other water table sponsors and partners, it would not be easy," he said.

Kayanda further called on Tanzanians to prepare for the international event to ensure most of the prizes remain home.

He lauded the showdown's other sponsors including Simba Cement, Kilimanjaro Water, TPC Sugar, Total Energies, and official suppliers GardaWorld Security, Keys Hotel, Kibo Palace Hotel, and CMC Automobiles.

Neema Patrick, TBL Group Senior Sales Manager for Northern Zone that was Kilimanjaro Premium Lager's representative on the occasion said they are proud to sponsor the event for the past 21 years, making it one of the longest and most successful sponsorships in Tanzania.

She added that they had been inspired over the years by the development of athletics, the growth of tourism, and culture as a whole - which the event helps promote.

She said they are well prepared for the 21st edition of the Kilimanjaro Premium Lager International Marathon and have set aside 22,760,000/- in prize money with the top finishers in both the men and women categories walking home with

4.2m/-.

Neema called on participants to register on time to avoid last minute rush through www.kilimanjaronmarathon.com and via Tigo Pesa by dialing "150*01#".

She further appealed to the 5km Fun Run participants to register early as numbers will again be limited.

She also called on fellow sponsors to register for the corporate challenge that will have them getting to run as a group and the organizers will calculate their average time and announce the winners after the race.

"This is a unique way of bringing us together as employees and also encouraging fitness and a healthy lifestyle in general," she said.

Tigo North Zone's Director Henry Kinabo said: "As the main sponsor of the 21km category, Tigo Kili Half Marathon, we are excited to launch the 2023 edition of this reputable race in Moshi along with other stakeholders."

The official revealed: "As registrations are underway, we continue to urge participants to register through Tigo Pesa by dialing "150*01# then choose Lipa Kwa Simu to secure your running numbers beforehand."

Tigo, the North Zone's Director revealed, is thrilled to continue its noble 'Tigo Green For Kili' project in a bid to preserve the environment around Mount Kilimanjaro.

Organizers of the event called on participants to use the remaining period to register as the exercise will close either on February 6 or as soon as entries are sold out - whichever is earliest as there is limited space and entries are on a first-come, first-serve basis.

"We stress the importance of this in terms of the logistics and

management processes based on the number of expected runners from both refreshment supplying planning through to safety and security on route based on the roads running capacity," they said.

The organizers also said that the event will be supporting the Tumaini La Maisha (TLM) charity that aims to reach every child in Tanzania who develops cancer and treat them with high-quality cancer treatment free of charge with the hope of a continued and healthy life.

They revealed that the event will set aside a percentage from every entry paid for and it will go towards charity.

In 2022, various Fund Raising efforts by several runners and individual donations raised almost US \$10,000 which was donated to the Kilimanjaro Christian Medical Centre (KCMC) in Moshi, to support the Children's Cancer Ward.

"KCMC is an important partner to the marathon due to its medical support at the event and the finish area each year and the support on route as the runners pass by the hospital on race day," the organizers noted.

Individual runners and corporates are encouraged to 'Run for Good' and fundraise or make a direct donation to help make a difference in the lives of these brave children.

Further details can be found online on the official website at www.kilimanjaronmarathon.com.

The 2023 Kilimanjaro Premium Lager International Marathon is set to be held at the Moshi Cooperative University (MoCU) ground on February 26.

The race is organized by the Kilimanjaro Marathon Company Limited and locally coordinated by Executive Solutions Limited.



Yanga's head coach, Nasreddine Nabi. PHOTO: COURTESY OF YANGA

Guardiola blasts 'happy flowers' Man City despite Spurs fightback

MANCHESTER, England

PEP Guardiola said Manchester City will be "destroyed" by Arsenal in the Premier League title race if they do not improve despite a stirring second half fightback to beat Tottenham 4-2 on Thursday.

Two goals in three minutes just before half-time from Dejan Kulusevski and Emerson Royal saw City staring down the barrel of a second consecutive defeat.

But Julian Alvarez, Erling Haaland and Riyad Mahrez struck in a 12-minute period early in the second half before Mahrez added his second late on to move Guardiola's men to within five points of leaders Arsenal, who have a game in hand. City and Arsenal are still to face each other twice in the league this season, but Guardiola took aim at his players for resting on their laurels after winning four league titles in five seasons.

"We cannot deny how happy we are but we are far away from the team that we were," said Guardiola.

"I want a reaction from all the club, not just the players. We are a happy flowers organisation. I don't want to be, I want to beat Arsenal. If we play that way, Arsenal will destroy us."

