



### National Pg 3 52 patients undergo eye surgeries



### National Pg 4 Dar makes strides in economic justice for women



### National Pg 5 Villagers benefit from project against GBV, climate change



## Samia mourns Justice Mwanaisha Kwariko

By Guardian Reporter

PRIME Minister Kassim Majaliwa yesterday represented President Samia Suluhu Hassan at the funeral of the late Justice Mwanaisha Kwariko.

The late judge of the Court of Appeal and member of the National Electoral Commission was buried at her home in Kondo, Dodoma Region/

In his condolence message to the mourners, the premier said that the president was deeply moved by Mwanaisha's passing, having distinguished herself at the Court of Appeal as in every position she earlier held.

She was a leader who performed her duties professionally and with integrity, he said, extolling the good work the late judge put up throughout her public service career.

Taking up and pursuing that spirit is a great way to honour the memory of the deceased, he stated, while Chief Justice Prof Ibrahim Juma stated that the late judge lived by the judicial oath.

She was fully committed to providing services to the public, including resolving disputes with fairness and impartiality, he said.

She had compassion and humanity and her life was dedicated to helping others, he stated, while Justice Jacobs Mwambelege, the NEC chairman, said that his colleague had passed away at a

TURN TO PAGE 2

# Speaker: Stamp out illegal immigration

By Rahma Suleiman, Zanzibar

LAW enforcers at the Immigration Department need to intensify efforts to curb illegal immigration to ensure that Tanzania remains safe while pursuing its developmental trajectory.

Dr. Tulia Ackson, the Speaker of the National Assembly, issued this appeal here over the weekend, at a ceremony to lay the foundation stone for the Central District Immigration Office in Unguja South Region.

In the event tied to marking 61 years of the Zanzibar Revolution, the top legislator said that accommodating individuals who enter the country illegally jeopardises national peace and security.

It exposes the nation to potential criminal activities and eventual unrest, she stated, affirming that no country can progress without peace.

"Peace is the foundation of development in any nation. Without peace and security, there is no development," she stated, appealing to residents to avoid hosting unfamiliar visitors.

They should report their presence for



Prime Minister Kassim Majaliwa, who is Ruangwa constituency legislator, has a first-hand account of the manual part of cashewnut processing at Naunambe in Ruangwa District on Sunday. Photo: PMO

## Swahili council opens 47 centres, 17 abroad

By Guardian Correspondent, Morogoro

THE National Kiswahili Council (BAKITA) has launched 47 centers worldwide to promote Swahili language teaching, locally and abroad.

Prof. Palamagamba Kabudi, the Information, Culture, Arts and Sports minister, made this observation when opening the 'Africa of Tomorrow' cultural international conference held at the Jordan University College (JUCO) here yesterday.

He said that of the 47 centers, 17 are located outside Tanzania, whose focus are on higher education institutions, as young people learn the language to conduct research in the country and in the neighbourhood.

They spark discussions aimed at uncovering tangible and intangible cultural heritage, he said, underlining that the goal is to help restore African values for the broader benefit of the African continent.

Prof Anna Tibaijuka, a veteran academic and administrator, asserted that a single native language carries many cultural values, and we should not lose Swahili by adopting foreign languages.

A keynote speaker at the conference, she argued for the protection of Swahili as well as our indigenous languages, "and in doing so we must not engage in tribalism."

Prof Bertram Mapunda, the rector for Jordan University, affirmed that the current generation has the view that cultural matters and speaking indigenous languages are con-

TURN TO PAGE 2

## Z'bar enforcers seize 800kg of illicit drugs

By Guardian Reporter, Zanzibar

ZANZIBAR's Drug Control and Enforcement Authority (ZDCEA) has seized about 800 kilogrammes of illegal drugs, in its recent series of operations.

Colonel Nassoro Burhani, the ZDCEA commissioner, briefed journalists on the exercise here yesterday, affirming that in collaboration with other security agencies, law enforcers carried out searches across

TURN TO PAGE 2



Zanzibar President Dr Hussein Ali Mwinyi delivers New Year message at Zanzibar State House yesterday. Photo: Zanzibar State House

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## Speaker: Stamp out illegal immigration

FROM PAGE 1

proper management of such instances in the interest of the nation, she said, asking members of the public to collaborate with the Immigration Department.

This will help it to pursue efforts to fight human trafficking, she said, pointing at the need to free themselves relics of the historical plight of slavery.

"The goal of the Revolution was to reject oppression and establish freedom and equality without discrimination, while restoring dignity to Zanzibaris. Allowing human trafficking would mean living under the very conditions that our revolutionaries fought to abolish in 1964," the top legislator declared.

Immigration officers need to educate the public on safeguarding

national borders, she said, pointing at fishermen as a pivotal group that can help to enhance security in areas prone to illegal entry and trafficking.

Additionally, she urged project supervisors to maintain the pace of construction while ensuring the quality of the buildings for national benefit.

Dr. Anna Makakala, the commissioner general of Immigration, noted that the completion of the building stands to enhance security in the district and improve access to immigration services in the zone.

She expressed gratitude to Zanzibar President Dr. Hussein Ali Mwinyi for allocating land for various immigration projects. Zanzibar is in the process of establishing an immigration training college in the region, she added.

## Swahili council opens 47 centres, 17 abroad

FROM PAGE 1

cerns for the older generations.

Young people need to learn indigenous languages to help preserve and spread the various tongues, he stated, explaining that the university plans to introduce curricula to teach indigenous languages to students, ensuring their growth and dissemination.

Chief Mtayani Simanga, a Maasai traditional leader, said that the conference, had enabled a number of indigenous leaders to meet with leaders in academia "to explain how people should live in their homes to restore peace and stability in Africa."

Adam ole Mwarabu, an advocate, suggested that the government needs to direct schools to teach indigenous languages, including Swahili, "to help eliminate foreign languages introduced by colonizers."

"If we use these indigenous languages in various regions, it will help build love, unity, solidarity and peace in our country," he

said, pointing at those engaging in tribal discrimination as likely to be changed.

Jordan University organised the conference in collaboration with the Sokoine University of Agriculture (SUA), Mzumbe University, the Islamic University of Morogoro (MUM), Zanzibar University, the University of Zimbabwe, the University of Nigeria at Lagos and the Portable Practical Educational Preparation (PPEP) Institute at the Arizona State University.

An online entry says that the institute specializes in helping sons and daughters of migrant and seasonal farmworkers in rural Arizona, at-risk students, high school dropouts or other students seeking to find their feet again in learning.

Various topics were discussed at the conference, including language issues, politics, economics, culture, ethics, history, heritage, rights and a major focus on community efforts to preserve African cultural heritage.

## Thirty-ninth US president Jimmy Carter dead at 100

NEW YORK

THE Carter Centre also disclosed that he died 13 months after entering hospice care at his home in the small town of Plains, Georgia.

The former US president, Jimmy Carter, has died at age 100.

His death was confirmed on Sunday by the Carter Centre in a post made on X, formerly Twitter.

"Our founder, former U.S. President Jimmy Carter, passed away this afternoon in Plains, Georgia," the non-profit organisation, founded by the former president in 1980, wrote.

The centre disclosed that he died peacefully, surrounded by his family.

The Carter Centre also disclosed that he died 13 months after entering hospice care at his home in the small town of Plains, Georgia, where he and his late wife, Rosalynn, spent most of their lives.

His son, James E. Carter III, has also confirmed his death, according to The Washington Post.

In September 2023, Carter's grandson, Jason Carter, had told PEOPLE that the former president's unexpectedly long time in hospice care had surprised the entire family, describing it as a "real blessing."

"This is an important part of his faith journey, and it's one that you don't get to experience at any other time in your life except for the very end," Jason said. "And so in that way, I think this has been a really meaningful time for him, and it's been a really reflective time for him."

At age 100, Carter was the longest-living American president. His wife, Rosalynn had died at 96 in November 2023.

He was a Nobel Peace Prize-winning president who transformed his legacy from a one-term commander-in-chief to humanitarian service. Carter

served as the 39th president of the United States between 1977 and 1981.

He was elected into the White House in 1976, in the wake of the Watergate scandal and the widespread unpopularity of President Gerald Ford's decision to pardon his disgraced predecessor, Richard Nixon.

Before his election, the former president held several positions. He was a nuclear scientist, a Navy submariner, a peanut farmer, and community organiser. He also served as the Georgia state senator from 1963 to 1967 and as governor from 1971 to 1975.

After defeating President Ford in the 1976 election, the Democrat became the first president from the Deep South since before the Civil War.

Carter's presidency was defined by economic instability, soaring gas prices, political unrest, racial tensions, and growing signs of America's declining influence abroad. One of his most notable achievements was brokering a historic peace treaty between Egypt and Israel, along with restoring full diplomatic relations with China.

However, he made several clumsy missteps in public relations that caused his approval ratings to sharply decline. One of such was the launch of a rescue mission for American hostages in Iran that ended in a fiasco. He also introduced a controversial boycott of the 1980 Moscow Olympics.

In 1980, Carter lost his reelection bid to Ronald Reagan and transitioned to humanitarian service. He and his wife established The Carter Center to advance global peace and human rights.

He also brokered a nuclear non-proliferation agreement with North Korea, served as an unofficial US diplomat in conflict zones, and contributed to building affordable housing for low-income families domestically and internationally.



Finance ministry deputy permanent secretary Amina Khamis Shaaban (C) receives an award on behalf of permanent secretary Dr Natu El-Maamry Mwamba from the Internal Auditors Institute of Tanzania president, Dr Zelia Njeza (L), in Dodoma city yesterday. It was in appreciation of the support the PS extended to the holding of the 10th Internal Auditors Conference in Africa and supporting the growth of the internal auditing profession. With them is the government's Chief Internal Auditor General, Benjamin Magai. Photo: Finance ministry

## Z'bar enforcers seize 800kg of illicit drugs

FROM PAGE 1

multiple locations.

The operations saw law enforcers confiscate various types of narcotics, citing marijuana, cocaine, heroin, methamphetamine and drug-laced shisha, he stated.

The total weight of the drugs seized amounted to 798.893 kilogrammes, the largest drug haul ever recorded in Zanzibar, he said, highlighting the scale of the danger posed by the confiscated drugs.

If the drugs had reached the streets, they could have been processed into 27m doses, thus, with a total population of 1.8m

"...this amounts to an average of 14 doses per person," he stated.

Six motor vehicles were seized as well as one boat, and nine individuals arrested, just one being a foreign national, he said, elabo-

rating that several of the suspects have already been brought before the courts, while others are under investigation.

Details of the series of operations, conducted in phases across two months shed light on the scope of the problem, as in the first operation, on October 17, investigators targeted the Malindi dhow harbour where two suspects were arrested, with 734.95 grams of marijuana.

Another operation on November 5 occurred at the Abeid Amani Karume International Airport, where 263 kilograms of drug-laced shisha, smuggled from China, were intercepted, he said.

Laboratory tests showed that the shisha contained harmful chemicals that can cause severe health problems like hallucinations, heart

disease and mental instability.

Within November, operations at Kilimani Chini and Mtendeni areas led to the seizure of cocaine, and authorities also broke record for methamphetamine seizures on November 15 at Kisauni, he said.

The law enforcers confiscated 536 kilogrammes of methamphetamine and one kilogramme of heroin, he said, pointing out that drugs like methamphetamine, which is often manufactured in illegal laboratories, pose significant dangers to public health.

The use of methamphetamine could lead to memory loss, nervous system damage and emotional instability, he said, affirming that the drug trade, primarily targets youth between the ages of 9 and 45.

It not only threatens individual

lives but also jeopardizes the country's security and future economic stability, he stressed, reaffirming government commitment to eradicating drug networks in Zanzibar in the coming year.

Those involved in the drug trade need to know that no one would be exempt from legal action, he said, advising youths to avoid getting involved in trafficking narcotics.

"Drug crimes do not pay; seek legitimate work," he said, pointing out that vehicles, properties and assets linked to drug activities would be confiscated.

Residential property owners to be vigilant when leasing out their premises to avoid their being used in illicit businesses, he said, urging members of the public to report any suspicious activities that could be drug-related.



Col Burhan Zubeir Nassor, Commissioner General of the Zanzibar Drug Control and Enforcement Authority, briefs journalists yesterday on the seizure of various types of illicit drugs weighing a total of 798.893 kilogrammes. Photo: Rahma Suleiman

FROM PAGE 1

time when the commission hugely needed her presence of mind.

"We lost Mwanisha while we were in the eighth cycle of the voter register improvement exercise, and as we entered the ninth cycle, which will involve four regions—Rukwa,

## Samia mourns Justice Mwanisha Kwariko

Songwe, Njombe, and Ruvuma," he said, hailing the highly professional advice she was providing in enabling the commission to fulfil its responsibilities.

She was foremost in seeking that NEC pursuits always adhere to the

constitution, legislation and standing regulations, he further noted.

Rosemary Senyamule, the regional commissioner, told the mourners that the late judge was a strong leader and advocate for women's issues. "She was an expert in her field,

and we, the people of Dodoma, will remember her for her significant contributions to development," she stated.

Justice Kwariko passed away on December 27 in India where she was receiving medical attention.





Motorbike taxi rider Athumani Waziri helps in the distribution of male condoms yesterday as a way sensitising his peers on the importance of using them in combating HIV/Aids. Photo: Correspondent Steven William

# TCRA draws 146 new apps for e-commerce

By Guardian Reporter

NOTICEABLE strides are being made in basic infrastructure to support the physical delivery of items purchased through electronic commerce.

Dr Jabir Bakari, the Tanzania Communications Regulatory Authority (TCRA) director general, made this observation when unveiling an update on the sector recently in Dar es Salaam.

He said that licences were issued to 146 application service providers up to September this year, critical infrastructure to promote high-speed internet services and robust payment systems.

While the regulator sees these initiatives as key prerequisites for a thriving e-commerce sector, observers worry that there is more of offer than demand in a vast number of commercial subsectors.

The regulator says that the policy and regulatory frameworks have addressed most enabling factors for e-commerce, as during the three quarters of 2024 a total of 41,376,545 identified internet use devices accessed services.

He said that application service operators play a pivotal role in facilitating internet access, a cornerstone of electronic commerce that relies on secure and efficient transport and logistics.

Additionally, mobile money services have seen remarkable growth as by September 2024 there were 60,815,533 active mobile money accounts, processing 310,881,561 transactions, he specified.

The convenience of delivering digitally procured items to offices or residences is attributed to advancements in mobile communication, internet penetration, social media marketing, and improved communication channels, the report noted.

The government is actively overseeing the development of e-commerce applications and integrating the National Physical Address System (NAPS) with other social service platforms.

To further enhance e-commerce logistics, the government has launched a programme to build bonded warehouses and improve delivery systems, it said.

NAPS has revolutionized postal services, ensuring the seamless physical delivery of goods purchased online. The system supports both local and international e-commerce, enabling individuals to receive items at their homes or workplaces.

These deliveries are facilitated by 147 courier companies licensed by TCRA as of September 2024, or through private arrangements using conventional taxis or motorcycle riders.

Experts believe that the country is strategically positioned to become a regional e-commerce hub owing to its port facilities. The national carrier, Air Tanzania, is also expanding its cargo fleet to regional and international destinations, enhancing the country's regional logistics capabilities.

The use of physical addresses significantly contributed to the success of the August 2022 national census, as part of advancements in unlocking local e-commerce potential, it added



**The system supports both local and international e-commerce, enabling individuals to receive items at their homes or workplaces**

# Lightning strikes, kills five family members

By Correspondent Grace Mwakalinga

FIVE family members from Nkangi village in Chunya District, Mbeya Region, have died after being struck by lightning while resting at a cattle camp. Five others were injured in the incident.

Mbeya Regional Police Commander, Assistant Commissioner of Police (SACP) Benjamin Kuzaga, confirmed the killings, saying that the incident occurred on December 29 at approximately 8:30 PM.

The victims, from Masiganya family, were identified as Bala Scania (28), Kulwa Luweja (17), Masele Masaganya (16), Hema Tati (10), and Manangu Ngwisu (18), all residents of Nkangi village.

The five injured individuals were named as Gulu Scania (30), Manyenge Masaganya (13), Seni Solo (13), Paskali Kalezi (16), and Huzuni Kalezi (19).

The cause of the incident was a storm with lightning that struck the area, resulting in the deaths and injuries.

The injured were taken to Isangawana health centre for treatment and were later discharged after their condition improved.

In a separate incident, the Mbeya Police arrested Anna Mwakilima (24) from Mbuyuni, Mbarali District, on claims of stealing a two-and-a-half-month-old child named Juliana Kiwelo.

Police Commander Kuzaga reported that on December 22, a woman named Aneth Mgaya (20) from Mwakaganga village had her child, Juliana Kiwelo, abducted by a woman she recognised by her face. The suspect had previously visited Aneth's home, claiming she was from Mbeya City and was in Mbarali for business.

The next morning, on December 22, Aneth left her home to buy snacks nearby, leaving the suspect and her two children. Upon returning, she found both the suspect and her children had disappeared.

Aneth reported the matter to the police, and a subsequent search led to the arrest of the suspect. On December 28, police apprehended Anna Mwakilima in Mbuyuni village, Mapogoro Ward, Mbarali District, with the child, Juliana Kiwelo, alive.

# 52 patients undergo eye surgeries at St. Joseph Peramiho hospital

By Correspondent Christina Mwakangale

A Total of 52 out of 405 patients underwent eye surgeries, including cataract removal, while one patient was referred to Muhimbili National Hospital (MNH) for further treatment.

The surgeries were conducted at St. Joseph Peramiho Mission hospital during a four-day eye camp organised by MNH in collaboration with the Songea District Council, Ruvuma Region, from December 26 to 29, 2024.

Songea District Council's Chief Medical Officer, Dr. Geoffrey Kihale, stated that 27 patients received prescription glasses to address visual impairments, while others received routine eye treatment.

Dr. Kihale added that alongside the examinations and treatment, Peramiho hospital specialists received advanced training to enhance the quality of eye care services.

"I would like to commend the leadership of Muhimbili for recognising the importance of bringing these doctors to provide services in our district. This initiative has significantly reduced the distance and cost for residents of Songea and neighbouring areas who would have had to travel to Dar es Salaam (Muhimbili) for such treatment," Dr. Kihale noted.

One of the camp beneficiaries, Bryson Mapunda, expressed gratitude to the government for prioritising the needs of Songea residents and urged that such initiatives continue to expand access to specialised care.

Ruvuma Regional Medical Officer, Dr. Louis Chomboko, thanked MNH's leadership for recognising the need for such specialised services and deploying experts to collaborate with local teams.

"This initiative will address the significant challenge of residents having to travel long distances for eye examination and treatment in other regions.

"We are grateful to President Samia Suluhu Hassan's government for its efforts to bring these services closer to the people. This reduces costs and ensures citizens have easier access to healthcare services without distance being a barrier," said Dr. Chomboko.

Dr. Joachim Kilemile, MNH ophthalmologist highlighted that the camp provided various services, including eye disease examinations, the provision of glasses, and medications for those with eye problems.

He added that patients requiring surgeries were treated on-site, with some referred for further care.

**Wishing you cheerful holidays!**

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DATE: 12 December 2024

Tala Mikopo Tanzania  
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- TAKE FURTHER NOTICE** that should you fail, neglect or refuse to abide with this notice by ceasing and desisting from all acts stated herein against Our Client, we are duly instructed to commence legal proceedings against you without any further notice.

This letter does not constitute an exhaustive statement of Our Client's position nor is it a waiver of any of the rights and/or remedies in this and/or any other related matter.

Take note accordingly.

Yours faithfully,  
Amish Shah  
for and on behalf of ARS Law & Advisories

Cc: Client.

List of Partners Available on Request.

**ARS**  
LAW & ADVISORIES  
DUR REF: AKSIAAMMSI/100272/1000376  
DATE: 12 December 2024

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Take note accordingly.

Yours faithfully,  
Amish Shah  
for and on behalf of ARS Law & Advisories

Cc: Client.

List of Partners Available on Request.



## Tanzania has made sizable strides in raising economic justice for women - TGNP

By Correspondent Mary Kadoke

TANZANIA has made significant progress toward achieving economic justice for women as the country approaches the 30th anniversary of the Beijing Conference, according to the Tanzania Gender Networking Programme (TGNP).

The 1995 Beijing conference, held in China, was a landmark event in the global women's rights movement, uniting delegates from across the world to address issues of women's rights and gender equality.

Flora Ndaba, TGNP's acting head of programme, activism, and movement building, shared these remarks in Dar es Salaam over the weekend during a student orientation session reflecting on the progress, challenges, and future of gender equality in Tanzania since the conference.

She noted that through the active involvement of various partners in upholding women's rights, Tanzania has made notable progress in securing economic justice for women, despite facing challenges along the way.

"Tanzania has made remarkable strides in advancing economic justice for women through a collective commitment to women's rights. The journey has not been without challenges, but the continued efforts of all involved have helped break barriers and promote gender equality," she said.

One of Tanzania's significant steps toward achieving more inclusive economic growth has been the adoption of the 4:4:2 economic strategy, which focuses on empowering key social groups.

"The 40 per cent allocation of resources to women and youth, along with 20 per cent allocated to people with disabilities, has reduced inequality and provided equal opportunities for all segments of society," Ndaba added.

She emphasized the vital role of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) in the country, which have supported economic justice by addressing issues such as inequality, economic empowerment, and social inclusion through advocacy, policy reform, and empowerment programs.

Flora also addressed the reluctance of some men to advocate for the girl-child agenda, linking it to various factors, with victimization being a key concern.

"Men often victimize themselves in the context of women's rights and

gender equality by internalizing societal expectations and rigid gender norms. As a result, when men engage in or support causes related to women's empowerment, they can feel like they are betraying these expectations," Flora explained.

Nasra Mohammed, a student at the main campus of St. Augustine University of Tanzania (SAUT), emphasised that women's empowerment efforts have been effectively aligned with the resolutions from the Beijing conference.

"Beijing's resolutions called for a world where gender-based violence is eradicated and women are empowered to reach their full potential. We see initiatives in place to address the issue, and we acknowledge the progress," said Nasra.

Irene Ng'umbi, a nursing student at Kilimanjaro Christian Medical Centre (KCMC) University, noted that Tanzania has successfully extended reproductive health education to rural communities, ensuring that even remote areas have access to vital information and resources to promote better health outcomes.

In 2025, the global community will celebrate three decades since the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. This landmark framework, endorsed by 189 countries, continues to serve as a blueprint for achieving gender equality and empowering women and girls worldwide.



**Tanzania has made remarkable strides in advancing economic justice for women through a collective commitment to women's rights. The journey has not been without challenges, but the continued efforts of all involved have helped break barriers and promote gender equality**

## Youth encouraged to explore beekeeping

By Correspondent Thobias Mwanakatwe, Singida

YOUTH have been encouraged to shift their focus from in search of limited government jobs in urban areas, instead they should embark on exploring the potential of beekeeping, particularly in the country's abundant forests.

Philemon Kiemi, Nyuki village executive officer made the call recently at an event which brought together alumni of Mwenge Secondary School in Singida Municipality.

Kiemi emphasised that, with government jobs increasingly being scarce, young people should consider beekeeping as a viable alternative to urban job hunting.

He stressed that forests should be seen as "offices" and called on the youth to explore beekeeping opportunities instead of wandering around cities like Dodoma, Dar es Salaam, and Arusha with job applications.

"Instead of walking around cities looking for jobs, young people should visit the forests to explore beekeeping opportunities. That's not wasting time—it's investing in a promising future," Kiemi said.

A 2012 graduate from Sokoine University of Agriculture (SUA), Kiemi shared his own experience, noting that Nyuki village had seen a remarkable influx of tourists in 2024.

Between January and December, more than 6,000 visitors, including 1,700 international tourists, had come to Nyuki village to learn about beekeeping and tourism.

Kiemi said the growth in interest is part of efforts to train local communities in beekeeping and provide them with the tools necessary to enhance honey production, particularly the renowned honey dust body powder from Singida.

He expressed gratitude to the government for creating an environment conducive for beekeeping, which had allowed young people to earn income from bee products.

"Bee products have good markets both locally and internationally," he said, "highlighting the economic potential of the industry."

Engineer Emmanuel Hanai, chairman of the Mwenge Secondary School Alumni Association, also praised the beekeeping initiatives in Nyuki village.

Hanai, who also heads the Tanzania Environmental Expert Advisers Association (TEEA), urged the government to further support young beekeepers by ensuring access to markets for their products.

He stressed that by connecting local producers with national and international buyers, the government could help boost the income of youth involved in beekeeping and contribute to the broader economic development of the region.



Tanzania Gender Networking Programme executive director Lilian Liundi addresses journalists during an orientation session held in Dar es Salaam at the weekend, chiefly to reflect on the prospects on gender equality as the global community gears up for next year's celebration of three decades since the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. Photo: Correspondent Mary Kadoke

## Hospital workers' housing project to be accomplished end of January

By Correspondent Sabato Kasika

THE construction for healthcare workers housing project at the North B District hospital in Pangatupu, Unguja North 'B' District, Zanzibar, is expected to be completed by January 2025.

The project, which costs 4bn/-, began in January this year. It includes a three-story building that will accommodate 16 families, consisting eight three-bedroom apartments and eight two-bedroom apartments, with each family having independent living spaces.

This was announced by the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Health and Medical Services, Dr. Mngereza Mzee Miraji, during the foundation stone laying ceremony

for the workers' housing project. The function was also attended by the Zanzibar's Minister for Community Development, Gender, Elderly, and Children, Riziki Pembe Juma.

"The construction of the housing units is funded by the Zanzibar government. Upon completion, it is expected to cost approximately 4bn/-." The project began in January 2024 and is expected to be completed by January 2025," said Dr. Miraji.

In her speech, minister Riziki said the eighth-phase government continues to strengthen healthcare services to ensure that citizens receive healthcare services without inconvenience.

She explained that under the CCM 2020/2025 election mani-

festos, the government continues to take several steps to enhance healthcare services, including the construction of new buildings such as housing for health workers and the provision of modern equipment.

"During the 2020 election campaign, CCM made promises, and now the government is fulfilling them by providing quality healthcare services to citizens and ensuring the availability of emergency medical services to reduce preventable deaths," she stated.

The minister further added: "Zanzibar government continues to oversee and ensure that healthcare service providers are given good housing to offer quality services to the public."

She explained that the government's decision to build housing for workers near the hospital reduces workers' commuting distances and cuts down on costs for specialists who would otherwise need to travel to their homes.

"These houses are expected to accommodate 16 families, and the Ministry of Health leadership will begin considering a proper system to maintain and ensure they are well-kept, including conducting timely renovations," she said.

Unguja North 'B' District Commissioner Juma Sururu Juma, thanked Zanzibar President Dr. Hussein Ali Mwinyi, for constructing the buildings and other projects being implemented in the region.



A heavy-duty truck lies on its side yesterday afternoon, all but a section of Dar es Salaam's Goba-Tegeta road impassable. Photo: Correspondent Miraji Msala

## Educate people on the importance of insurance, journalists encouraged

By Correspondent Wilhelm Mulinda, Mwanza

THE Tanzania's media fraternity has been urged to play a key role in educating the public about the importance of insurance, particularly as a means of protection against unexpected disasters or property losses.

According to Richard Toyota, the manager of the Tanzania Insurance

Regulatory Authority (TIRA) in the Lake Zone, insurance alone cannot educate people on its importance. The media, however, can make a significant contribution in bridging this knowledge gap.

Toyota explained that, despite some progress, awareness of insurance remains low among the public. He emphasised that the media should help fill this gap by raising awareness about insurance's crucial role in people's development.

"Insurance ensures that people facing disasters or unexpected losses are not left in trouble, as they know they are covered and can continue with their lives," he said.

Toyota also mentioned that TIRA has introduced awards to motivate journalists who cover insurance-related stories, encouraging media personnel to write more articles on the topic to increase their chances of winning.

Currently, only 20 to 30 per cent

of Tanzanians utilize insurance services, which are essential for personal and national development. Toyota urged that this rate should increase, contributing both to individual security and national revenue.

He hailed the Mwanza Press Club for organising the event, praising the initiative for strengthening cooperation between journalists, government sectors, and private industries.





**INVITATION FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST – PRE-QUALIFICATION OF SERVICE PROVIDERS FOR THOROUGH INSPECTION, REPAIR, CALIBRATION, SOFTWARE UPDATING, LOAD TEST & CERTIFICATION OF MOBILE LIFTING MACHINES**

**I. INTRODUCTION**

Geita Gold Mining Limited ("The Company"), a subsidiary of AngloGold Ashanti ("AGA") is in north-western Tanzania, in the Lake Victoria goldfields of the Geita region, about 5 km from Geita town.

The Company is in the process of pre-qualifying Service Providers for Thorough Inspection, Repair, Calibration, Software Updating, Load Test & Certification of Mobile Lifting Machines and is, therefore, inviting eligible and interested applicants to submit expressions of interest as detailed below.

**NB: THE DOCUMENTS REQUESTED BELOW MUST BE SUBMITTED WHEN EXPRESSING INTEREST IN THIS SERVICE. SHORTLISTED APPLICANTS WILL BE SUBJECT TO THE ANGLOGOLD ASHANTI VETTING PROCESS.**

**Scope of Service:**

REFERENCE NUMBER	DESCRIPTION
GGME01929	THOROUGH INSPECTION, REPAIR, CALIBRATION, SOFTWARE UPDATING, LOAD TEST & CERTIFICATION OF MOBILE LIFTING MACHINES

**II. INFORMATION REQUIRED**

PRE-QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS
<b>COMMERCIAL</b>
Company Profile and updated Organogram
Company Code of Conduct and Ethics
Copy of Current Business License
Copy of Certificate of Incorporation, the most recent BRELA search, and the latest BRELA application of annual return.
Copy of Valid Tax Clearance Certificate (TCC), TIN Certificate and VAT Registration Certificate
Copy of Company Memorandum and Article of Association
Compliance with Mining Act-Approved Local Content Plan (Approval letter)
<b>FINANCIAL POSITION AND TERMS OF TRADE</b>
Applicants Audited Financial Statements for the latest three years (2021, 2022, 2023)
Bank Statements of the Applicants active bank accounts for the past 6 months.
<b>SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS</b>
OSHA Compliance Certificate
Environmental Compliance Certificate
Workers' Compensation fund Certificate
Safety and Environmental policy
<b>OTHER POLICIES</b>
Gifts / Hospitality / Sponsorship Policy / Procedure
Policies / Procedures dealing with Forced and Child Labour
Policies / Procedures dealing with Abuse, Discrimination and Harassment
Grievance Procedure
Human Rights Policy / Procedure / Programme
<b>PAST EXPERIENCE</b>
At least 3 names of the applicant's clients, value and duration of the contracts entered with the clients in the past two years (must be listed)
<b>TECHNICAL CRITERIA (GGME01929)</b>
Provide a copy of certified certificates for qualified Engineers/Technician must have Lifting Equipment Engineers Association (LEEA) Certificate or equivalent from recognized International Body in Lifting equipment inspection.
Service Provider shall issue Copies of all quality assurance documentation i.e. perform general inspection, calibration, updating software, load & brake test for GGM Mobile lifting Equipment/machinery.
Service provider shall provide reference letters at least three clients that the Applicants has performed the similar services within past three years.
Provide Parts list and commitment letter that guarantees the Part list provided are valid/correct and suit for mobile crane.

III. Interested companies must submit their Expression Letters of Interest ("LOI") by quoting **(GGME01929 – THOROUGH INSPECTION, REPAIR, CALIBRATION, SOFTWARE UPDATING, LOAD TEST & CERTIFICATION OF MOBILE LIFTING MACHINES)** on the subject of the email. Applicants must also submit supporting information to the Company, which states the full name, address, telephone, and e-mail address of the Company, name of the principal contact, and signed by an authorized representative.

IV. All LOIs and supporting documentation (in PDF format) must be submitted to the Company via e-mail at [geita.eoi@anglogoldashanti.com](mailto:geita.eoi@anglogoldashanti.com) without copying any individual from the Company. Submission should not be later than **8.30 AM on 11<sup>th</sup> January 2025** (the "EOI" Submission Deadline). EOI submissions must not exceed 150MB per email. In case the size of the email exceeds 150MB, applicants must split the submissions into multiple emails.

V. Shortlisted Candidates will be notified within forty-five (45) calendar days from the submission deadline. Candidates not contacted within the forty-five (45) calendar days should consider themselves unsuccessful.

**=END OF ADVERTISEMENT=**



**INVITATION FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST – PRE-QUALIFICATION OF SERVICE PROVIDERS FOR THE PROVISION OF LABOUR FOR PANEL BEATING AND BODY REPAIR SERVICES**

**I. INTRODUCTION**

Geita Gold Mining Limited ("The Company"), a subsidiary of AngloGold Ashanti ("AGA") is in north-western Tanzania, in the Lake Victoria goldfields of the Geita region, about 5 km from Geita town.

The Company is in the process of pre-qualifying Service Providers for the Provision of Labour for Panel Beating and Body Repair Services and is, therefore, inviting eligible and interested applicants to submit expressions of interest as detailed below.

**NB: THE DOCUMENTS REQUESTED BELOW MUST BE SUBMITTED WHEN EXPRESSING INTEREST IN THIS SERVICE. SHORTLISTED APPLICANTS WILL BE SUBJECT TO THE ANGLOGOLD ASHANTI VETTING PROCESS.**

**Scope of Service:**

REFERENCE NUMBER	DESCRIPTION
GGME01930	PROVISION OF LABOUR FOR PANEL BEATING AND BODY REPAIR SERVICES

**II. INFORMATION REQUIRED**

PRE-QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS
<b>COMMERCIAL</b>
Company Profile and updated Organogram
Company Code of Conduct and Ethics
Copy of Current Business License
Copy of Certificate of Incorporation, the most recent BRELA search, and the latest BRELA application of annual return.
Copy of Valid Tax Clearance Certificate (TCC), TIN Certificate and VAT Registration Certificate
Copy of Company Memorandum and Article of Association
Compliance with Mining Act-Approved Local Content Plan (Approval letter)
<b>FINANCIAL POSITION AND TERMS OF TRADE</b>
Applicants Audited Financial Statements for the latest three years (2021, 2022, 2023)
Bank Statements of the Applicants active bank accounts for the past 6 months.
<b>SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS</b>
OSHA Compliance Certificate
Environmental Compliance Certificate
Workers' Compensation fund Certificate
Safety and Environmental policy
<b>OTHER POLICIES</b>
Gifts / Hospitality / Sponsorship Policy / Procedure
Policies / Procedures dealing with Forced and Child Labour
Policies / Procedures dealing with Abuse, Discrimination and Harassment
Grievance Procedure
Human Rights Policy / Procedure / Programme
<b>PAST EXPERIENCE</b>
At least three recommendation letters from clients
<b>TECHNICAL CRITERIA (GGME01930)</b>
Applicants must provide company brochures showing technical capabilities and experience of not less than three years in panel beating and body repair for mobile equipment.
Proof of ownership of a spray booth for a minimum duration of three years, which may include, but is not limited to, purchase agreements or documents pertaining to the transfer of ownership, as well as demonstrable technical proficiency in operating the essential panel beating equipment (the spray booth).
Applicants must provide purchase orders (PO's) as evidence from at least three customers for similar works performed in panel beating and body repair.
Provide a Proof of ownership of vehicles or buses that will be used for transportation of employees in and out of mine site.

III. Interested companies must submit their Expression Letters of Interest ("LOI") by quoting **(GGME01930 - PROVISION OF LABOUR FOR PANEL BEATING AND BODY REPAIR SERVICES)** on the subject of the email. Applicants must also submit supporting information to the Company, which states the full name, address, telephone, and e-mail address of the Company, name of the principal contact, and signed by an authorized representative.

IV. All LOIs and supporting documentation (in PDF format) must be submitted to the Company via e-mail at [geita.eoi@anglogoldashanti.com](mailto:geita.eoi@anglogoldashanti.com) without copying any individual from the Company. Submission should not be later than **8.30 AM on 11<sup>th</sup> January 2025** (the "EOI" Submission Deadline). EOI submissions must not exceed 150MB per email. In case the size of the email exceeds 150MB, applicants must split the submissions into multiple emails.

V. Shortlisted Candidates will be notified within forty-five (45) calendar days from the submission deadline. Candidates not contacted within the forty-five (45) calendar days should consider themselves unsuccessful.

**=END OF ADVERTISEMENT=**



## Msomera villagers benefit from project against GBV, impacts of climate change

By Guardian Correspondent, Handeni

MSOMERA villagers in Handeni District, Tanga Region have benefited from a project aimed at combating gender-based violence and building community resilience to combat the impacts of climate change.

The project is being implemented by the Tree of Hope organisation, with funding from Women Fund Tanzania (WFTT), for the community in Msomera village, many of whom were relocated from the Ngorongoro Conservation Area.

Project coordinator from Tree of Hope, Goodluck Malilo, spoke over the weekend during a training session aimed at raising awareness about gender-based violence and building resilience to climate change in the Msomera community.

Goodluck stated that through the project, the residents of Msomera and Handeni have gained an understanding of the impacts of gender-based violence through education.

"This organisation engages in various developmental issues, including education, health, combating gender-based violence against children, and empowering women, youth, and people living with disabilities. Thus, we are focused here in Msomera to build the capacity of the residents, many of whom are from pastoral communities," emphasised Goodluck.

Goodluck said that Tree of Hope is implementing initiatives aimed at increasing awareness and building community resilience to the effects of climate change.

"We provide environmental education and empower the community to plant drought-resistant crops such as cassava, beans, and peas. We also provide financial education where the women of Msomera form saving and credit groups (VICOPA), which help them increase their households income," Goodluck added.

On her part, the Director of Tree of Hope, Fortunata Manyresa,

stated that the project has achieved significant success in Msomera, particularly in reducing cases of gender-based violence in the community.

"The number of violence cases has dropped significantly, and we are proud of the positive results. Statistics show a major decrease in violence, including an 80 per cent reduction in intimate partner violence, 70 per cent decrease in female genital mutilation, and 50 per cent reduction in child marriages. These are major accomplishments for us," emphasised Fortunata.