Guardiola sent a message with his team selection with Kevin De Bruyne and Bernardo Silva among the star names dropped to the bench as Alvarez was paired alongside Haaland in a change of system.

Tottenham have made a habit of having to come from behind after slow starts this season, but the roles were reversed as a third defeat in four league games leaves Antonio Conte's men still five points adrift of the top four.

Spurs' half-time lead owed much to uncharacteristic City mistakes.

'Ridiculous goal'

Ederson's wayward pass to Rodri played the Spanish midfielder into trouble and the ball eventually dropped to Kulusevski to slot in his first goal since the opening day of the season.

Moments later Rodri was dispossessed inside his own box again by a Harry Kane tackle and when Ederson parried his shot, Emerson headed in the rebound.

AFP

Arsenal face Manchester Utd test as struggling Liverpool host Chelsea

LONDON

ARSENAL face a stern test of their Premier League title credentials against Manchester United this weekend as Liverpool and Chelsea meet in a clash of two clubs desperate to escape mid-table obscurity.

At the bottom, Frank Lampard takes Everton to face David Moyes' West Ham, with both managers under intense pressure as the relegation trap door looms.

AFP Sport takes a look at some of the key talking points ahead of the action.

Arsenal's title charge

Arsenal v Manchester United used to be the match that defined the Premier League, pitting Arsene Wenger against Alex Ferguson in a rivalry for the ages.

In recent years the game has been reduced to a sideshow, but there is a growing sense leaders Arsenal can end a wait of nearly two decades to be crowned English champions, while United are a rising force under Erik ten Hag.

Mikel Arteta's young team are now clear favourites to claim Arsenal's first Premier League crown since the 2004 "Invincibles".

The Gunners have more points at this stage of a league season than ever before and are benefiting from the stum-

bles of those beneath them, particularly the inconsistency of champions Manchester City.

Aside from the game against United and a match against City in February, Arsenal's league fixtures over the next two months look kind. Even so, Arteta believes a successful title tilt will "demand almost perfection".

Eight points behind Arsenal, Ten Hag's men travel to the Emirates Stadium without suspended midfielder Casemiro after the Brazilian was booked in the frustrating midweek draw at Crystal Palace.

Liverpool, Chelsea in clash of also-rans

After nearly two decades of sparring for silverware, the startling declines of Liverpool and Chelsea will be laid bare when they meet at Anfield on Saturday.

Just last season, Liverpool came within touching distance of an unprecedented quadruple, while Chelsea were winners of the FIFA Club World Cup.

Liverpool finished second in the Premier League and Chelsea came third, with the Reds beating the Blues in both the FA Cup and League Cup finals. Those battles will seem like distant memories this weekend as ninth-placed Liverpool host 10th-placed Chelsea.

Both still harbour faint hopes of climbing into



Manchester United manager Erik Ten Hag (R) and Mikel Arteta's Arsenal (L).

the top four but with injuries hurting Jurgen Klopp's side and Graham Potter's team, gatecrashing the race to qualify for the Champions League looks a tough ask.

Klopp has achieved enough in his long reign to keep the critics largely at bay, but Chelsea's Potter is on shaky ground only four months after replacing the sacked Thomas Tuchel.

Despite a huge spending spree under the club's new owners, Chelsea had lost seven of their previous 10 matches in all competitions prior to a 1-0 victory against Crystal Palace last weekend.

Potter could give a de-

but to Ukraine winger Mykhailo Mudryk after his £88 million (\$108 million) move from Shakhtar Donetsk as he seeks to find the magic formula.

Lampard, Moyes on borrowed time

Everton manager Frank Lampard and West Ham boss David Moyes are fast running out of time heading into their crunch clash.

Either team could end Saturday at the bottom of the Premier League table depending on Southampton's result against Aston Villa, and neither will approach the game in London with much confidence.

West Ham have taken just a single point from their past seven league games and Everton have one point from a possible 18.

Rumours have swirled this week that Moyes is likely to be dismissed if he loses the game.

But the Hammers finished seventh last season, also reaching the Europa League semi-finals, and Moyes has pleaded for loyalty from fans.

"What we've given West Ham supporters in the last few years, I hope they can give us back," he said.

Former Chelsea boss Lampard, for his part, says he will not "cry" at

the pressure he is under. Fixtures (1500 GMT unless stated)

Today
Liverpool v Chelsea (1230), Bournemouth v Nottingham Forest, Leicester v Brighton, Southampton v Aston Villa, West Ham v Everton, Crystal Palace v Newcastle (1730)

Tomorrow
Leeds v Brentford, Manchester City v Wolves (both 1400), Arsenal v Manchester United (1630)

Monday
Fulham v Tottenham (2000)

AFP

Bruised Ronaldo scores twice to edge showdown with Messi

RIYADH

GRIMACING in pain from his bruised cheekbone, Cristiano Ronaldo steadied himself before scoring from the penalty spot for his first goal in Saudi Arabia against a Paris Saint-Germain team featuring old foe Lionel Messi.