Fortunata added that Tree of Hope will continue to support the community in various areas and urged them to abandon harmful practices that contribute to gender-based violence.

"One of the challenges we face while implementing our responsibilities is that some families continue to uphold harmful traditions that contribute to gender-based violence, particularly against girls. Some families still marry off their daughters early and deny them the opportunity to receive an education. This remains one of the greatest challenges in our project implementation," Fortunata stressed.

Meanwhile, Ester Naftali, a beneficiary of the project, expressed gratitude for the training on gender-based violence and financial management, which has greatly improved their understanding of these issues.

"We are grateful for this education; we now have a much better understanding, especially us women. Initially, we didn't understand gender-based violence, and we accepted it as our right to be punished by our partners. However, we have also received financial education, which is very helpful economically. Many of us didn't understand what VICOPA was, but now we have started joining saving and loan groups (VICOPA) to improve our economic status," Ester emphasised.



Tumaini Sebastian (3rd-L), acting Simanjiro district administrative secretary, presents New Year gifts including two goats and foodstuffs donated by President Samia Suluhu Hassan to orphans and people with special needs cared for at an orphanage in Mirerani township yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Gift Thadey

## Samia contributes 35m/- towards construction of Anglican church

By Correspondent Elizabeth John,

Njombe

PRESIDENT Samia Suluhu Hassan has contributed 35m/- to support construction of the Anglican Church in Makambako Town Council, Njombe Region.

The donation was delivered on her behalf by the Njombe Regional Commissioner Antony Mtaka during a fundraising event held at the church over the weekend, which aimed to raise a total of 310m/- for the completion of the church building.

In his address, RC Mtaka commended the role of religious institutions in fostering peace, stability, and social development in the country.

He emphasised that President Samia recognises and supports the critical role religious leaders play in guiding their congregations, upholding moral values, and contributing to the overall well-being of society.

"Religious institutions and leaders play a vital role in supporting the development of our nation. Please continue to pray for our country and uphold moral values among your congregants," RC Mtaka said.

He also urged religious leaders to take an active role in addressing pressing societal issues such as violence, malnutrition, and other social challenges.

He highlighted the need for continued education within communities to tackle problems

like murder, rape, and suicide, which have adverse effects on families and the broader society. Mtaka encouraged the church to explore sustainable income-generating projects.

"Njombe has abundant untapped opportunities that can support long-term sustainability. The region faces a shortage of seeds for crops like potatoes, maize, and livestock products such as poultry and cattle. Local residents should seize these opportunities in 2025 to boost both individual and regional economies," he said.

According to him, tapping into the opportunities, the region could reduce its reliance on seeds imported from other areas and strengthen its local economy.

Mathew Mhagama, Bishop of South West Tanganyika diocese of the Anglican Church in Tanzania, expressed heartfelt gratitude for President Samia's contribution, noting that it would go a long way in supporting the church's efforts to complete the construction.

He also acknowledged the contributions from other leaders and attendees, which helped raise over 60m/- in total. Of this amount, 13m/- was pledged, and 47.8m/- was received in cash.

The funds will be crucial in ensuring the completion of the Anglican Church's construction in Makambako, a project that is expected to benefit the local community spiritually and economically.



UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA  
PRESIDENT'S OFFICE,  
REGIONAL ADMINISTRATION AND LOCAL  
GOVERNMENT



DATE: 27/12/2024

### PUBLIC NOTICE

THE KINONDONI MUNICIPAL COUNCIL IS INFORMING THE GENERAL PUBLIC THAT IT IS PLANNING TO RENOVATE AND IMPROVE THE COCO BEACH AND ITS SURROUNDINGS. THE IMPROVEMENT WILL INCLUDE TRADING STALLS, PARKING AREAS, GARDENS, PUBLIC AREAS AND OTHERS.

THE COUNCIL IS THEREFORE INVITING ALL STAKEHOLDERS AND THE GENERAL PUBLIC TO GIVE THEIR VIEWS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE EXPECTED IMPROVEMENTS THROUGH THE FOLLOWING:

1. COMMUNICATING THEM DIRECTLY AT THE KINONDONI MUNICIPAL COUNCIL DIRECTOR'S OFFICE LOCATED AT MAGOMENI AREA, NEXT TO THE KINONDONI DISTRICT COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE.
2. POSTING THEIR VIEWS THROUGH THE FOLLOWING POSTAL ADDRESS KINONDONI MUNICIPAL DIRECTOR, P.O. BOX. 31902 DAR ES SALAAM OR BY DROPPING THEM IN SUGGESTION BOXES AT THE MUNICIPAL OFFICES.
3. BY DROPPING IN SPECIAL SUGGESTION BOX PLACED AT COCO BEACH AREA.
4. BY SENDING THEM BY E-MAIL THROUGH THE FOLLOWING ADDRESS MD@KINONDONIMC.GO.TZ

PLEASE NOTE THAT YOUR VIEWS ARE CRUCIAL FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF COCO BEACH AREA.

THIS PUBLIC NOTICE HAS BEEN ISSUED BY THE KINONDONI MUNICIPAL COUNCIL DIRECTOR'S OFFICE.

THANK YOU

All correspondences to be addressed to the Kinondoni Municipal Director, Box 31902 Morogoro Road, 14883 Dar es Salaam, in reply please quote Tel: +2552170173 Email Info@kinondonimc.go.tz



Fortunata Manyresa, Director of Tanga city's Tree of Hope Organisation, has a word with residents Msomera village in Handeni District yesterday during training meant to empower them on gender-based violence and the impacts of climate change. Photo: Correspondent Boniface Gideon

## 4 people injured as bus is hit from behind

By Correspondent Gideon

Mwakanoya, Songea

FOUR people received in-

**KUPOTEA KWA HATI  
YA KUSAFIRIA**



ZAMDAT MATHIAS SHUMBUSHO naomba kutangaza kupotelewa na hati yangu ya kusafiria namba TAE 170134 iliyoitolewa uhamijaji makao makuu tarehe 23 AUGUST, 2019. Yoyote atakayeliona atoe taarifa kituo cha Polisi. Taarifa ya Polisi: PHO/DAR/LA/200943/2024

juries when a bus belonging to Superfeo Company, carrying 55 passengers, was hit from behind by a truck.

The accident occurred just three days after a Toyota Prado overturned, killing six people in Nyasa District.

Ruvuma Regional Police Commander Marco Chilya said that the incident took place on December 30 at around 10 a.m. at Kadewe village, Mchangan Ward, Tunduru District. The vehicle involved, a Yutong bus with registration number T1968DRT, is owned by Superfeo company and driven by Zakaria Mbunda, traveling from Dar es Salaam to Songea.

Chilya further explained that the bus collided with Scania truck with registration number T955DGG, driven by Juma Mohamed Malindi (21), a resident of Dar es Salaam, causing significant damage to both vehicles and injuries to four people.

The injured, who are currently re-

ceiving treatment at Tunduru District hospital, have been identified as Franciscus Komba (21), a resident of Matarawe, Songea, with a broken right leg, Asia Poner (75), a resident of Namtumbo, with facial injuries; Zuberi Mohamed Ally (55), a resident of Songea town, suffering from severe back pain; and Christopher Kazimoto (13), also from Songea town, who reportedly suffered a laceration to his upper lip.

Commander Chilya explained that the cause of the accident was fatigue of the driver. After the accident, the bus driver fled and his whereabouts still unknown. He said search is ongoing for him.

The injured are being treated at Tunduru District Hospital and were improving.

Chilya urged drivers and vehicle owners to take precaution, especially as the year-end approaches, by adhering to traffic safety laws and regulations.



## Tanzanians urged to manage challenge of waste disposal

By Correspondent Ibrahim Joseph, Dodoma

TANZANIANS have been urged to control the problem of waste disposal and stop throwing the items into drainage systems which has become a major contributor to flooding in residential areas.

Eng. Edward Lemelo, Tanzania Rural and Urban Roads Agency (TARURA) manager in Dodoma Region, made the call yesterday while speaking to this reporter, emphasising the growing risks to public safety and the economy.

Lemelo explained that improper waste disposal into storm-water drains is a primary cause of blocked drainage systems, leading to water overflow during heavy rains. This not only causes flooding in residential areas but also damages road infrastructure.

"TARURA has identified that in some areas, people continue to dump household waste, plastics, and other materials into the drainage systems. This results in flooding that spills into homes and disrupts activities," Lemelo said.

He added that the government has invested heavily in constructing drainage systems to prevent flooding and protect road networks, but these efforts are being undermined by the actions of a few individuals.

"This irresponsible behaviour is causing water to overflow into residential areas, and it also damages the roads that the government has spent millions of shillings to build," Lemelo said, stressing the need for public cooperation in safeguarding the vital infrastructure.

In addition to the flooding concerns, Lemelo highlighted the ongoing challenges posed by the heavy rains in Dodoma Region, which had caused damage to several roads.

He assured residents that TARURA is responding promptly by carrying out temporary repairs to restore transportation access. "In areas severely affected by rainwater, we are prioritizing urgent repairs to ensure the roads are usable and safe for travel," Lemelo said.

He specifically pointed out the situation in Kondo District, where flooding had disrupted transportation. However, Lemelo confirmed

that TARURA's teams had successfully restored roads, allowing for the resumption of transportation services.

"Kondo was particularly hit hard by the rains, but we have now restored road access. Roads are a key driver of economic activity, and it's crucial to ensure that they remain open for daily use," he added.

Lemelo stated that TARURA plans further investments in road maintenance and drainage improvement across the region, with a focus on districts most affected by seasonal rains.

"We are committed to ensuring that all damaged roads are promptly repaired, and that drainage systems are properly maintained to prevent future flooding," he said.

He added that the government's efforts to improve infrastructure and flood prevention are part of a broader strategy to support sustainable urban development and economic growth.

However, Lemelo reiterated that community participation is essential for the success of the initiatives.

"Preserving our infrastructure is a collective responsibility. We must all take care of our environment and ensure that we dispose of waste properly to avoid the kind of damage that is destroying our homes, roads, and communities," he said.

He also mentioned that TARURA has been working alongside local leaders and community groups to educate the public on the importance of proper waste disposal and the preservation of drainage systems.



**We are committed to ensuring that all damaged roads are promptly repaired, and that drainage systems are properly maintained to prevent future flooding**

## President Samia supports the needy in Kahama with New Year presents

By Guardian Correspondent, Kahama

PRESIDENT Samia Suluhu Hassan has extended her support to orphans and other vulnerable groups in the Msalala, Ushetu, and Kahama Municipal councils in Kahama District, Shinyanga Region, by providing various items worth 7m/- in celebration of the New Year 2025.

During a gift presentation at the Mvuma Orphanage in Nyasubu Ward, the Acting Shinyanga Regional Commissioner, who is also the Tabora Regional Commissioner Paul Chacha, said the President had remembered these groups in Kahama District by providing essential supplies worth 7m/-.

Chacha explained that President Samia has established a tradition of supporting orphans, widows, and people with disabilities each year, ensuring that they too can celebrate the festive season, just like other members of the community.

He listed the items distributed to these groups, which included cooking oil, sugar, rice, and school supplies such as notebooks and pens for children attending primary and secondary schools. He also urged those with the means to assist these groups with their essential needs.

Masoud Kibetu, Kahama Municipal council executive director urged the public to continue supporting these children, as many have not been able to pursue their educational dreams due to lack of resources, which stem from their challenging circumstances.

Laurine Noel, the Manager of Mvuma Orphanage, stated that the President's contribution would help address food shortages at the center, while students who lacked school supplies would now be able

to attend school and pursue their dreams, as they have been excelling in their studies.

She added that while the children have many needs, the most urgent is food, and she called on people with the ability to assist so that the children do not have to repeatedly ask for help. Many of the children at the orphanage were abandoned by relatives when they were infants, making their needs even greater.

"We thank President Samia for remembering us and providing essential supplies. The center cares for 40 children, 27 girls and 14 boys. The children need these supplies to continue their education and achieve their dreams," she said.

One of the beneficiaries, Victoria Justine, expressed her gratitude to the President for remembering them each year and providing essential items, including school supplies. She promised to study hard, fulfill her dreams, and help others in the future.



**We thank President Samia for remembering us and providing essential supplies. The center cares for 40 children, 27 girls and 14 boys. The children need these supplies to continue their education and achieve their dreams**



Garbage in dilapidated disposal 'bins' lies uncollected at Mlezi, on the outskirts of Dodoma city, as found yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Peter Mkwavila

## Fishers drilled on post-harvest loss in fisheries

By Correspondent Wilhelm Mulinda,

Mwanza

THE government, through the Fisheries Department, has provided comprehensive training to fishermen in the Lake Zone on how to prevent post-harvest losses of the sector, ensuring sustainable use of the region's fishing resources.

Abubakar Rutabanzibwa, the Lake Zone fisheries officer-in-charge, shared these remarks in an inter-

view with The Guardian, emphasising the importance of proper fish handling techniques to avoid losses.

"We have trained fishermen on improved methods of processing and drying fish, especially sardines. Sardines should be dried on vessels with inoculations to prevent contamination by sand, which improves their quality and market value," he explained.

Rutabanzibwa highlighted that improper drying can cause sardines to spoil and produce an unpleasant

odor, rendering them unfit for consumption and resulting in losses for fishermen.

The training also covered the use of ice and cold storage for preserving fish. "Currently, some fishermen use ice-filled containers on their boats and cold rooms to preserve fish, and cold storage facilities are now more widely available in the Lake Zone," he added.

These are some of the measures the government is taking to help fishermen control post-harvest loss-

es, promoting the development of fishing communities and the broader national economy.

He stressed the importance of maintaining a cold chain system from the moment fish are harvested until they reach the market or industry, ensuring the fish remain fresh and minimising losses.

Rutabanzibwa also encouraged fishermen with sufficient capital to invest in solar dryers, which can speed up the drying process and ensure better-quality products.



In a New Year celebration gesture, acting Muheza district commissioner Mohamed Mfaki (4th-L) pictured yesterday presenting a cockerel to Anna Saambili of Misufini camp for the elderly camp. Also presented were rice, soap and soft drinks. Photo: Correspondent Steven William

## Mozambique creates commission to investigate mass prison break

MAPUTO

THE government of Mozambique has created a commission of inquiry to investigate the mass escape of prisoners from two penitentiary facilities in the country's capital of Maputo, which occurred on Wednesday, state news agency AIM reported on Sunday.

The escape involved 1,534 prisoners from the Central Prison and the Maximum Security Prison of Machava, known as B.O., resulting in clashes with the National Penitentiary Service staff, in which at least 33 people were

killed.

The commission, which has already started its work, aims to understand the circumstances of the escape, identify possible internal or external failures, and determine whether there was negligence on the part of those responsible for security, the report quoted Deputy Minister of Justice, Constitutional and Religious Affairs Filimao Suaze as saying.

Suaze said the inquiry commission will also analyze the deaths that occurred during the ongoing operation to search for and capture the fugitives.

According to the deputy minister, about 280 prisoners have already been recaptured, more than 100 of them on Friday, thanks to the cooperation of families and reports of escapes in the neighborhoods.

Suaze emphasized that many of the fugitives returned voluntarily or were handed over by their relatives, who reported the escapes after noticing the irregularities.

The deputy minister also denied allegations that the escape was part of a premeditated plan to eliminate the prisoners, as some information on social media

suggested. He clarified that the fugitives, some of whom are considered terrorists, are being monitored and that the police are committed to recapturing them.

Suaze called on the public to continue to cooperate with the authorities in locating the escaped prisoners, warning that the situation has caused panic in several neighborhoods in Maputo.

The commission has not set deadlines for completion of its report, but the deputy minister said he expected significant progress in the investigation in the coming days.



## Wasn't having property and business formalisation for a policy creditable?

WE remember having taken time to comment on this issue at least twice in the last 15 years or so, the issue itself being the ambitious pro-poor programme popularly known by its Kiswahili acronym Mkurabita.

This was an initiative the government mooted, vigorously touted and then set out to implement, with support from the Institute for Liberty and Democracy (ILD).

Leading the institute was Hernando de Soto Polar, a Peruvian economist widely known for his work on the informal economy and on the importance of business and property rights.

The expert's work in developing countries earned him praise worldwide by numerous heads of state. This was particularly in relation to the implementation of property and business rights reforms that provided the legal tools and institutions required for citizens to participate in the formal national and global economy.

ILD was seen as working towards a world in which all people had equal access to secure rights to their real property and business assets in order to pull themselves - and their countries - out of poverty.

It was reported that the first two phases of the initiative had been completed with Norwegian government funding and that ILD experts would have submitted their proposal for the third phase, but amid fears of further funding not being forthcoming.

Official records show that the birth of the programme resulted from the realisation that poor people's opportunities for improving their livelihoods were seriously constrained by lack of access to legal protection and formal policy systems.

As a Norwegian People's Aid expert once noted in an official summary of the Mkurabita concept document: "The consequences of customary or informal arrangements for people's assets - without a unified legal system of recognising people's housing, land and business activity - are that banks and investors do not accept them as security for credit or investment and Government cannot effectively collect the tax it needs. Thus economic growth and employment are restricted and poverty persists."

It was also observed that informal sector entrepreneurs operated with low levels of education, little market information, poor technology for

production, and a lack of technical and advisory services.

Experts also said informal-sector business operators were weak in management and planning and needed training, information and the strengthening of their associations.

For its part, the Bank of Tanzania was said to have set tough conditions on lending by commercial banks to prevent them from taking risks with their customers' deposits.

It was further noted that, judicious or prudential as these guidelines may have been, it was not always that they were as pro-poor as Mkurabita ought to have been because they often excluded lending to micro and small enterprises.

That is precisely why those who devised the programme also deemed it necessary to learn from a number of other government programmes ways to harmonise the Mkurabita approach.

Mkurabita was thus viewed as established primarily to empower the marginalised majority in the informal sector so that they could use their property and business assets as well as other opportunities in the modern market economy to increase their income and participate in the reduction of income poverty.

In a word, the idea was to see the initiative effectively contributing to the attainment of the targets of what had been drawn up as the eight Global Millennium Development Goals, popularly known as MDGs.

Some banks and other micro-finance institutions playing a noticeable and indeed laudable role to that end.

Somewhere along the line, though, Mkurabita looked to have lost steam. It no longer even spoke, if you will. No one heard from or about it any longer, while lending institutions insisted that only property or businesses for which there were title deeds or at least residential permits or business licences would be accepted as collateral.

The poor whose residences or businesses were yet to be covered by Mkurabita found themselves in a fix, knowing neither where to go nor what to do next. From then on, there was little in the form of mention of the initiative worth listening to - or heeding.

Yet, all those caring to remember why the initiative was established in the first place knew full well that starving it would amount to killing the goose laying the golden egg... With this, what next for Mkurabita?

## Could the 'magic' Ewura injected into oil sub-sector work within water authorities?

DESPITE hiccups one would likely experience once in a while, the decision by the Energy and Water Utilities Regulatory Authority (Ewura) to fix indicative retail prices for petrol, diesel and kerosene as well as oversee the quality of those products has immensely helped the local oil sector regain sanity.