Messi had already scored early in Thursday's exhibition game when Ronaldo was flattened boxing-match style by PSG goalkeeper Keylor Navas after about 30 minutes in Riyadh, the city which gained sporting prominence for hosting a world heavyweight championship boxing bout in 2019.

It wasn't Anthony Joshua but Navas who caught Ronaldo flush in the face with his forearm under a high ball.

Both went down like felled boxers.

Ronaldo held his head, got back up, did a wide yawn as if to test his sore left cheek, and sent his former Real Madrid teammate Navas the wrong way.

By the end of the first half Ronaldo's cheekbone was bright apple red but he was all smiles after netting his second goal, smashing in a rebound when his header came back off the post. Poking his tongue out, Ronaldo wheeled away in delight and was mobbed by teammates at the corner flag.

When PSG star Kylian Mbappé checked on the

state of Ronaldo's cheek just before the second half, Ronaldo milked the attention from France's World Cup star and pointed to the red mark.

Mbappé smiled at him as if to say "You'll be fine" and Ronaldo raised his arm in triumph like a heavyweight champion.

Messi's Qatari-backed PSG won 5-4 against a combined XI of Saudi Arabian teams Al Nassr and Al Hilal, captained by Al Nassr's new signing Ronaldo, in front of 68,000 fans at King Fahd International Stadium. Although his team lost, Ronaldo edged perhaps the final instalment of Ronaldo vs. Messi as one of the greatest rivalries in soccer history resumed in an unusual location.

Messi's shot led to a handball and PSG's fourth goal, scored by Mbappé from the penalty spot.

Ronaldo came off to a huge ovation just after the hour mark followed by Mbappé and Argentina's World Cup-winning star Messi, who was warmly hugged by countryman Marcelo Gallardo, coaching the combined Saudi Arabian team.

Ronaldo's bruise darkened with the night sky as he collected his man of the match award.

He was locked in conversation with ex-Madrid teammates Sergio Ramos and Navas before the medal ceremony. Then he spoke to Portugal teammates Renato Sanches and Danilo,



Cristiano Ronaldo, right, playing for a combined XI of Saudi Arabian teams Al Nassr and Al Hilal is challenged by PSG's Lionel Messi during a friendly soccer match, at the King Saud University Stadium, in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, Thursday, Jan. 19, 2023. (AP Photo)

who play for PSG.

But Ronaldo was nowhere near Messi, almost like they avoided each other. They couldn't do that earlier on the field, when Ronaldo tackled Messi in the second minute.

Moments later, Messi smiled as he scored from Neymar's lofted pass. Ronaldo looked annoyed with his teammates for letting Messi ghost into space. Harsh, because few defenders have ever tracked Messi's runs, let alone stopped them. The World Cup proved that, if it was ever in doubt.

There was scant inter-

action between former Madrid star Ronaldo and Messi, his arch rival during Barcelona's glory days. It was Ronaldo who tentatively approached an impassive-looking Messi at the center circle seconds before the whistle blew to start perhaps their final game as opponents.

There was a polite exchange, the briefest handshake.

Messi stared at Ronaldo late in the first half, after PSG defender Juan Bernat had been sent off, and Ronaldo seemed to look away from Messi.

It was a different mood in the tunnel beforehand, when a grin-

ning Ronaldo hugged Ramos, who now plays alongside Messi, and

joked with Ramos that he'd forgotten to remove an ear stud.

The laugh was on Ramos later, when he air-kicked a loose ball on Ronaldo's second goal. PSG's Neymar also missed, from the penalty spot.

The atmosphere built before the start as fans waved Argentina flags while others held up the yellow jersey of Al Nassr, pointing proudly to Ronaldo's No. 7 on the back. The ticker tape poured from the stands as Ronaldo led his team out. He smiled and winked when he got a loud ovation.

Ronaldo could end his storied career in Riyadh after signing a deal worth a reported \$200 million a year, swapping Europe's elite club competition for the Asian Champions League.

He makes his Saudi league debut for Al Nassr on Sunday against Ettifaq, far from the fields where he shone for Manchester United

and Madrid.

INTENSE RIVALRY
The Messi-Ronaldo rivalry has been among the greatest ever.