A consumer public that had become increasingly upset after years of failure by the authorities concerned to tame oil dealers had one more reason to believe that the government had teeth that could bite and bring about positive changes when it mattered.

Ewura has sustained the momentum on this laudable performance for some years now. While there may still be a few tiny pockets of silent resistance, there is reason to believe that the order we are witnessing will live on.

But we know that there is a lot more to Ewura's duties and responsibilities than just overseeing the energy or oil sector, one of the other major ones being acting similarly with respect to the water sector.

We wonder whether Ewura could be as swift and effective in sprucing

up the water sector as it has been in working for improvements in the quality and pricing of petroleum products and ensuring safety standards at filling stations.

We say this given the way some water and sewerage/sanitation authorities in various parts of the country have been going about their routine duties and responsibilities.

There is an immense lot they ought to do to make their customers believe that the challenges and problems they keep facing are not "manufactured" or "artificial".

For instance, they may wish to say why customers keep complaining about being bombarded with inflated bills or bills for water that was never supplied and why alerts from consumers about burst water pipes and proven cases of foul play by the agencies' very own dishonest staff or agents are seldom attended to.

Fast-tracking debt collection could well work in the short term, but the long-term solution lies in serving consumers more efficiently and reliably.

Ewura may wish to advise water authorities accordingly on all this, perhaps using magic similar to the one that has helped make the oil sector more consumer-friendly.

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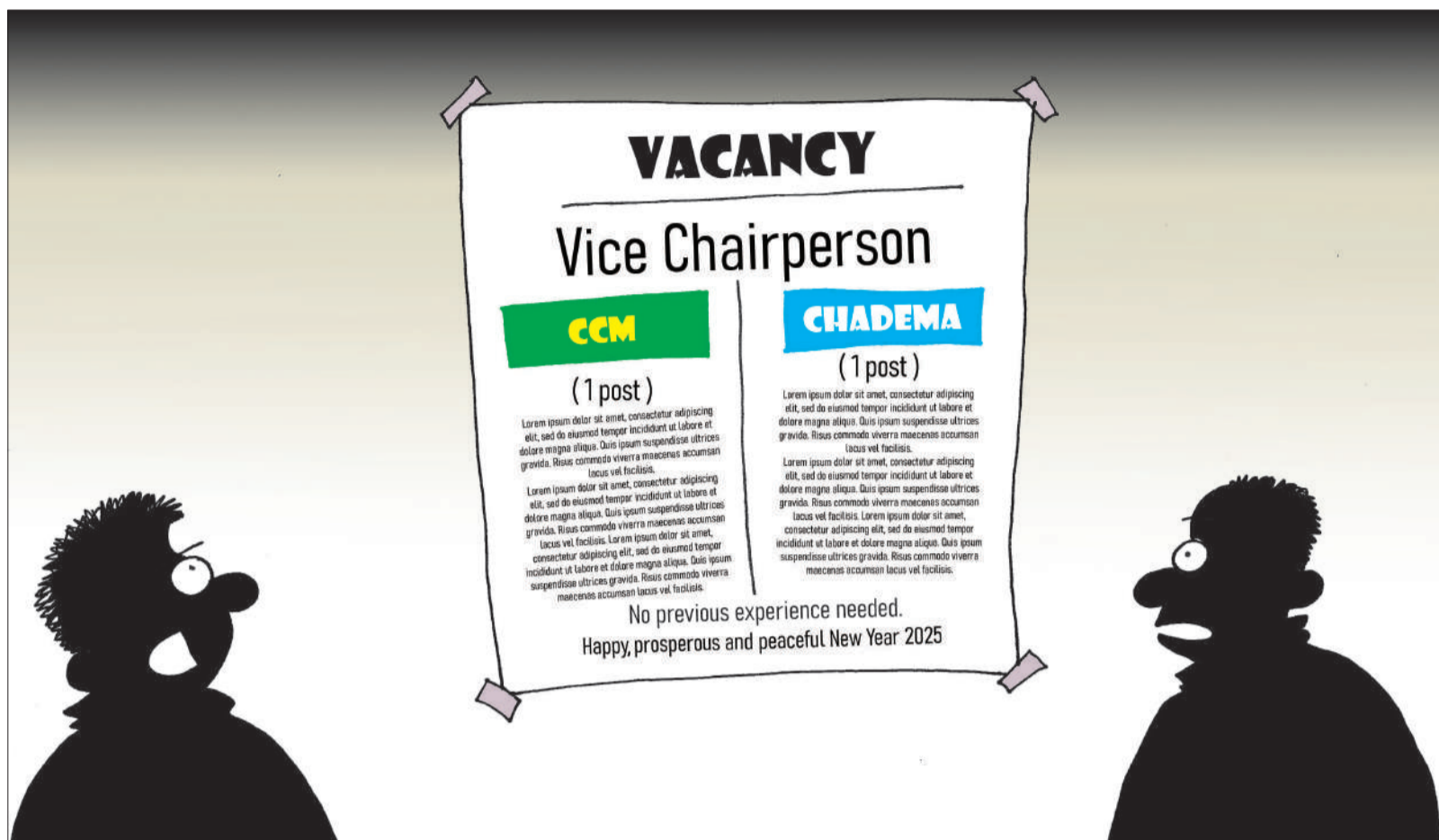
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## Deaths from giveaway stampedes: Why govt must take the blame

By Adekunle Adekoya

FOUR the many families that lost loved ones, it could not have been a merry Christmas. I sympathise with them and offer my condolences. All of those who died in the stampedes were in search of wherewithal to make the season as merry as possible. Sadly it was not to be. In all, no less than 67 persons lost their lives, including women and children, in three different locations in the country.

About 35 persons, mostly children were killed in Ibadan, in the week preceding Christmas, while the following Saturday, about 22 also died in Okija, Anambra State, at a giveaway event organised by business magnate and philanthropist, Dr Ernest Azudialu Obiejesi. In Abuja, the national capital, another 10 people died at another giveaway event organised by a parish of the Catholic Church.

As is usual here, the authorities have been quick to apportion blames, saying the organisers did not put effective crowd-control measures in place. As a result, organisers of the Ibadan event, are currently behind bars in a police station. They are a popular broadcaster and operator of Agidigbo FM in Ibadan, Alhaji Oriyomi Hamzat, and former wife of the Ooni of Ife, Queen Naomi. It is not known whether similar fates have come the way of Anambra and Abuja organisers where people also died in stampedes.

As the late Chief Obafemi Awolowo once said: "Problems are like plants. They have roots." What was the cause of the stampedes? A deeper look beyond the surface would reveal that apart from the disorderly attitude of our people at such events, the principal cause is deep-rooted poverty. Most families are struggling with the country's worst cost-of-living crisis in more than five decades since the end of the civil war. Between 2015 and 2023, the national economy was virtually run aground by the administration of Muhammadu Buhari.

Under the watch of this taciturn general, the country raced back into the debt trap from which it had been freed from during the Olusegun Obasanjo administration. In addition, insecurity soared sky-high as bands of marauding herdsmen militias roamed round the country and drove farmers off their lands, and in the process, created huge shortages in food supply, which led to the remaining available food being sold at high prices.

The country was thus set on the road to famine. In addition, bands of kidnappers were also operating without let or hindrance; it became a dangerous undertaking to travel from one point to another, and for a



Alhaji Oriyomi Hamza



Chief Obafemi Awolowo



Dr Ernest Azudialu Obiejesi



Muhammadu Buhari

country that depends a lot on trade among the various states, another deadly blow was dealt to economic activities. As experience has shown, a 50-kg bag of rice which sold for less than N8,000 when Buhari took over governance in 2015 was selling for nearly N50,000 by May 2023 when he left.

If that was not bad enough, in his inaugural speech as president, Asiwaju Bola Tinubu peremptorily announced removal of subsidy on petrol. The marketplace reacted very viciously to this as transport fares skyrocketed while prices of food items, transported mostly by road, headed for the sky, burst through the homosphere, and made

for outer space. At the moment, a 50-kg bag of rice is selling for between N103,000-108,000. In a country whose minimum wage is N70,000, just how many can afford that? And rice is a staple!

Is the president aware that university lecturers and many company executives have resorted to sleeping in their offices to cut costs of transport? Is it also known by the president that a man with four children in primary and secondary schools in Lagos needs as much as N4,000-6,000 daily for children to go to school and return?

In his maiden media chat aired last Monday, the president spoke about the deaths from the



Olusegun Obasanjo

stampedes, saying it was a "grave error" by the organisers.

"It is very sad that people are not well organised. We just have to be more disciplined in our society. Condolences to those who lost members, but it is good to give," Tinubu said. "I've been giving out foodstuff and commodities, including envelopes in Bourdillon, for the last 25 years, and I've never experienced this kind of incident because we are organised and disciplined. If you know you won't have enough to give, don't attempt to give or publicise it."

This is where the president got it wrong. Of course, I do not expect him to say that his policies are behind the burgeoning poverty in the land and that is why he needs to be told so. Saying that he has been doing giveaways for 25 years without incident is rubbing salt into injury. How accessible is Bourdillon in Ikoyi, Lagos? That is a very exclusive part of Lagos. VIIRA (Victoria Island & Ikoyi Residents Association) is arguably the most powerful community residents association in Nigeria, with the country's most well-heeled people as members.

The association, many years ago, got the Lagos State Government to ban okada and danfo from operating in their precincts. If not, the Bourdillon giveaways would turn to bloodbaths as people throng the president's residence for their share of his giveaways! I challenge the president to attempt a giveaway at Agege Stadium or somewhere else in Alimosho in Lagos and see the results. Let the truth be told: the president and his government must take responsibility for the deaths of our hapless people during the giveaway stampedes. His policies are also responsible for deepening poverty in the land, and I hereby urge him and his government to triple their efforts at working the economy to bring relief to the people. TGIF.

Apart from the disorderly attitude of our people at such events, the principal cause is deep-rooted poverty. Most families are struggling with the country's worst cost-of-living crisis in more than five decades



# Work vs. gambling: Need for African youth to choose wisely

By Correspondent Gaudensia Mngumi

**W**ORK is everything in life as it provides respect, financial stability and the means to make hands meet every day. More importantly, work is essential for both individuals and national development.

Work allows people to address challenges, seize opportunities and achieve their targeted life goals.

A society cannot thrive without work. Regardless of gender, every individual must engage in meaningful labour or any income-generating activity to secure their livelihoods and celebrate progress.

However, in Africa—particularly Tanzania—the approach to work among youth and some adults has taken a troubling turn.

Prioritizing work over betting to earn money is crucial for youth for several reasons, including financial stability since betting is risky and unreliable as a source of income. The odds are often stacked against participants, leading to potential losses rather than gains.

Young people who rely on betting may end up in debt, creating financial strain, thus impacting their future. When youth have a stable job, it offers them a steady income, enabling savings and investments for long-term financial security.

Employment fosters development of practical skills, knowledge, and expertise that can enhance career prospects. Engaging in work provides valuable



experience for young people and could more likely open doors to better opportunities.

Youth are increasingly drawn to gambling, seduced by the promise of instant riches. Gambling has become the 'talk of the town' dominating urban and rural spaces alike.

Advertisements related to gambling have gone viral across television, radio, newspapers and online platforms.

All these adverts promote betting as an easy way to wealth. The allure? Spend as little as 1,000 Tanzanian shillings and 'wake up richer'.

This narrative misleads young people into believing that gambling is a viable alternative to hard work. As a result, many rely on betting, neglecting the fact that real wealth is earned through employment, business, or other

legitimate means.

## The harsh reality

The truth remains: wealth cannot be achieved through shortcuts; one must work hard to achieve his/her targeted life goals. Most gamblers lose more than they gain because gambling is risky. However, betting companies profit immensely.

For example, if one million

young people each bet 1,000/-, the companies earn a billion shillings daily. A small fraction may be redistributed among winners, but the majority remains with the companies.

According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), the youth workforce in sub-Saharan Africa is expected to grow to 72.6 million by 2050. This should be a demographic advantage, enabling Africa to transform into a global economic leader. However, the rising obsession with gambling threatens this potential.

## Gambling addiction

Gambling is not just a personal financial drain; it has societal repercussions. It breeds idleness and fosters a generation unwilling to engage in meaningful work.

This mentality contributes to urban chaos, crime, and the decline of small businesses. Shops are going bankrupt as shopkeepers divert money into betting, while addicted university students misuse their allowances. Even pensioners are not immune.

The addiction also fuels Africa's migration crisis. Young people, desperate for better opportunities, risk their

lives crossing the Mediterranean Sea in search of wealth abroad.

African nations must urgently address this issue. Governments, media, and communities need to prioritize the truth: betting is not a path to wealth but a gamble that leaves most people poorer.

Media outlets should shift their focus from promoting gambling to encouraging hard work, entrepreneurship, and creativity.

Moreover, regulations should limit the overwhelming presence of betting advertisements. Airtime currently dedicated to gambling could be better utilized for educational campaigns on climate change, disease prevention, and economic empowerment.

Gambling is a trap that preys on the dreams of Africa's youth. The promise of easy money is a false hope that often leads to poverty and despair.

It is time to reframe the narrative: work is the foundation of personal and societal progress. Only through hard work, innovation, and resilience can Africa's youth build a prosperous future for themselves and their continent.

By Telesphor Magobe

**A**S we end the year of 2024 and begin the New Year of 2025, it is worth recalling a few selected global reports that elevate Tanzania to higher levels of improvement. In light of these reports Tanzania is a good performer in various sectors of the economy and its performance sets the foundation for further achievements.

The State of the World's Migratory Species 2024 report mentions Tanzania twice. Authored by the UN Environment Programme World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC), the report highlights the migratory species' current status and trends, identifies key pressure risks they face, and highlights efforts made to conserve and promote their recovery.

In relation to Serengeti National Park, the report recognises this natural world heritage as "the largest remaining migratory system on earth" for its mass migrations of wildebeest. UNESCO regards it as "one of the most impressive nature spectacles in the world [which] also hosts one of the largest and most diverse large predator-prey interactions worldwide, providing a particularly impressive aesthetic experience."

The Serengeti-Mara ecosystem in Tanzania and Kenya is one of the world's largest free-ranging populations of migratory ungulates, including blue wildebeest and plains zebra, which support populations of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS)-listed apex predators like cheetah, lion and African wild dog, according to the report.

The second is a report on the results of the wildlife census launched by then Minister for Natural Resources and Tourism Angella Kairuki in Arusha on April 22, 2024. In this report, of 401,000 rhinos found in Africa, Tanzania leads other African countries in having the largest rhino population (225,000), followed by South Africa (46,000), Mozambique (45,000), Kenya (42,000) and Zambia (41,000), according to Tanzania Wildlife Research Institute (TAWRI).

Of 29,000 lion populations found in Africa, Tanzania also leads other African countries in having the largest lion population (17,000), followed by South Africa (3,284), Botswana (3,064), Kenya (2,500) and Zambia (2,500). However, in elephant populations, Tanzania is ranked the third as it has 60,000 elephants after Botswana (130,000) and Zimbabwe (100,000).

The third is a report about the discovery of geometric rock art sites. Tanzania has identified 46 new geometric rock art sites in Lake Victoria Region and on February 28, 2024 submitted them to UNESCO for consideration and possible nomination for the world heritage sites' list.

As of now the sites are still on a tentative list, which is an inventory of properties each State Party intends to consider

# Tanzania rises to new heights of improvement in year 2024



FAO's State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture 2024 report ranks Tanzania among five of the top 10 freshwater fish producers.

for nomination. The sites include 37 rock art sites in Kagera Region, two in Mwanza Region, and seven in Musoma (Mara Region).

"The discovery of rock art, across international borders linking three countries together (Uganda (24), Kenya (3), and Tanzania (46)), is testament to the existence of a long history of producing paintings and engravings imbued with spiritual power."

According to UNESCO, some of these sites are still being used by the local inhabitants, continuing the management of these localities for their spiritual power. "The relevance of rock art, beyond tourism, to local inhabitants is important in safeguarding it further - for the benefit of future generations."

In the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) report of May 2024 Tanzania has for the first time in 2024 met criteria for graduation from the status of UN least developed countries (LDCs) since the establishment of the LDC category in 1971 when Tanzania was categorised as a LDC and was one of the 25 initial LDCs. Tanzania will be assessed again during a triennial review in 2027 by the Committee for Development Policy (CDP).

If Tanzania meets the criteria again after the next review in 2027, it could be recommended for graduation after the endorsement of the recommendation by the Economic and Social Council

(ECOSOC) and the UN General Assembly and after a preparatory period.

During its triennial review of the list of LDCs in New York on March 4-8, 2024 the CDP found that "Rwanda, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania had fulfilled the criteria for graduation for the first time. These countries will be considered for graduation at the next triennial review in 2027," says the 2024 ECOSOC report.

In "Economic Report on Africa (ERA): Investing in a Just and Sustainable Transition in Africa" published by UN Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) in May 2024, Tanzania tops 10 surveyed African economies in poverty and inequality reduction by 2045.

The surveyed economies included Cameroon, Ethiopia, Kenya, Morocco, Namibia, Rwanda, Senegal, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zimbabwe. In projected African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) contributions to reducing poverty by 2045, Tanzania tops the 10 surveyed economies by scoring in relative change (-11.5 per cent), followed by Ethiopia (-3.2 per cent), Zimbabwe (-1.3 per cent), Senegal (-1.0 per cent), Morocco (-0.9 per cent), Uganda (-0.7 per cent), Kenya (-0.7 per cent), Namibia (0.5 per cent), Cameroon (-0.4 per cent) and Rwanda (-0.1 per cent).

In absolute change (million), Tanzania tops the surveyed econ-

omies by scoring (-1.06), followed by Ethiopia (-0.64), Zimbabwe (-0.01), Senegal (-0.02), Morocco (0.00), Uganda (-0.03), Kenya (-0.03), Namibia (0.00), Cameroon (-0.01) and Rwanda (0.00).

FAO's State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture 2024 report: Blue Transformation in action ranks Tanzania among five of the top 10 freshwater fish producers in the world in 2022. The top 10 global freshwater fish producers (in descending order) comprises Bangladesh, Cambodia, Myanmar, Uganda, Tanzania, India, China, Indonesia, Nigeria and Egypt. As a result of the impact of Covid-19, the FAO report says, Africa experienced a drop in production in 2020 especially in Egypt, Africa's top producer, and Nigeria, the top producer in sub-Saharan Africa.

"Africa produced just over 2.3 million tonnes of farmed aquatic animal species in 2022, an increase of only 50,500 tonnes (2.2 per cent) from 2020. The net increase came mainly from freshwater aquaculture, mostly in Ghana, followed by Zambia, Tanzania and Rwanda." Tanzania (2021), Namibia (2022), Madagascar, Malawi and Uganda (2023) have already developed National Plans of Action for Small-Scale Fisheries (NPOAs-SSF) and two countries are developing or finalising their plans in 2024. In Tanzania's major lakes, important fish species include small pelagic,

tilapia and perch fisheries.

In Global Cybersecurity Index (GCI) 2024 Tanzania scores highly in all five pillars of measuring global cybersecurity commitments. It is one of the top 5 African and 46 role-modelling countries, according to the International Telecommunication Union (ITU).

ITU says the role-modelling countries have an overall GCI score of at least 95 per cent by demonstrating a strong cybersecurity commitment to coordinated and government-driven actions that encompass evaluating, establishing and implementing generally accepted cybersecurity measures across all five pillars or up to all indicators.

A country score was calculated out of 20 points per pillar and Tanzania's performance in relative strength scores 20/20 in legal measures, 20/20 in cooperation measures, and 20/20 in organisational measures. In potential growth, it scores 19.69/20 in technical measures, and 19.57/20 in capacity development measures.

In Africa, role-modelling countries (in descending order) are Ghana, Kenya, Mauritius, Rwanda and Tanzania. ITU launched GCI in 2015 to help countries identify the areas of improvement and encourage them to act in building capacity and capabilities under each pillar. The GCI has been adapted across editions to respond to changing risks, priorities and resources to provide a more relevant snapshot of cybersecurity measures undertaken by countries.

Tanzania is also among the top 10 tax performers in reducing inequality, according to the Commitment to Reducing Inequality Index (CRI) 2024. The top 10 countries in the category of "tax impact on inequality" with their pre-tax Gini percentage in brackets are Ireland (-11.3), Kenya (-8.5), Belgium (-8.0), Australia (-7.4), Argentina (-7.2), Tanzania (-7.0), Lesotho (-6.8), Tunisia (-6.2), Canada (-5.9) and the USA (-5.1).

This year's top 10 inequality reducers collect a large amount of progressive taxation (except Ireland, which diverts revenues away from other countries), according to the (CRI) 2024 report that measures the commitment of 164 countries and regions to re-

ducing inequality. It assesses their performance across the three pillars of 1) public services (education, health and social protection), 2) progressive taxation, and labour rights and wages.

Tanzania has climbed in Network Readiness Index (NRI) as it ranks 103rd out of 133 surveyed economies worldwide. Each surveyed economy was measured in four pillars, namely technology, people, governance, and impact and each of these pillars is further divided into three sub-pillars. Technology is subdivided into access, content and future technologies. The people pillar is subdivided into individuals, businesses and governments. Governance is subdivided into trust, regulation and inclusion, and impact is subdivided into economy, quality of life and sustainable development goal (SDG) contribution.

The report says technology is a foundational component of NRI, which aims at evaluating the technological infrastructure crucial for a country's engagement in the global economy. The people pillar assesses the application of information communication and technology (ICT) across individuals, enterprises, and the public sector. The governance pillar emphasises the creation and reachability of structures that revitalise the networked economy across trust, regulation and impact dimensions. The impact pillar endeavours to gauge the diverse implications of engagement in the networked economy.

The surveyed countries include 52 high-income economies, 36 upper-middle-income economies, 32 lower-middle-income economies, and 13 low-income economies.

In sub-Saharan Africa, Mauritius leads digital readiness, ranking 60th globally, demonstrating balanced performance across multiple dimensions. It shows strength in the impact (47th) and people (51st) pillars, with notable achievements in digital businesses (23rd). It also performs well in the regulation (61st) of emerging technologies, and excels in digital inclusion (60th), especially in addressing the socioeconomic gap in the use of digital payments (49th) and in the rural gap in the use of digital payments (43rd).

Ghana shows strength in technology, people and governance; Malawi in people, governance and impact; Zimbabwe in technology, people and governance; Senegal in technology, governance and impact; Tanzania in technology, people and governance; and Burundi in technology, people and impact. The NRI report is produced and published by Portulans Institute (PI), an independent nonprofit, nonpartisan research and educational institute based in Washington DC.



By Mohammed Zain Shafi Khan

# Enabling genocide? Former Biden officials reflect on United States president's legacy



**President Joe Biden has faced criticism for his continued support for Israel's war in Gaza, despite the mounting civilian toll.**

IN July, outgoing United States President Joe Biden claimed he had “done more for the Palestinian community than anybody”. Maryam Hassanein, a political appointee who resigned from his administration, strongly disagrees.

“I think his legacy is the opposite,” Hassanein, a former member of the Interior Department, said. “He’s the president who’s done the most harm to Palestinians.”

On January 20, Biden is slated to leave office, joining a short list of presidents who served only a single term in the White House.

But as his tenure sunsets, some former members of his government say his approach to Israel’s war on Gaza may prove to be a lasting stain on his legacy.

The war in Gaza has provoked widespread humanitarian concerns, ranging from famine to ethnic cleansing. A United Nations special committee even warned Israel’s tactics in the Palestinian enclave were “consistent with genocide”.

Close to 45,000 Palestinians have been killed, and more than 100,000 wounded. As many as 1.9 million have been displaced from their homes.

But since the war was launched in October 2023, the US has been unwavering in its support for Israel’s campaign.

The Biden administration provided at least \$17.9bn in military aid to Israel in the first year of the war – a record sum for the Middle East country. Additionally, earlier this year, the US deployed about 100 troops to assist in operating an advanced missile defence system it sent to Israel.

Hassanein was one of about a dozen Biden officials who resigned as a result of these policies. She blames Biden for helping to create a culture of acceptance towards anti-Palestinian violence.

“His policies caused immense harm to Palestinians, not just in Palestine but also here in the US, where hate crimes against Palestinians have surged,” Hassanein said.

In Biden’s final days, former government contractors and staffers like Hassanein who reflected on the president’s controversial legacy and why they had to quit their posts.

## Josh Paul resigned on October 18, 2023

Josh Paul, a former director of congressional and public affairs at the State Department’s Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, was one of the earliest departures from the Biden administration.

He had spent more than a decade in the State Department. But that tenure came to an end in October 2023, shortly after the start of Israel’s war.

He opposed what he described as Israel’s indiscriminate killing of Palestinians, as well as the US decision to provide unconditional support to Israel.

“It was viscerally apparent that not only was there nothing I could do in the context of Gaza to make the situation better, but in fact, anything I could do would only make it worse,” he said of his final days at the State Department.

At the time of his resignation, at least 8,000 Palestinians had been killed by Israel. Paul blames US complacency for the thousands of Palestinian deaths throughout the conflict.

“The Biden legacy over Gaza will be American complicity in genocide and American tearing down of the rules-

based international order – or at least the first and most significant steps toward that,” Paul said. “Neither of those is a legacy that anyone should be proud of.”

Paul added he has no regrets about his decision to leave the Biden administration. He pointed out that Biden has repeatedly established “red lines” that Israel crossed, with no meaningful consequences.

For example, in March, Biden called invading the southern city of Rafah a “red line”. But by May, Israel had both bombed the city and brought troops into its densely populated neighbourhoods.

“When countries see that the president of the United States sets red lines and does nothing to enforce them, that weakens us globally,” said Paul.

Voting in the 2024 presidential election was a challenge for him. The race pitted Biden’s vice president, Kamala Harris, against former President Donald Trump. Both candidates refused to make pledges to curb Israel’s military offensive.

Paul said he consulted several Palestinian friends before casting his ballot. He voted for Harris.

“As horrific as the Biden-Harris administration has been, there was a better chance of shifting American politics under a Harris administration than there would be

under a Trump administration,” he said. Trump, however, ultimately won his bid for re-election.

Paul now serves as the president of A New Policy, an organisation he founded with another former Biden official, Tariq Habash, aimed at strengthening US-Middle East relations.

## Lily Greenberg-Cole resigned on May 15, 2024

Lily Greenberg-Cole is believed to be the first Jewish appointee from the Biden administration to publicly resign over the war in Gaza.

Her reasons – similar to Paul’s – were “dismay” and “disappointment” over Biden’s policies, which she described as “devastating for Palestinians”.

Greenberg-Cole served within the Department of the Interior as a special assistant to the chief of staff. As a political appointee, hired to serve at the pleasure of the president, she felt she had a duty to take a stand against Biden’s policies.

“I felt kind of uniquely privileged in being able to speak up within the administration in a way that some of my other colleagues, especially people who were non-white or Muslim, were opposed to and felt much more censored,” Greenberg-Cole said.

Four years ago, Greenberg-Cole admits she was excited about Biden’s victory in the 2020 election. She considers

herself a lifelong Democrat and even campaigned for Biden in Pennsylvania.

At first, she was proud to serve in Biden’s administration. She pointed to the 2022 Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) as a particular high point.

It marked a major investment in clean energy and climate change policies, and Biden himself touted it as “the biggest step forward on climate ever”. But Greenberg-Cole believes that accomplishment will be overshadowed by Biden’s policies towards Gaza.

“There were things the administration did that were really good for us in terms of domestic policy, like passing climate change legislation and the IRA,” Greenberg-Cole said. “I think no one is going to remember that.”

Critics point out that domestic human rights laws, including the Leahy Law, prevent the US from transferring aid to foreign forces facing “credible” accusations of human rights violations.

Greenberg-Cole is among those who believe the US has violated its own standards.

“The US has broken so many of our own laws to continue giving Israel weapons despite the massive amounts of evidence of war crimes committed,” she said.

In her opinion, Biden will be remembered as a “war criminal” who showed almost no empathy or care for Palestinian suffering – and allowed

for the “complete dehumanisation of Palestinians and Lebanese people and Arabs in general”.

## Alex Smith resigned on May 27, 2024

While serving as a contractor and senior adviser for the US Agency for International Development (USAID), Alex Smith had a broad mandate.

He was tasked with offering insight on issues concerning gender, infectious disease, nutrition, and the health of mothers and children.

And all of those issues converged in Gaza, as Israel’s siege unfolded. The siege limited access to food, water and medicine, forcing the closure of hospitals and medical units. The United Nations has also repeatedly warned that northern Gaza is at “imminent” risk of famine.

According to the nonprofit Save the Children, at least 3,100 children under age five had been killed in Gaza as of October. In a survey of children in that age group, the nonprofit found nearly 20 percent were suffering from acute malnutrition. A further 4 percent faced severe acute malnutrition.

The UN likewise found that an estimated 46,300 pregnant women in Gaza were grappling with “crisis levels” of hunger.

Smith decided to raise the alarm within his agency. He said he wrote emails to his higher-ups, including Saman-

tha Power, the administrator of USAID – all to no avail.

The final straw, Smith said, was when senior leadership pulled his presentation on maternal and child mortality among Palestinians, despite initially agreeing to let him speak.

In the lead-up to the presentation, he said his slides were scrutinised, and he was given detailed instructions on what language to use.

He recalled being told not to refer to Arab Israeli citizens as “Palestinians”, even if they identified as such, and to avoid phrases like “at the border of Gaza”. Even a map of Gaza was deemed “unacceptable”.

“It was all very Orwellian,” Smith said, referencing the British dystopian novelist George Orwell. “It’s pretty much straight out of the pages of 1984.”

After the presentation’s cancellation, Smith said he was made to choose: either resign or face dismissal. He chose the former.

Currently, he works for a think tank, the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, collecting evidence for tribunals.

As he reflects upon his time in the Biden government, Smith notes a stark contrast between Biden’s support for war-torn Ukraine and his lack of support for Gaza, where entire neighbourhoods have been levelled.

“When we talk about Ukraine, we can condemn the bombing of hospitals. We can talk about the resilience of the people who are being attacked. We can talk about the perpetrators who are attacking them,” Smith said.

“But when it comes to Gaza, we don’t talk about those people. We don’t plan for their health systems to be rebuilt.”

When he voted in the 2024 presidential race, Smith knew he could not back Biden’s vice president, Harris, fearing a continuation of the president’s policies.

His home state of Maine employs a ranked-choice system, allowing residents to offer support to multiple candidates. Smith used his ballot to rank Harris as his last choice, behind the third-party candidates Cornel West and Jill Stein.

Smith explained he has a grim view of Biden’s legacy will be perceived in the years to come. “He will be remembered as the US president who manufactured a genocide against children in Gaza.”

## CAPITAL RADIO

# RATIBA YA VIPINDI JUMATATU - JUMAPILI

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

Tembelea mitandao ya kijamii ya CAPITAL RADIO



CAPITAL RADIO



# Address public service challenges through research, TPSC instructed

By Guardian Correspondent, Mbeya

THE Tanzania Public Service College (TPSC) has been urged to conduct research that will help address various challenges facing the public service sector in the country.

George Simbachawene (pictured), Minister of State in the President's Office - (Public Service Management and Good Governance), made the call in Mbeya recently when speaking at the 40th graduation ceremony, where 6,516 graduates completed their studies in various disciplines.

During the ceremony, Simbachawene launched two research studies aimed at improving efficiency in public service operations.

"I have launched these studies, which will help address the challenges facing the public service sector in the country. Congratulations to you all," said the Minister.

He emphasized that research is essential for making informed decisions, as without it, there is no solid basis for discussions, stressing that the college has earned respect for its commitment to research.

He noted that the research aligns with President Samia Suluhu Hassan's directives on the importance of research for societal and national development, urging public institutions employing new staff to ensure they send these employees to TPSC for the Initial Orientation Course to equip them with knowledge of laws, regulations, procedures,

and ethics governing public service.

Simbachawene highlighted that there have been conflicts between government leaders, particularly presidential appointees, in executing their duties. He expressed hope that the research findings would provide solutions to these challenges, ensuring peace and stability in workplaces.

Dr. Florens Turuka, Chairperson of the TPSC Advisory Board, noted: "These two studies you have just launched are part of applied research conducted by the college using internal funds. The research focuses on identifying challenges in public service and advising the government on improving these areas to address the identified challenges."

He elaborated that during the 2023/2024 fiscal year, TPSC conducted the two studies, completed in the first quarter of the 2024/2025 fiscal year. These include research on the implementation of the Initial Orientation Course in public institutions under the Central Government and its agencies.

Dr. Turuka explained that the study focused on three key areas: awareness among public institutions about the existing guidelines for Initial Orientation Courses, adherence to these guidelines, and the effectiveness of the guidelines in ensuring proper implementation.

The research covered 83 public institutions across regions such as Dodoma, Dar es Salaam, Arusha, Morogoro, Lindi, and Mtwara.

He highlighted critical findings, including a lack of awareness among human resource



officers about the existing guidelines. While 99% claimed to be generally aware of the guidelines, only 65% demonstrated adequate knowledge of specific details. Additionally, the research found poor adherence to guidelines in implementing the courses. For instance, 70% of employees had not received orientation, even long after their employment began. For those who did, the procedures were often not fully followed, including delays in providing training and training conducted by unauthorized institutions.

ence to guidelines in implementing the courses. For instance, 70% of employees had not received orientation, even long after their employment began. For those who did, the procedures were often not fully followed, including delays in providing training and training conducted by unauthorized institutions.

The research also noted a lack of mechanisms to enforce compliance with guidelines, with institutions like the Public Service Commission and the Controller and Auditor General's Office confirming recurring issues.

According to him, the second study examined causes and solutions to conflicts among presidential appointees in local government authorities (LGAs), whereby the study identified four main areas contributing to conflicts including division of powers and existing laws governing LGAs, resource allocation, lack of leadership skills and experience and individual behaviors of leaders. The research also revealed issues such as insufficient operational funds for District Commissioners (DCs), leading to dependency on District Executive Directors (DEDs), and inadequate communication about development projects.

Furthermore, personal attitudes such as lack of patriotism (26%), arrogance (20%), and greed (10%) were found to exacerbate conflicts.

Participants also recommended that enhancing awareness of guidelines among HR officers and institution heads, making the Initial Orientation Course mandatory for job confirmation, allocating sufficient resources for training and ensuring that appointments in LGAs consider public service experience.

Dr. Ernest Mabonesho, TPSC Principal and CEO, reaffirmed the college's dedication to applied research, advisory services, and capacity building. He announced plans to conduct six applied research studies in the 2024/2025 fiscal year, with two already in the data collection phase.

By Correspondent Mohammed Hammie

WATER is life, and this fact is well known to the citizens of Tanzania, especially those living in rural areas, where the lack of adequate clean water has caused tremendous hardship, illness, and even death.

It is her deep care for the Tanzanians that led President Samia Suluhu Hassan to make finding a solution to this problem her top priority. She has announced that it is her goal to ensure every village has access to piped water by the end of 2025.

To achieve this goal, she has initiated the national campaign 'Kumtua Mama Ndoro Kichwani,' meaning 'Landing a Bucket on Women's Head,' specifically designed to improve access to clean and safe water services in both urban and rural areas.

The mission of Ministry of Water is to improve access to safe drinking water and sanitation services for all citizens, while managing water resources to ensure national food security and sustainable industrial economic development.

"We have made significant progress in providing millions of citizens with access to clean and safe water; however, there are still areas in need, and the work continues," Samia quoted as saying.

She also recently instructed Water Minister Jumaa Aweso to address the water challenge in the Komungu area of Kwamsisi Village.

Samia's instruction highlights the significant work being done by the Tanzanian government to solve the water crisis, but it also acknowledges that more efforts are needed to reach all areas and fulfill the goal.

Tanzanian Water Project implementer, Hamisi Mlaponi, has researched this issue and found a solution in the Solar/Thermal Distillation/Desalination System, developed by Sun Fresh Water, LLC, in partnership with the City College of New York and New York State University at Albany. This solution has been presented to the Tanzania Ministry of Water, and their Technical Committee has concluded that the technology is in line with both water sector development frameworks and global initiatives addressing climate change impacts.

A significant benefit of this technology



## Bringing innovation to villages: A first-hand solution for clean water, health, development

is its simplicity, as it mimics nature's process of fresh water production - distillation. In nature, the Sun heats the Earth's oceans, causing the freshwater component to separate, evaporate, and rise into the atmosphere, where it condenses into clouds and returns to the Earth as precipitation.

The Sun Fresh Water system replicates this process but replaces the Earth's atmosphere with enclosed containers. The system requires only two components: a source of contaminated water (saltwater, brackish water, or otherwise contaminated water) and

sunlight - both of which Tanzania has in abundance.

Many villages in Tanzania rely on boreholes for water, but this water often contains harmful contaminants, such as fluoride. Distillation significantly reduces or may completely eliminate these harmful substances, which helps achieve the National Water Policy's goal of providing clean and safe water to rural residents.

Furthermore, Sun Fresh Water, LLC, proposes to assist the Ministry of Water in achieving sustainable industrial-based economic development by making Tanzania

the center for providing a reliable and sustainable source of potable water throughout East Africa.

The United Nations has established 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with 169 targets for all member states to achieve by 2030. SDG 6 focuses on ensuring "clean water and sanitation for all" and recognizes that improving water, sanitation, and hygiene can support progress in other areas such as health, education, and poverty reduction.

Tanzania has committed to achieving SDG 6.1 and 6.2 targets as part of its third National Five-

Year Development Plan by 2030. The plan also outlines a goal for 2025: "universal access to safe water."

"This is the only real solution I see," said Mlaponi. He continued, "Bringing this innovation to Tanzania's villages may be the greatest improvement ever provided to the people of our country. Securing a sustainable source of clean water would improve public health and well-being, relieve the burden on women who must gather water daily, and enable them to focus more on their families. It will also improve sanitation,

hygiene, and agricultural production. With this system, we can meet President Samia's goal of bringing fresh, clean water to our people, with immense benefits for all."