Between them they have 12 Ballon d'Or awards - Messi a record seven, Ronaldo five - and have won a combined 56 major trophies. Ronaldo won the Champions League five times, compared to Messi's four. Messi is the all-time "El Clasico" top scorer with 26 goals for Barca, eight more than Ronaldo for Madrid.

Ronaldo won the European Championship in 2016 but Messi was brilliant in Argentina's Copa America win in 2021 and its 2022 World Cup success.

Ronaldo is the all-time leading scorer in men's international soccer with 118 goals, while Messi's seven at the World Cup took him to third overall with 98.

AP

Gwiji by David Chikoko



SPORT

Arsenal face Man Utd test as struggling Liverpool host Chelsea

PAGE 19

Caravans cricket outfit closes in on Gymkhana Shield tourney's knockout stage

By Guardian Reporter

CARAVANS cricket squad has inched closer to qualification for the knockouts of this season's Cello|Ruby's Magic Gymkhana Shield tournament after knocking out in an eight-run win over hard-fighting GP outfit in a tie that was held in Dar es Salaam recently.

The duel's winners have therefore maintained a perfect record, having managed to come out victorious in all four ties they have honoured in the tournament's Group A.

The Group A leaders have the 3.0948 net run rate, which happens to be the best from the four victories, notching 554 runs and leaking 401 runs.

Tournament favourites Caravans Club hardly had a smooth ride in the duel against the now fifth-positioned GP outfit, given the former had to give its all because of the opponents' relentlessness.

Caravans Club's cricketers cruised to 106/8 in 20 overs after getting a chance to take the crease first. They were hardly as impressive as expected, clearly finding it difficult to stay in control as the GP squad opted for spirited fielding.

So far three members of the batting unit made their presence felt when Caravans Club took the crease, as Amal Rajeevan was the top run-getter having ended two runs short of a half-century.

Senior players Jitin Pratap Singh and Kassim Nassor also made their way back with meaningful contributions, recording 23 runs and 10 runs.

They unexpectedly got off to a wobbly start, having lost key player Nandakishan Pottachira in the first over.

Pottachira that had opened the innings with Nassor was caught by GP side's Shehryar Ali off skipper Muzamil Hussain's ball, leaving his club with paltry four runs after 1.4 overs.

Singh then laid his hands on the bat following Nassor's dismissal, which came after 4.6 overs, and put a determined showing that had Caravans moving to 77 runs after 13.6 overs once the well-drilled cricketer exited the crease.

Rajeevan, deployed at number three, showcased his resoluteness and pushed Caravans' total to 86 runs after 15.6 overs, having been dismissed by Sarfaraz Tare.

The experienced Tare had the best bowling performance in the GP side's turn with the ball, in which he had a four-wicket haul whilst giving away 21 runs in four overs.

He was ably assisted by Talha Sayed that had recorded two wickets giving away 14 runs in three overs.

The GP team's cricketers in response could hardly live up to expectations despite giving their all having ended with 98/9 in the 20 overs.

Opening batsman Humayun Taj, Sayed, and Shehryar Ali were the squad's cricketers with significant showing with the bat, given Taj ended with 18 runs, Sayed posted 17 runs not out and Shehryar Ali notched 17 runs.

Singh ended with the best bowling figure for Caravans, taking three wickets in four overs, Adersh Dileep took two wickets as is the case with fellow bowler Manoj Kumar. Singh's exploits had the cricketer laying his hands on the tie's Man of the Match prize.

The outfits battling it out in this season's showpiece have been placed in groups A and B.

Group A consists of Caravans Cricket Club, GP, Shree Kutchi Leva Patel Sports Center (SKLPSC), Pak Stars, Union Sports Club, and Gymkhana Cricket Club.

Aruti Aces, Upanga Sports Club, Aga Khan SC, Annadil Burhani Club, Dar Cricket Club (DCC), and Lions Cricket Club have been put in Group B.

The ongoing edition is sponsored by Cello|Ruby's Magic and Co, as well as long-time sponsors, General Petroleum (GP). Other sponsors are Planet Fitness, Gem Point, ETG, and Pepsi.

Cello|Ruby's Magic and Co has moreover sponsored a special cash prize to be handed over to batsmen scoring centuries and wicket-takers posting hat-tricks in the showdown

Prisons, Ihefu SC look to bounce back in NBC Premier League

league matches, with their most recent outing a 3-0 humbling at the hands of Azam FC at Azam Complex venue on Monday.

They have shipped 10 goals while scoring just once in reply in their last two matches and will be keen on tightening up at the back.

Goals are also a struggle for Prisons, as they have scored 17 goals in 20 league games.