Through various NGOs, Hamisi Mlaponi has played a crucial role in promoting access to clean water by raising funds, implementing projects, raising awareness, and advocating for policy changes. Since 2016, he has worked in regions where government infrastructure and services are lacking, particularly in Tanga and Morogoro. His NGOs promote access to clean water by constructing wells, boreholes, and water purification systems in both rural and urban communities.

Mlaponi also plays a significant role in raising awareness about the importance of clean water and the issues surrounding water scarcity.

Despite the many potential benefits of this technology, authorization to implement the system has not yet been granted. Joseph D'Alba, President of Sun Fresh Water, explained, "The greatest inventions in history have often been the simplest and most obvious. For thousands of years, mankind looked at the full moon before the wheel was invented. Distillation, a process Nature developed when the oceans were formed, is a solution for today's global challenge of securing a sustainable source of potable water."

He added, "It would be an honor to work with the United Republic of Tanzania to lead the world toward a safe, healthy, and secure future with abundant access to clean, fresh water - where women and children no longer toil daily to provide water for their families, and no one suffers the cruelty of dying from thirst or from consuming contaminated water."

The Tanzania Ministry of Water envisions a water-secure country, where citizens have sustainable access to sufficient and quality water to meet their human, economic, and environmental needs. The Sun Fresh Water system will make this vision a reality.



# Gift giving: A tradition rooted in African culture

By Alan Fowler

FOR many countries around the world, December is an intense, commercialised period of gift-giving. Not just within families but across all sorts of relationships, such as gifts between buyers and service providers.

Gift-giving, the act of presenting someone with a gift is intended to convey thoughtfulness, appreciation, or goodwill. The gift can be a tangible item, experience, personal time or gesture. It's an age-old tradition found across cultures and societies, carrying various meanings and functions that help shape human relationships.

I'm the university chair in African philanthropy at the Centre on African Philanthropy and Social Investment at Wits Business School in South Africa. The centre is Africa's first and only place of scholarship, teaching and research in this field. I've undertaken various studies looking at where gifting came from as a human behaviour, and its history in Africa.

Gifting began in Africa, when the first humans like us emerged. It then evolved as people migrated and was adapted to fit different cultures. Early examples involved the transfer of cattle or women to seal relationships between groups.

Today, it is exemplified by exchanges of gifts between countries during state visits and has evolved into practices like philanthropy. Giving is something that takes place outside households and celebrations, typically to create or seal relationships.

By examining the full history of giving, we're able to trace its fascinating evolution and the many ways of showing generosity.

## Human cognition

Today's humans originated in Africa, about 200,000 years ago, developing unique mental (cognitive) abilities as part of their evolution. These governed the way humans interact with each other. Giving complemented other survival mechanisms, like instinctive "fight or flight" response.

Research shows that three types of interactive human socioeconomic behaviours evolved together: selfish, cooperative and selfless. Collectively



UK's Prince Charles (future King Charles III) receives a gift from a member of the Ashanti tribe in Kumasi, Ghana, March 22, 1977.

applied, they enabled groups of hunter gatherers to survive, flourish and grow in numbers. These behaviours appeared in a ratio of about 20% selfish, 63% cooperative, and 13% selfless. This relative ratio endures today.

Gifting is similar to the instinct to cooperate, but it does not necessarily imply that something is expected in return. In other words, giving gifts started as a way of sharing that showed selflessness.

As people migrated around the world, their societies adapted to the conditions they encountered. The mix of selfishness, cooperation and selflessness became woven into diverse cultures.

## Emergence of gifting

As humans evolved, more and more complex social relationships developed in bounded territorial spaces. Within Africa, groups become clans, clans become tribes, developing into chieftainships, kingdoms and other types of organised areas. Here, gifts were important for

two reasons.

First, within groups, gifts were structured ways of caring for each other and ensured mutual well-being and growth. Gifts were used to build friendships and connections among equals (horizontal relationships). Gifts also helped create loyalty and respect in relationships with leaders or people in power (vertical relationships). Here, gifts were often equated with an expected "deal". For example, a gift would earn the support of and protection by those with authority. Or, for example, gifts during ceremonies ensured one's place within the group.

Second, between separate identity groups, gifts also functioned as a (symbolic) instrument to negotiate and prevent what might otherwise be hostile relationships.

## Shift in practices

Islamic expansion in northern Africa and the imposition of rules by European colonisers everywhere altered this landscape.

Gifting started to function in different, notable ways.

Islam came into ancient Africa around the seventh century while Christianity spread from what is now Egypt in the first century AD. Each faith recognised an obligation to gift. They introduced new, formalised and institutionalised forms of giving, such as *caritas*, or Christian charity, and *zakat*, a Muslim obligation of giving for the needy.

Early in the past millennium, as resistance to colonisation gained traction, gifting practices transformed into a self-defensive strategy. Gifting became one tool to cope and survive under difficult conditions. For example, in east Africa people would exchange food, money and other resources to support both families and the communities they were part of. In Kenya the community practice of *harambee* (pulling together) sponsored expansion of access to education: an example of horizontal gifting.

## End of colonial rule

Colonial rule ended after about 300 years. In the post-colonial era, gifting can be divided into two periods. One can be referred to as "traditional", dating from about 1960 to 2000. The second, from 2000 onwards, can be called "new age".

The traditional era loosely corresponded to when many African countries gained political independence, calling for a return to traditional values, societal norms and to self-determination.

African leaders inherited borders that forced together diverse ethnic and language groups, each with different relationships to colonial powers that had to be managed. In many ways, this laid the foundation for the prevalence of Africa's ethnic patronage in politics today.

For about 30 years of independence, many countries were under single-party rule with politicians relying on vertical gift-like handouts extracted from public resources, to manage internal political tensions. Even after multi-party systems were introduced, this practice continued as a form of political dispensation.

Independence allowed many non-governmental organisations (NGOs), or "givers", to become involved in development. Instead of focusing on people's rights, aid was often framed as charity. NGOs used professional, one-way donation models. Despite good intentions, this shift has weakened traditional, community-based contributions as local communities became reliant on external gifts.

Alongside NGOs, big private donors and foundations introduced the idea of "philanthropy" to Africa. This popularised a type of giving that can make traditional, smaller-scale generosity feel less important. It potentially discourages those who can't give as much.

## New era of gifting

This millennium has introduced a new age of African giving, driven by three key factors; dissatisfaction with traditional grant methods, a variety of funding sources, and different approaches and ways to measure success.

One force is a fast-moving diversification of gift-givers. Examples include corporate social investment as well as "philanthocapitalism" - large-scale donations or investment by very wealthy individuals or private organisations. They typically use business strategies to tackle social issues.

Another force is innovation in the design of gift-giving practices. For instance, trust-based philanthropy where funders support recipients they trust without requiring strict contracts or periodic detailed reporting until the next tranche is paid. Another innovation is effective altruism, a type of giving that focuses on making rational, evidence-based investments to create measurable solutions for social problems.

Third is promotion of domestic resource mobilisation. This is the application of Africa's own assets for its development, which includes diaspora remittances.

Looking back, it's clear that those giving gifts - in whatever form - should take a more reflective and balanced approach to understanding the role of giving role in Africa's community and society, especially as a political tool. Doing so can help bring greater accountability of leaders to their citizens.

By Nomsa Maseko and Rob Wilson

A biodiversity hotspot in a remote part of South Africa has become the hub of an illegal trade in protected plant species, with organised crime groups capitalising on overseas demand.

"They've not just stolen our land or our plants, they've stolen our heritage as well," a livestock farmer angrily tells the BBC, as she expresses dismay at the social and ecological crisis that the poaching has caused.

Most of the plants in question are a variety known as succulents, named for their ability to hold water and survive in arid climates.

Many of the world's succulent species are only found in the Succulent Karoo desert, which spans South Africa and Namibia.

Succulent species range in size, shape and colour - some look like small multi-coloured buttons and some look like cacti, sprouting colourful flowers at certain times of the year.

While these varieties can be cultivated in nurseries, global demand is also fuelling the poaching of these plants from the wild which are then smuggled and sold online to buyers in the US, Europe and East Asia.

In Kamieskroon, a small town in the centre of South Africa's Namaqualand region, the rolling hills have become a haven for poachers.

Some of the species are highly localised, and so can be wiped out by just a small amount of poaching.

"In South Africa, we know already of seven species that has been wiped out completely and there are certainly more species that will go extinct very soon," says Pieter van Wyk, a nursery curator at the /Ai /Ais-Richtersveld Transfrontier Park.

It is hard to obtain figures for how many plants are being poached, but the non-governmental organisation Traffic reports that 1.6 million illegally harvested succulents were seized by South Africa's law enforcement agencies between 2019 and 2024. This only represents the contraband that was detected, so the true figure is likely to be far higher.

The South African government is well

## Illegal trade booms in South Africa's 'super-strange looking' plant species



aware of the problem, and unveiled a strategy in 2022 to combat poaching. It includes running community programmes about the need to protect the environment.

According to Van Wyk and other conservationists, plant poaching has been booming since the Covid-19 lockdown in 2020.

With international traders unable to travel to South Africa during that time, they turned to local people to collect succulents for them and post them out of the country.

Van Wyk says this coincided with an increase in global demand.

"People had more time to try to find something to keep busy with, and plants were one of the only things that in your house, could connect

you to the outside world."

This has been seized upon by organised crime syndicates who hire teams of plant poachers and then market the wild plants on social media and e-commerce platforms.

"The syndicates saw this as an opportunity of making something viral... telling a wide as possible public: 'We have this super-strange looking thing that comes from the African continent,'" Van Wyk says.

"Then the public just loses their heads and they say: 'I want to buy one', and [the syndicates] arrange for the species to be poached," he adds.

The uptick in organised crime activity in the region is having knock-on effects on

local communities.

"This is a low-income area, people are not rich here, and people will exploit opportunities for income," explains Malinda Gardiner from Conservation South Africa.

Expressing a similar view, the livestock farmer whom this publication spoke to says there is always an influx of money in her community when poaching takes place.

"When we see young men going up in the mountain areas, we know they're poachers," adds the farmer, who asks not to be identified for fear of reprisals.

"They use screwdrivers to uproot the succulents and they carry backpacks and sacks to keep the stolen plants."

A few days after that, there

is an outbreak of binge drinking and illegal activity.

"When they get the money, there's more drugs, more alcohol, children are neglected because mummy is drunk, daddy is drunk, there's no food," adds the farmer.

Gardiner worries that the tensions will have longer-term effects.

"Small communities here really need each other... but this brings distrust. It brings a split in the communities as well," she says.

Van Wyk's assessment is starker: "People are being abused and enslaved by syndicates and buyers."

Attempts are being made to raise awareness among buyers about the importance of understanding where a plant might have come from.

China has become a major source of demand for wild succulents in the last few years, but an internet campaign there to educate people about the illegal succulent trade has seen some results.

The Clean Internet for Conophytum campaign was launched in March 2023 by the China Biodiversity Conservation and Green Development Foundation.

According to the foundation's deputy secretary-general Linda Wong, they have seen an 80% reduction in online demand for conophytum - a type of succulent - with an unknown source, and buyers are starting to ask questions about where plants being sold online have come from.

"The key is awareness. Once people know, they want to take action. They want to take responsibility to consume those plants and enjoy their beauty in a very responsible way," she said.

Conservationists advise customers all over the world to ask about the origin of a plant, and under no circumstances should they buy those advertised as wild.

Traffic and the UK's Kew Gardens recently announced that they were teaming up with eBay to develop new ways of preventing the sale of wild succulents on its platform.

In South Africa, Van Wyk says more should be done to promote the cultivation of succulents that can be grown and harvested legally, to reduce the demand for poaching.

"We as a country need to say that: 'We have this resource, and there are other countries that are majorly benefiting from this, why aren't we?'" he said.

Van Wyk now runs a nursery at the /Ai /Ais-Richtersveld Transfrontier Park which looks after plants that have been confiscated by law enforcement, and he says they have received more than 200,000 so far.

"It's obviously stressful seeing things disappearing. But if you study these plants, it brings so much joy and pleasure and you just forget about all the nonsense that's happening in the world," Van Wyk says.



**BUSINESS NEWS**

'Indian economy prospects expected to improve'

Page 14



**BUSINESS NEWS**

Mergers, acquisitions that shaped 2024

Page 14



**BUSINESS NEWS**

Key pivot foreseen in macro strategy

Page 15

## Varsity students spot economic gaps in Vision 2050 first draft

By Francis Kajubi

HIGHER learners from various universities have identified shortcomings in the first draft of Vision 2050 in relation to youth economic empowerment and development affairs.

With regard to the Vision made public by the government three weeks ago, the students share their views through the Tanzania Gender Networking Programme's (TGNP) workshop.

The workshop organized at the weekend brought a range of university students to discuss gaps in the first draft of the Vision regarding inclusive economic development, gender and social issues.

The workshop further touched ongoing preparations for the 30th anniversary of the Beijing Conference.

Flora Ndaba, TGNP's Acting Head of Programme, Activism and Movement Building, said the two-day workshop held in Dar es Salaam aimed at sensitizing and canvassing opinions from the students in preparation for the second draft of the Vision that will be used for the next 25 years.

Ndaba said the workshop also aimed to discuss the achievements and challenges related to gender towards the 30th anniversary of the Beijing Conference.

According to her, the 30th anniversary of the Beijing Conference will be celebrated in March 2025 in New York for 11 days where, along with the celebration, gender stakeholders from women's right defending organizations and public institutions from approximately 189 member states will continue to discuss and enter into various agreements in favor of women's affairs until the end of September 2025.

She said in line with the celebration, they have convened the workshop to sensitize the university students about the Generation Equality Forum which aims to realize economic justice regarding women's economic empowerment.

She said the students who counted more than 40 have been invited to participate in the workshop from SAUT, University of Dodoma (UDOM), Mzumbe University Sokoine University of Agriculture (SUA), Tanzania Institute of Accountancy (TIA), University of Dar es Salaam (UDSM), Tumaini Uni-



Flora Ndaba, TGNP's Acting Head of Programmes, Activism and Movement Building addresses university students at a workshop held at the weekend. Photo: TGNP.

versity, Ardhi University, NIT, and Tengeru Institute of Community Development.

"We have gathered these students to discuss the implementation of the Actions set at the Beijing Conference for matters concerning young people;

Alongside other aspects, we are

discussing the issues related to the economy, gender, rights, responsibility and technology that are not included in the first draft of Vision 2050," said Ndaba.

Julieth Msofe, Member of the Gender Club at Kigamboni Mwalimu Julius Nyerere Memorial Academy said that the Vision 2050 document

should be inclusive for all groups of society.

"I would like to see Vision 2050 put more emphasis on protecting the resources of the country and the government against corruption. The country's resources should be protected so that future generations can benefit from them," said Msofe.

Dady Thomas, a student at Tengeru Institute of Community Development said that the issue of mental health was not mentioned anywhere in the first draft of Vision 2050.

"I ask that the improvements of this draft consider the mental health because it has become a problem that is taking new faces as day pass by. The government should come up with strategies for addressing the problem through Vision 2050," said Thomas.

Ruth Mkanza, a student at Dar es Salaam Institute of Technology (DIT) said that the climate change is an alarming threat that has not been mentioned or identified in the first draft of the Vision.

Mkanza said that currently most of the countries in the world are linking development plans with climate change by setting mitigation, resilience and adaptation strategies.

"It is worth enough that Vision 2050 specifies how the government will be prepared against climate change crises in the next 25 years. Plans and strategies can also be initiated through various development budgets and programs," said Mkanza.



## Training on climate change elicits positive impacts in Kilwa District

By Beatrice Philemon

THE climate change training extended to Lihimalyao residents in Kilwa District, Lindi Region has brought positive results, with a decline in illegal mangrove tree cutting and fishing activities.

Said Mpuna, Lihimalyao Ward, Legal assistant said this recently when speaking to journalists during the launch of Kilwa Youth Development Initiatives' (KIYODI) three-year Strategic Plan.

The event was attended by KIYODI members, ActionAid Tanzania staff, and Kilwa Community Development Officers.

The training was offered free of charge by a legal assistant in collaboration with the Dira Yetu Initiative.

"We are very happy with what has been achieved so far because there is sufficient security now and there is also a Beach Management Unit (BMU) that helps protect these areas and the community in general," he says

Although they are protecting these areas, there are still people using the mangrove areas to persuade children to engage in sexual activities, especially during holidays.

They persuade children when they go swimming, they give them 1000/- after they have had sex with them so that when they return home, they can buy flour for food and are also given a little fish, something which is very dangerous to children's lives.

"After identifying these challenges, as paralegals, we have launched a new campaign aimed at educating children about gender-based violence (GBV) and how they can report GBV incidents to paralegals, village leaders, teachers, and police gender desks," he says

Additionally, residents of Lihimalyao ward have established a special programme to conserve mangrove trees and coastal beaches to tackle climate change and assist people stay on a safe planet.

"We have decided to introduce this programme to prevent strong waves that come from the deep sea from reaching the shore," he says

The decline in coral reefs has caused the waves to become larger, although the situation has improved recently.

Although they have successfully educated people about climate change and provided

training to women and girls on their economic, political, social, and cultural rights, they still lack the financial resources needed to support the activities of the KIYODI platform.

Additionally, KIYODI members lack reliable markets for selling the products they produce in their localities and do not have a specific office to carry out their activities.

KIYODI currently operates in 10 wards such as Kilwa Masoko, Kilwa Kivinje, Mandawa, Lihimalyao, Njinjo, Mitole, Miguruwe, Miteja, Namyuni and Kipatimu.

It has established 10 youth reflection groups with 221 members, engaging in entrepreneurship ventures like horticulture and motorcycle taxi businesses.

He applauded ActionAid Kilwa for helping the youth develop a comprehensive strategic plan.

He appealed to various stakeholders to assist in building a dedicated office so they can empower youth economically, politically, and socially, as well as educate them on good governance, accountability, agriculture, the environment, and other key issues.

## Nigeria, Egypt top stock markets with best ten-year returns record

LAGOS

Investors who took a long position in eight major African stock markets made more money in Egypt, Nigeria and Ghana than any other, with each surpassing 100 percent cumulative returns since 2014, BusinessDay trend watch shows.

The eight major markets tracked are: Côte d'Ivoire (BRVM-CI), Nigeria (NGX-ASI), Egypt (EGX-30), South Africa (JSE-ASI), Morocco (MASI), Kenya (NSE-ASI), Ghana (GSE-CI), and Botswana (BSE-DCI).

In the past 10 years, Egypt's market has yielded the highest cumulative return of 351 percent, followed by Nigeria's 147 percent, and Ghana's 121 percent.

Others major Africa stock markets and their performances from 2014 to 2023 are: South Africa (+85 percent), Morocco (+62 percent), Côte d'Ivoire (+19 percent), Botswana (+11 percent), and Kenya, which recorded negative cumulative return of 12 percent in the reviewed 10-year period.

Temu Popoola, CEO, Nigerian Exchange Group, told BusinessDay that, "Nigeria's capital market has consistently stood out as a hub of resilience and innovation, offering compelling opportunities for investors. Over the past decade, the consistent outperformance of our blue-chip companies has been a critical driver of market returns. These companies, which anchor the market index, have exhibited remarkable growth and resilience even during challenging economic cycles."

Speaking further, he said, "High inflation has also shaped investment strategies, with equities becoming a preferred hedge. As a result, share prices have often adjusted in line with inflationary trends, preserving investor value. Additionally, strengthened regulatory frameworks, especially following the 2008 financial crisis, have bolstered market integrity and investor confidence."

Popoola said another key factor is the number of strategic new listings, which have catalysed secondary market activity.

"When paired with macroeconomic reforms, these listings have heightened the appeal of naira-denominated assets to international investors. Finally, the post-COVID era has seen reduced yields in fixed-income markets, driving greater

interest in equities and fueling robust market performance over the years," the NGX CEO noted.

He said the NGX Group is encouraged by the positive trajectory of the market, which reflects the impact of targeted macroeconomic and sectoral reforms, stressing that the rebound of companies that successfully adapted to currency devaluation challenges, reigniting investor interest and fostering renewed confidence were key market drivers in 2024.

"Notably, reforms in critical sectors like oil and gas have been transformative. The removal of subsidies and exchange rate liberalisation have not only enhanced operational efficiency but also boosted the overall performance of listed companies in this sector. These policy changes have significantly influenced market dynamics, creating a ripple effect of growth and opportunity."

"As we look toward 2025, we anticipate that a stable macroeconomic environment and the continuation of these strategic reforms will sustain this momentum. Our outlook remains positive, with expectations for increased liquidity, strengthened investor confidence, and sustainable growth across the market. These elements will be pivotal in maintaining the upward trajectory and delivering value for all market participants," Popoola noted.

Year-to-date (YTD), Nigeria's stock market has risen by 35.25 percent, according to December 20 trading data seen by BusinessDay. Market data also show that year-to-date, the stock market of Côte d'Ivoire, a Francophone country, has risen by 28.11 percent. Egypt's market has risen this year by 22.63 percent, while South Africa's market is up by 9.85 percent.

Other markets and their return YTD are: Morocco (+21.76 percent), Kenya

(+31.73 percent), Ghana (+53.65 percent), and Botswana (+12.54 percent).

The Nigerian equities market has sustained its positive momentum lately, supported by strong buy-interest across insurance, consumer goods, and banking counters.

The impressive performance at the Nigerian bourse further reflects the continued investor confidence in the market, analysts say.

This activity pushed the NGX All-Share Index (NGX-ASI) to beyond the 100,000-point milestone to 101,129.09 points as at Friday December 20.

Also, market capitalisation has risen to N61.30 trillion driven by new listings, banks recapitalisation exercise and improved bargains, amid impressive yields in the fixed income space.

The Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) of the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) recently raised the benchmark interest rate, also known as the Monetary Policy Rate (MPR), to 27.50 percent from 27.25 percent.

Analysts had expected some bearish undertone in Nigeria's equities market as fixed income-biased investors took advantage of the high yields in the fixed income space.

Rather, the bulls have remained incentivised to persist in bargain hunting, given the tremendous mid-long-term opportunities in the equities market. The impressive performance seen at the Nigerian bourse further reflects the continued investor confidence in the market.

"The bullish markets closely align with strong economic data from the previous weeks, including an eight consecutive trade surplus at N5.8trillion in Q3 2024, improved capital importation, and increased foreign reserve accretion." Futureview analysts said in their December 20 note.





# Mergers, acquisitions that shaped 2024

## KENYA

As curtain falls on 2024, this year will go down in annals of history as a period with mixed bag of challenges to individuals, businesses and the government.

The start of the year was characterized by elevated inflation, weaker shilling and high interest rates which called for extra measures to stay afloat from the volatility. Towards the end of the year, the country has however witnessed some ease albeit at a slow pace with inflation dropping from a high of 6.9 per cent in January to 2.8 per cent in November.

To ease access to loans, the Central Bank of Kenya has also lowered base lending rate to 11.25 per cent in December from a high of 13 per cent in February. Call it tough economic times or an opportunity for new business, the year 2024 also saw a number of companies restructure their businesses for growth, synergies, market expansion, and diversification.

On December 19th, Amsons Industries (K) completed its buyout deal of Bamburi Cement when shareholders of the listed cement manufacturer agreed to transfer 350.4 million shares to the Tanzanian subsidiary.

The deal, valued at KSh 23.59bn, was perhaps the most watched acquisition of the second half of 2024 and not just because it involved one of the most iconic companies in Kenya.

Amsons launched the bid KSh 65 a share in July, before Savannah Clinker placed a higher counter offer at KSh 70



a share. In October, Savannah Clinker hiked its offer to Ksh 76.55 a share, before controversially withdrawing its bid in early December. Amsons could now potentially delist Bamburi Cement, which has been on the Nairobi Securities Exchange since 1970.

In March, KCB Group CEO Paul Russo confirmed that the bank was in the process of selling NBK at 1.25\* its book value, to Access Bank.

Access Bank, which has been on a mergers and acquisitions streak across the continent, already has a presence in Kenya after it acquired Transnational Bank in 2019. The Nigerian lender originally wanted to acquire Sidian Bank from Centum Investments, but the deal fell through in 2023.

On 13th August 2023, COMESA's Competition Commission approved

parts of the KCB-Access deal in other markets other than Kenya, and referred the part of the transaction related to the Kenyan market to CAK. CAK has since given the deal go ahead.

**Access Bank Acquires National Bank of Kenya**

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**Browns Investments Acquires Lipton Teas**

- early December, Lipton Teas and Infusions transferred its tea estates in Kenya, Rwanda, and Tanzania to Browns Investments in a deal that will also see shares totaling 15 per cent of the main Kenyan operating company of Keri-cho and Bomet.

Details of the deal says all tea sold by Browns worldwide will be grown and harvested to a new set of standards covering quality,

social and environment protection, target being by 2025. The two entities will also set up a tea-specific fertilisers plant.

The two did not disclose terms of the transaction, which is subject to standard regulatory clearances. Lipton Teas and Infusion, and Brown Investments will position Kenya's Tea as a premium product to the global stage.

Makini School's owner ADVTECH concluded a \$7.5 million agreement to acquire 100% interest in Ethiopia's Flipper International School. The acquisition will add to ADVTECH's international portfolio five more schools and approximately 3000 students.

Flipper International School operates five campuses located in Beklobet, in central Addis Ababa, and Summit, in the eastern part of the city. It was founded in 1998 by Menna Selamu Bekele and Serkaddis Seifu Yeteshawork.

The move marks the group's second major expansion in the region since 2018, when the company acquired Makini Group of Schools and established Crawford International School, both in Kenya.

CFAO Motors and Kenya Vehicle Manufacturers

The Competition Authority of Kenya (CAK) approved the KSh 1 billion acquisition deal between Toyota-owned CFAO Motors and Thika-based Kenya Vehicle Manufacturers (KVM) Limited,

concluding that the agreement will not impact fair competition.

CFAO Motors, now CFAO Mobility, will take control of a 98% ownership stake in KVM, as well as the responsibility to settle outstanding debts and rejuvenate operations. The government initially owned 35% of KVM, while CFAO Motors and CMC Holdings each owned 32.5% of the company.

The buyout of shares allows CFAO Motors to assemble and produce its vehicles locally, cutting out its reliance on assemblers like Simba Corps Associated Vehicle Assemblers (AVA) in Mombasa.

The Competition Authority of Kenya (CAK) approved the acquisition of investment holding company Ramco Plexus by its parent company Ramco Inc. Ramco Inc., based in Mauritius, jointly owned Ramco Plexus with Paris-based equity firm, Amethis, but it had no commercial operations in Kenya.

After Amethis exited, Ramco inc. was mandated by law to seek approval from CAK to be the sole owner of the company, as it is perceived as a merger according to the Competition Act. Ramco Plexus invests in several subsidiaries dealing with digital printing, flexible packaging, supply of paper, polystyrene, POS solutions, branded promotional gifts, and press supplies.



## Banks' gross bad loan ratio seen worsening

## NEW DELHI

Indian banks' gross bad loan ratio may rise from a 12-year low if risks emanating from credit quality, interest rates and geopolitics play out, a report published by the central bank on Monday showed.

Gross bad loan ratio is the proportion of bad assets to total loans.

This key measure could rise to 3 per cent by the end of March 2026 from a 12-year low of 2.6 per cent in September 2024 for 46 banks under the so-called baseline scenario, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) said in the Financial Stability Report.

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The bad loan ratio could rise to 5 per cent and 5.3 per cent under two separate high-risk scenarios, it said.

While the aggregate capital ratios of banks may reduce, no lender will fall short of the minimum capital requirement of 9 per cent even in adverse cases, the RBI said.

The bad loan ratio could rise to 5 per cent and 5.3 per cent under two separate high-risk scenarios, it said.

The Financial Stability Report, published twice a year by the central bank, includes contributions from all financial sector regulators.

Indian banks' asset quality has improved over the last few years due to recoveries and write-offs of legacy bad loans, and curtailed growth of bad assets. Banks have also shored up their capital positions.

Over the last year, the RBI has warned the financial sector against "all forms of exuberance", tightened rules for credit card and personal loans, made it more expensive for non-banking finance companies to borrow from banks and imposed business restrictions on non-compliant lenders.

It also wants lenders to adopt strong risk management and governance frameworks and to raise more capital.

On the whole, banks' asset quality parameters have improved and their capital levels remain robust, the central bank said.

The Indian financial system is expected to remain sound and vibrant, supported by further improvement in balance sheets and strong buffers, the RBI said.

"Although net interest margins have narrowed, banks' return on equity and return on assets have improved," it said.

The balance sheets of non-banking finance companies have strengthened, the RBI said, with stress tests indicating that even under a high-risk scenario, their capital requirements would remain much above the minimum needed level.

In the Union Budget for Financial Year 2023-24 (FY24), Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman had held forth on the need for better governance and investor protection in the banking sector. She had proposed certain amendments to the Reserve Bank of India Act (RBI Act), 1934; the Banking Regulation Act (BR Act), 1949; and the Banking Companies (Acquisition and Transfer of Undertakings) Act, 1970. 1

## 'Indian economy prospects expected to improve more'

## MUMBAI

The prospects of the Indian economy are expected to improve after the recent slowdown in GDP growth, with consumer and business confidence remaining high, Sanjay Malhotra, Governor, Reserve Bank of India said.

"Notwithstanding the uncertainties shrouding the global macro-financial ethos as it unfolds, prospects for the Indian economy are expected to improve after the slowdown in the pace of economic activity in the first half of 2024-25," Malhotra said in the foreword of the December 2024 edition of RBI's Financial Stability Report published today.

This was Malhotra's first commentary on the economy after taking charge as RBI governor earlier this month. GDP growth in the second quarter (Jul-Sep) of the current financial year plunged to 5.4 per cent, much below what the market was expecting.

"Consumer and business confidence for the year ahead remain high and the investment scenario is brighter as corporations step into 2025 with robust balance sheets and high profitability," Malhotra said.

The report noted that despite the recent deceleration, structural growth drivers remain intact. It said real GDP growth is expected to recover in Q3 and Q4 of 2024-25 supported by pick up in domestic drivers, mainly public consumption and investment, strong service exports and easy financial conditions. Among the downside risks, softness in industrial activity, especially in the manufacturing sector, moderation in urban demand, global spillovers and protective trade and industrial policies are cited as risks.

On inflation, the report noted that softening food prices and base effects helped the headline to come down to 5.5 per cent in November, while core inflation rose by 64 basis points (bps) since May 2024 to 3.7 per cent in November 2024.

"Going forward, the disinflationary effect of a bumper kharif harvest and the rabi crop prospects are expected to soften prices of foodgrains," the report said. Rising frequency of extreme weather events pose risks to inflation dynamics, it said.

Malhotra said the RBI's focus remains steadfast on maintaining stability of financial institutions and, more broadly, systemic stability



Sanjay Malhotra, Governor, Reserve Bank of India

while preserving financial stability to support a higher growth path for the Indian economy.

"We continue to secure and anchor public trust and confidence to support India's aspirational goals. We remain committed to developing a modern financial system that is customer-centric, technologically leveraged and financially inclusive," he said.

On the Indian financial sector, he said the financial system is bolstered by robust earnings, low levels of impaired assets and strong capital buffers.

He said stress test results reveal that capital levels of the banking system as well as of the non-banking financial companies (NBFCs) sector will remain well above the regulatory minimum even under adverse stress scenarios.

Commenting on the global setting, Malhotra said the global economy exhibits resilience in the face of formidable headwinds from political and economic policy uncertainty, persisting conflicts and an environment of fragmenting inter-

national trade and tariffs.

"We continue to secure and anchor public trust and confidence to support India's aspirational goals. We remain committed to developing a modern financial system that is customer-centric, technologically leveraged and financially inclusive," he said.

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Observing that declining inflation brightening the global prospects, he said the medium-term outlook, however, remains challenging, with downside risks from possible intensification of geopolitical conflicts, sporadic financial market turmoil, extreme climate events and rising indebtedness.



# Barbados fishing industry reeling from hurricane aftermath

BRIDGETOWN

There are few clearer signs of the destructive power that Hurricane Beryl unleashed on Barbados in July than the scene at the temporary boatyard in the capital, Bridgetown.

Scores of mangled and cracked vessels sit on stacks, gaping holes in their hulls, their rudders snapped off and cabin windows broken.

Yet these were the lucky ones.

At least they can be repaired and put back out to sea. Many others sank, taking entire family incomes with them.

When Beryl lashed Barbados, the island's fishing fleet was devastated in a matter of hours. About 75% of the active fleet was damaged, with 88 boats totally destroyed.

Charles Carter, who owns a blue-and-black fishing vessel called Joyce, was among those affected.

"It's been real bad, I can tell you. I had to change both sides of the hull, up to the waterline," he says, pointing at the now pristine boat in front of us.

It has taken months of restoration and thousands of dollars to get it back to this point, during which time Charles has barely been able to fish.

"That's my living, my livelihood, fishing is all I do," he says.

"The fishing industry is mash up," echoes his friend, Captain Euride. "We're just trying to get back the pieces."

Now, six months after the storm, there are signs of calmer waters. On a warm Saturday, several repaired vessels were put back into the ocean with the help of a crane, a trailer and some government support.

Seeing Joyce back on the water is a welcome sight for all fishermen in Barbados.

But Barbadians are acutely aware that

climate change means more active and powerful Atlantic hurricane seasons - and it may be just another year or two before the fishing industry is struck again. Beryl, for example, was the earliest-forming Category 5 storm on record.

Few understand the extent of the problem better than the island's Chief Fisheries Officer, Dr Shelly Ann Cox.

"Our captains have been reporting that sea conditions have changed," she explains. "Higher swells, sea surface temperatures are much warmer and they're having difficulty getting flying fish now at the beginning of our pelagic season."

The flying fish is a national symbol in Barbados and a key part of the island's cuisine. But climate change has been harming the stocks for years.

At the Oistins Fish Market in Bridgetown, flying fish are still available, along with marlin, mahi-mahi and tuna, though only a handful of stalls are open.

At one of them, Cornelius Carrington, from the Freedom Fish House, fillets a kingfish with the speed and dexterity of a man who has spent many years with a fish knife in his hands.

"Beryl was like a surprise attack, like an ambush," says Cornelius, in a deep baritone voice, over the market's chatter, reggae and thwack of cleavers on chopping boards.

Cornelius lost one of his two boats in Hurricane Beryl. "It's the first time a hurricane has come from the south like that, normally



storms hit us from the north," he said.

Although his second boat allowed him to stay afloat financially, Cornelius thinks the hand of climate change is increasingly present in the fishermen's fate.

"Right now, everything has changed. The tides are changing, the weather is changing, the temperature of the sea, the whole pattern has changed."

The effects are also being felt in the tourism industry, he says, with hotels and restaurants struggling to find enough fish to meet demand each month.

For Dr Shelly Ann Cox, public education is key and, she says, the message is getting through.

"Perhaps because we are an island and we're so connected to the water, people in Barbados can speak well on the impact on climate change and what that means for our country," she says.

"I think if you speak to children as well, they're very knowledgeable

about the topic."

To see for myself, I visited a secondary school - Harrison College - as a member of a local NGO, the Caribbean Youth Environmental Network (CYEN), talked to members of the school's Environmental Club about climate change.

The CYEN representative, Sheldon Marshall, is an energy expert who quizzed the pupils about greenhouse gases and the steps they could take at home to help reduce carbon emissions on the island.

"How can you, as young people in Barbados, help make a difference on climate change?" he asked them.

Following an engaging and lively debate, I asked the pupils how they felt about Barbados being on the front line of global climate change, despite having only a small carbon footprint itself.

"Personally, I take a very pessimistic view," said 17-year-old Isabella Fredricks.

"We are a very small country. No matter how hard we try to change, if the big countries - the main producers of pollution like America, India and China - don't make a change, everything we do is going to be pointless."

Her classmate, Tenusha Ramsham, is slightly more optimistic.

"I think that all great big leaps in history were made when people collaborated and innovated," she argues. "I don't think we should be completely disheartened because research, innovation, creating technology and education will ultimately lead to the future that we want."

"I feel if we can communicate to the global superpowers the pain that we feel seeing this happen to our environment," adds 16-year-old Adrielle Baird, "then it would help them to understand and help us collaborate to find ways to fix the issues that we're seeing."

For the island's young people, their very futures are at stake. Rising sea levels now pose an existential threat to the small islands of the Caribbean.

It is a point on which the Prime Minister of Barbados, Mia Mottley, has become a global advocate for change - urging greater action over an impending climate catastrophe in her speech at COP29 and calling for economic compensation from the world's industrialised nations.

On its shores and in its seas, it feels like Barbados is under siege - dealing with issues from coral bleaching to coastal ero-

sion. While the impetus for action comes from the island's youth, it is the older generations who have borne witness as the changes unfold.

Steven Bourne has fished the waters around Barbados his whole life and lost two boats in Hurricane Beryl. As we look out at the coastline from a dilapidated beach-hut bar, he says the island's sands have shifted before his very eyes.

"It's an attack from the elements. You see it taking the beaches away, but years ago you'd be sitting here, and you could see the water's edge coming upon the sand. Now you can't because the sand's built up so much."

By coincidence, in the same bar where I chatted to Steven was Home Affairs Minister Wilfred Abrahams, who has responsibility for national disaster management.

I put it to him that it must be a difficult time for disaster management in the Caribbean.

"The whole landscape has changed entirely," he replied. "Once upon a time, it was rare to get a Category Five hurricane in any year. Now we're getting them every year. So the intensity and the frequency are cause for concern."

Even the duration of the hurricane season has changed, he says.

"We used to have a rhyme that went: June, too soon; July, standby; October, all over," he tells me. Extreme weather events like Beryl have rendered such an idea obsolete.

## Key pivot foreseen in macro strategy

SHANDONG

China's policymakers are set to take a more proactive approach to macroeconomic policies in the year ahead, aiming to tackle both short-term challenges arising from lackluster demand and structural issues, said economists.

Citing the recently concluded Central Economic Work Conference, they said the country is fine-tuning its macroeconomic strategy, marking a significant shift toward a consumption-driven economy as it prepares for expansionary fiscal and monetary policies in 2025.

"The deficit ratio for 2025 is likely to be the highest on record," said Xiong Yuan, chief economist at Guosheng Securities, anticipating that the government would set the projected deficit-to-GDP ratio for 2025 at 3.5-4 percent or higher in March, up from 3 percent for this year.

The Chinese government started to release the annual projected deficit ratio in 2010, with the highest reading in 2020 at 3.6 percent as COVID-19 hit, according to market tracker Wind Info.

Xiong said next year's quota of special local government

bonds is expected to increase to more than 4.5 trillion yuan (\$616.5 billion) from a record high of 3.9 trillion yuan this year, in addition to special treasury bonds of over 2 to 3 trillion yuan in 2025, up from 1 trillion yuan for 2024.

Xiong's remarks came as the Central Economic Work Conference held in December pledged to implement more proactive and effective macroeconomic policies, boost domestic demand, drive the integration of sci-tech innovation and industrial innovation, and stabilize the real estate sector and stock markets.

The nation will maintain basic equilibrium in the balance of payments and better synchronize the income growth of households and economic expansion, according to the meeting.

"While promoting industrial sectors was the top task last year, expanding domestic demand is in the top spot this year," said Lu Ting, chief China economist at Nomura.

Lu said that the conference called for more specific measures to support consumption, including increasing basic pension payments, raising fis-

cal subsidies for basic medical insurance and developing policies to boost fertility.

"Overall, the conference adds support to our relatively optimistic view on fiscal policies in 2025 and our view that Beijing may stick to the 'around 5 percent' GDP growth target in 2025," he said.

According to the conference, policymakers pledged to roll out more initiatives to boost consumption, including greater strides in equipment upgrades and consumer goods trade-in programs.

Looking forward, Lu said policymakers might consider an increase in spending on social security for lower-income households and encouraging childbirth.

"We especially expect policymakers to significantly increase payments to those rural pensioners (55 percent of total pensioners) whose average monthly pension income is only 225 yuan," he said.

"They may also increase financial support for families with a second or third child. And they may also waive part of the annual 400 yuan fee on basic medical insurance for low-income individuals."

VIEW FROM THE TOP



## Kenya's celebrated coffee under threat as farmers hit by climate change crises

NAIROBI

In the lush, volcanic highlands of Komothai in central Kenya, farmers like Simon Macharia produce coffee on small plantations scattered across the hillsides.

Along with other farmers, Mr Macharia brings sacks of his bright red coffee cherries to the local processing plant, where they are weighed and treated.

A machine removes the red husks, and the pale beans inside are washed and passed along concrete channels, ending up on lines of drying platforms that sweep across the valley.

Here, workers categorise the beans into grades, the highest destined for the coffee houses of Europe.

"We call coffee the black gold around here," Mr Macharia, whose farm covers 2.5 hectares (six acres), told the BBC.

He grows the Kenya AA coffee beans, which are prized worldwide for their high quality, full body, deep aromas and fruity flavour.

The crop has been part of these lush highlands since the late 1890s, when British colonial settlers introduced it.

Now, the area is famous for its unique, top-rated coffee.

Growing the berries is labour intensive - picking, pruning, weeding, spraying, fertilising and transporting the products.

"Coffee requires your full-time concentration, especially when it

starts to bloom," Mr Macharia said.

"From that moment up until the day that you are going to harvest - those six months, your full-time job is on the farm."

A coffee tree is a huge investment for cash-strapped farmers, as it can take four years for the fruits to mature.

The price of a single cup of coffee in a chic European café, typically \$4 (£3.20), highlights a stark disparity when compared to the earnings of many Kenyan coffee labourers, who make at most \$2.30 a day.

Edita Mwangi, who harvests coffee cherries on the red earth hillside overlooking the processing plant, confirms this.

"They don't know the poverty we suffer. You have to struggle day and night just to survive," she said.

With four children depending on her, Ms Mwangi works six days a week, earning about \$1.40 a day.

She has to walk 5km (three miles) to reach the farm where she works.

Farmers feel the trading system between Kenya and Europe - the world's largest coffee market - has been stacked against them for many years.

But now, a new threat looms, jeopardising farmers' ability to make a living - climate change.

Coffee trees are extremely sensitive to small differences in temperature and weather conditions.

They also need specific climatic conditions like humid temperatures and ample rainfall to grow.

"Climate change is a major challenge for our coffee farmers," says John Murigi, the chairman of the Komothai Coffee Society, which represents 8,000 coffee farmers like Mr Macharia.

Cold temperatures and erratic rainfall are having a devastating impact on the delicate coffee plants, said Mr Murigi.

As a result, "coffee production has decreased over the last few years".

He added that climate change was intensifying the spread of diseases in coffee plants.

Mr Murigi said there had been a significant increase in coffee leaf miners, bugs that feed on coffee leaves, and coffee berry disease, a destructive fungal infection that can wipe out more than 80% of crops.

To deal with the increasing outbreaks, farmers are resorting to using herbicides and insecticides that can damage soil quality in the long term and also pose health risks.

Farmers use dangerous herbicides like Roundup, which contain glyphosates known to cause cancers - banned in some European countries - to ensure they get a good harvest.

Pest Control Products Board (PCPB) of Kenya, in charge of regulating the use of these products, did not respond to a BBC request for comment.

To produce a single cup of coffee can require up to 140 litres of water - including the water to grow the plants.



Consumers shop at a supermarket in Zaozhuang, Shandong province



## WORLD

# WHO chief calls for end to hospital attacks in Gaza after strike

ZURICH

THE head of the World Health Organization on Monday called for an end to attacks on hospitals in Gaza after Israel struck one and raided another in the past few days.

"Hospitals in Gaza have once again become battlegrounds and the health system is under severe threat," WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said in a post on X.

"We repeat: stop attacks on hospitals. People in Gaza need access to health care. Humanitarians need access to provide health aid. Ceasefire!" he added.

The Israeli military said Hamas militants were the targets of a strike on Gaza City's Al Wafa hospital on Sunday, which the Palestinian civil defense said killed seven people.

Israeli forces also detained more than 240 Palestinians including dozens of medical staff from Kamal Adwan hospital on Friday, among them its director Hussam Abu Safiya, according to health authorities in the enclave and Israel's military.

The Israeli military said the hospital was being used as a command center for Hamas military operations and those arrested were suspected militants. It said Abu



WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus looks on during a press conference with the Association of Accredited Correspondents at the United Nations (ACANU) at the World Health Organization's headquarters in Geneva, on Dec 10, 2024. AFP

Safiya was taken for questioning as he was suspected of being a Hamas operative.

Tedros, who last week was caught up in an Israeli strike against Yemen's main airport that he said might have cost him his life, called for Abu Safiya's immediate release and said the Al-Ahli hospital had also faced attacks.

Tedros said the WHO and partners had delivered basic medical supplies, food and water to Gaza's Indo-

nesian hospital and transferred 10 critical patients to Al Shifa hospital. Four patients were detained during the transfer, he said.

"We urge Israel to ensure their health care needs and rights are upheld," Tedros said.

At least 45,514 Palestinians have been killed and 108,189 wounded in Israel's military offensive in Gaza since the Hamas attacks of Oct 7, 2023, according to Gaza's health ministry.

## Former US president Jimmy Carter dies at 100

NEW YORK

FORMER US president Jimmy Carter, who established diplomatic relations with China in 1979, died on Sunday at the age of 100.

Carter, who served one term after his election in 1976, also saw his presidency defined negatively by the Iran hostage crisis in 1979 but positively by the Camp David peace accords. He lost his reelection bid to Ronald Reagan in 1980.

The center announced the death of Carter at his long-time home in Plains, Georgia, where he had been in hospice care for nearly two years.

Carter's wife, former first lady Rosalynn Carter, died in 2023 at the age of 96.

"To all of the young people in this nation and for anyone in search of what it means to live a life of purpose and meaning – the good life – study Jimmy Carter, a man of principle, faith, and humility," President Joe Biden said in a statement on Sunday.

President-elect Donald Trump said in a statement Sunday: "The challenges Jimmy faced as president came at a pivotal time for our country, and he did everything in his power to improve the lives of all Americans. For that, we owe him a debt of gratitude."

"President Carter will be remembered for his solidarity with the vulnerable, his abiding grace, and his unrelenting faith in the common good and our common humanity. His legacy as a peacemaker, human rights champion and humanitarian will endure," United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said in a statement.

A native of the small town of Plains, where he was a peanut farmer, Carter was known for his folksy ways and his later humanitarian efforts, such as Habitat for Humanity, which built homes for needy people. He was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2002.

The 39th US president, Carter was also the longest-living American president. He was a 1946 graduate of the US Naval Academy. In 1953, as a lieutenant, Carter was in charge of a crew that would work on the first nuclear submarine, the Nautilus.

The Carters established The Carter Center in Atlanta in 1982, which "seeks to prevent and resolve conflicts, enhance freedom and democracy, and improve health", its website says.

In January 2019, the center held a three-day event to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the normalization of US-China relations.

"Our being the only US-based organization to do this is a stark indication of how the bilateral landscape has changed in recent years," Jimmy Carter said then.

"In December 1978, when Vice-Premier Deng Xiaoping and I announced our decision, we knew that we were opening an era of opportunity for both nations. I have been proud to witness the benefits that have followed," Carter said in a talk with the George H. W. Bush Foundation for US-China Relations in August 2021.

Iran had held 52 Americans hostage for 444 days during Carter's presidency, and the story dominated US headlines the entire time. The hostages were released on the day that Reagan was inaugurated in 1981.

Carter also had to contend with a Middle East oil embargo, which led to long lines at gasoline stations in the United States, along with soaring inflation.

In September 1978, he invited Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin and Egyptian President Anwar Sadat to Camp David in Maryland for almost two weeks of peace talks between their nations.

The talks concluded with the signing of the Camp David Accords, memorialized by one of the most enduring images of the era, as all three men joined hands.



Xinhua

## South Africa eyes surge in Chinese travelers

JOHANNESBURG

South Africa anticipates a surge in global visitors next year, especially from China and India, boosted by its streamlined visa policies and the prospect of hosting the G20 summit, says a senior government official.

Patricia de Lille, South Africa's minister of tourism, said the country has ramped up efforts to attract international tourists by engaging with potential investors and taking part in global exhibitions throughout the year.

"Next year, we expect a lot more Chinese and Indian visitors. We finally solved the visa issues for Chinese and Indian citizens," de Lille said.

Starting Jan 20, accredited tour operators will handle visa applications for groups traveling from China and India, eliminating the need for tourists to visit South African embassies, she said.

South Africa's tourism, home affairs and state security authorities have vetted these



Visitors explore the Union Buildings in Pretoria, South Africa, on April 15. The Nelson Mandela statue in front of the president's office has become a popular attraction for tourists. (WANG XI / CHINA NEWS SERVICE)

selected tour operators to ensure smooth visa processing, she added.

The Department of Home Affairs has also deployed experienced officials for handling group applications from Chinese and Indian tourists.

Many Chinese and Indian tourists love traveling in groups, de Lille said, and South Africa is committed to making travel more convenient for them.

"We have introduced electronic visa authorization where you can apply online, and the turnaround time for visas is now two to three days. The

Chinese are interested in our rich culture and cuisine and they want to (explore) our townships and villages. The chicken feet we eat is a delicacy in China, too," she said.

In 2019, South Africa welcomed 10 million tourists, but the figures decreased during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the trend is now reversing, with 8.5 million tourists visiting the country last year. De Lille expressed optimism that South Africa will return to pre-pandemic tourism levels by the end of this year.

South Africa assumed the G20 presidency on Dec 1 and will host the summit next year, a development de Lille said will boost the country's tourism sector.

"We are excited to host the G20 summit ... we will host between 200 and 300 business events in the country. Many G20 working group meetings and ministerial ones will be held in different parts of the country," she said.

Councilors, ministers and senior government officials will conduct outreach programs all over the country to educate the public about the G20 presidency, its benefits and the importance of extending a warm welcome to international visitors, she added.

Johannesburg Mayor Dada Morero said the city would host several G20 meetings and expected a significant influx of international tourists.

## China expects New Year holiday tourism boom with relaxed immigration policies

BEIJING

WITH the latest relaxation and extension of its immigration policies, China is expected to become a popular destination for foreign tourists this upcoming New Year holiday.

The number of inbound and outbound passengers will reach 2.05 million per day during the New Year holiday in China, up 18.8 percent year on year, as the National Immigration Administration has forecast. Peak hours are expected to occur mainly on the evening of Dec. 31, 2024 and Jan. 1, 2025.

During the holiday, four major airports in Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou and Chengdu are expected to handle nearly 200,000 international passengers per day.

Earlier this month, China announced a significant relaxation of its visa-free transit policy, extending the permitted stay for eligible foreign travelers from the initial 72 hours and subsequent 144 hours to

240 hours, or 10 days.

Under the updated policy, eligible citizens from 54 countries can enter China visa-free when transiting to a third country or region. These travelers may enter through any of the 60 ports across 24 provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities and stay within the designated areas for up to 240 hours.

Besides, China has implemented a complete mutual visa exemption for 26 countries and issued a unilateral visa-free policy for 38 countries.

"This is my second visit to China. In the past, I had to go through visa and other formalities before I could come here. With this new policy, it is becoming more and more convenient to come to China," said Beschmetnov Stanislav from Russia. Upon landing at the Shanghai Pudong International Airport, he planned to use the visa-free transit policy to take his family to the Bund, Nanjing Road, and other scenic spots in the city.

According to the statistics of Shanghai

General Station of Immigration Inspection, from Dec. 17 to 24, the station issued 240-hour temporary entry permits to nearly 1,000 foreigners. The top five countries are Russia, the United States, Britain, Sweden and Canada.

"We are on a five-day vacation in Shanghai this time. It is more convenient to come to China now, taking just over an hour to fly here, without complicated procedures or costs of a visa application," said Lim Seung-hwan from the Republic of Korea (ROK).

Since China extended its visa-free policy to ROK and Japan last month, 11,000 passenger flights between Shanghai and the two countries and 363,000 ROK and Japanese tourists have been logged at Shanghai General Station of Immigration Inspection. The passenger number increased by more than 20 percent compared with the same period from September to October.

In the meantime, the southern Chinese island province of Hainan has always en-

joyed the best visa-free entry policy in China. Since the beginning of this year, more than 350,000 foreign tourists have entered Hainan visa-free, a year-on-year increase of more than three times, accounting for 85 percent of the foreign tourists visiting the tropical island.

Visa-free entry has become the main way for foreigners to enter Hainan.

The Mohan railway port in southwest China's Yunnan Province, an important gateway on the China-Laos Railway that entered operation in April of 2023, has welcomed over 33,000 foreign tourists this year, a year-on-year increase of 99.5 percent, including over 9,500 visa-free entries, an increase of ten times from last year.

China recorded nearly 29.22 million inbound foreign visits between January and November 2024, up 86.2 percent year on year. Of these, 17.45 million entered the country visa-free, marking a significant 123.3 percent year-on-year growth.

Xinhua

## China is confident in promoting sustained economic growth

THE recently concluded China's Central Economic Work Conference sent a clear and optimistic signal that China's economy will brave the wind and the waves and sail steadily into the future.

The international community has closely followed and positively interpreted the outcomes of the conference, believing China will inject greater stability and momentum into the world economy.

Over the past year, in the face of a complicated and challenging environment of increasing external pressure and growing internal difficulties, China's economic journey has been extraordinary with encouraging achievements. The Chinese economy has maintained overall stability and made steady progress, the high-quality

development has been solidly promoted, and the main goals and tasks of China's economic and social development are expected to be successfully completed.

Notably, the decisive deployment of a package of incremental policies at the meeting held by the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee on Sept. 26 has effectively boosted social confidence and led to a remarkable economic recovery.

This year, the Chinese economy is expected to grow by around 5 percent and continue contributing around 30 percent to the world economic growth. International observers see this as a testament to the strong resilience and immense potential of the Chinese economy.

China's economy is underpinned by a stable foundation, multiple advantages, strong resilience, and great potential, and the supporting conditions and fundamental trends for long-term sound economic development have not changed.

China is a large economy with a massive domestic market and a robust industrial ecosystem, which helps create a "dual circulation" pattern that allows its domestic and international economic activities to reinforce each other. The benign interactions between the Chinese and international markets lay a solid foundation for China's steady and sustained economic progress.

China boasts a comprehensive industrial system with diverse business entities that are highly adaptable to

changing environments, and Chinese households have a high savings rate that provides resilience against economic fluctuations. These factors collectively underline the remarkable resilience of the Chinese economy.

China remains a developing country that faces challenges of unbalanced and inadequate development. However, these very challenges also signify the country's untapped growth potential and serve as powerful drivers for further progress.

The world economy is facing many difficulties and challenges, and trade protectionism, unilateralism, and geopolitical tensions are clearly on the rise, which have heightened uncertainty in economic operations worldwide. China has the conditions and room to strengthen counter-cyclical adjust-

ments, which provides strong policy support for achieving annual goals and tasks. China's Central Economic Work Conference this year unveiled a host of effective policy measures targeted at stabilizing public expectations and boosting market confidence.

Next year, China will implement a more proactive fiscal policy and shift to a moderately loose monetary policy for the first time after having a prudent monetary policy for 14 consecutive years. The country will vigorously boost consumption, improve investment efficiency, and expand domestic demand on all fronts. It will also drive the development of new quality productive forces through scientific and technological innovation and build a modernized industrial system.

International analysts observed that

China has all the tools it needs to adapt to its new geopolitical environment, accelerate domestic transformation, and bolster economic dynamism.

Cultivating new quality productive forces for high-quality development. China is solidly advancing high-quality development and continuing to lead the efforts to improve the performance of the world economy.

New quality productive forces have provided crucial support for China's high-quality development. China has made significant advancements in scientific and technological innovation, such as integrated circuit, artificial intelligence, and quantum technology. Chinese traditional industries have been embracing high-end, intelligent and green development.

People's Daily



# An awakened Africa joins hands with Global South to advance modernisation

CAIRO

IN a region where turmoil has long been the norm, the cascade of events in the Middle East in 2024 has nevertheless shocked the world due to its intensity and complexity.

The Israel-Palestine conflict entered the second year, leaving Gaza stranded in a dire humanitarian crisis and creating ripple effects across Lebanon, Yemen and Iran. Apart from Israel's multiple-front wars, the escalating fighting in Sudan, rising instability in Libya, as well as the swift toppling of Bashar al-Assad's government in Syria, have created further chaos in the Middle East.

The human tragedies, geopolitical shifts and socioeconomic challenges befalling the region throughout the year have cast a shadow over the future of the Middle East in 2025.

## INCREASING HOSTILITIES

As mediators are still working to bridge the chasm between Israel and Palestine to create a Gaza ceasefire deal through indirect negotiations, Israel is launching more airstrikes and bombardment on the brittle enclave.

The 14-month conflict has claimed more than 45,300 Palestinian lives and injured nearly 108,000 others, according to Gaza's health authorities. The UN estimates that, as of early December, over 1.6 million people were living in makeshift shelters, with 80 percent of Gaza under ongoing evacuation orders since October.

"There is nowhere that civilians in Gaza are safe," Tom Fletcher, UN under-secretary-general for humanitarian affairs and emergency relief coordinator, said Monday, noting that more humanitarians in Gaza have been killed in 2024 than any on record.

The conflict in