They are led in goals by forwards Jeremiah Juma and Samson Mbangula having notched four goals apiece.

Despite the looming threat of a successive relegation battle, the movement of players either in or out has been in short supply for Prisons in the just-ended transfer window.

The shortcoming has

forced Prisons' head coach Patrick Odhiambo to look within his squad and the youth sides for much-needed squad depth.

Coach Odhiambo will hope that a return to their home base at Sokoine Stadium sees an upturn in form.

Prisons have claimed maximum points from two matches at the venue and will hope to continue that trend in this Saturday's clash.

As for the visitors Ihefu SC, the club is coming into this game on the back of a narrow 1-0 loss away to league leaders Young Africans SC.

Ihefu SC assistant coach Zubeir Katwila would have been disappointed by the results but is proud of his team's performance and a

repeat of the same determination could bring at least a share of the spoils.

The Mbarali-based club has been winless in two straight road games in the league. Just four points from the 33 points on offer were picked up by Ihefu SC away from the home turf in Mbarali.

When an individual looks at the bigger picture, Ihefu SC has lost 12 of their 20 league outings this season. No team has suffered more top-flight defeats in 2022-23.

However, recent back-to-back wins have seen them move from the basement to go four points clear of the bottom two, Ruvi Shooting and Polisi Tanzania.

In a bid to avoid relegation, Ihefu SC bolstered their midfield with the loan

signings of Simba SC stars Victor Akpan and Nelson Okwa. The Nigerian internationals have joined the club until the end of the season.

The duo is part of the wholesale changes to the squad during the mid-season transfer window where five players were released and eight added.

In head-to-head stats, Prisons and Ihefu SC have met in three league matches since 2020/21.

The teams have each racked up one home win in the rivalry, while their meeting earlier this season at the Highland Estate Stadium in October 2022 ended in a one-all stalemate. The three meetings of these teams have produced just four goals.

By Correspondent Michael Mwebe

TANZANIA Prisons FC and Ihefu SC will both be determined to bounce back from recent negative results in the 2022/23 NBC Premier League when they meet at Sokoine Stadium in Mbeya this afternoon, kick-off slated for 4 pm.

Hosts Prisons have suffered two losses in their last three



NBC Bank's Director for Risk Management Godliving Maro (R) hands over a 1m/- dummy cheque and a trophy to Simba SC midfielder Clatous Chama, who was declared the 2022/23 NBC Premier League Best Player for December 2022. The event took place at the Benjamin Mkapa Stadium in Dar es Salaam on Wednesday shortly before the kick-off of the league fixture between Simba SC and Mbeya City FC. PHOTO: CORRESPONDENT

Chess team wins East Africa Junior Tournament

By Correspondent Joseph Mchekadona

TANZANIA's national junior chess side has emerged as champion in the just-ended Lighthouse East Africa Junior Tournament which was held in Mombasa, Kenya.

The fourth edition of the Lighthouse East Africa Junior Tournament was held from January 13-15 at Aga Khan Academy Mombasa, hosting players from Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda.

Tanzania squad's coach Kara Luis said the country's team was represented by 15 players from various schools located in Dar es Salaam.

The schools are Aga Khan Mzizima, Aga Khan Academy Mombasa, Dar es Salaam International Academy, Feza Boys School, International School of Tanganyika, Baybridge Primary School, and Mt. Kibo Primary School all under their chess club, Rising Stars Activity Center Upanga.

According to the tactician, Tanzania scooped four gold medals, and the players who won them for the country are Savely Yakolev in U-18 Open, as well as Christian Fernandes in U-16 Open.

Others are Mahek Desai in U-14 girls and Anahi Shah, currently the national

U-12 female champion, winning the gold medal in U-10 girls.

Tanzania's squad also collected three silver medals won by Mikail Walli in U-16 Open, the current national female champion Mahi R Shah in the U-16 girls, and Kahil Walli in U-12 Open.

The bronze medals were won by Delbert I Panya in U-18 Open, Maryam Panya in the U-14 girls, Yash R Panjwani in U-10 Open, and Vihaan K Mehta in U-8 Open.

Luis said Tanzania's players' performance cemented Rising Stars Activity Center in the first place and witnessed the squad lifting the overall winner

honour in the East Africa Junior Chess Tournament.

"It was a tough competition but we had the best team that was selected through qualifiers held on December 3 2022 at the International School of Tanganyika, we are doing our best at clubs and school levels whilst hoping that with continued good performance and media support, we will win the attention of the government so it can back us as is the case with other countries," Luis revealed.

The junior players attributed their performance to good training, practice, and preparation.

Flexibles by David Chikoko

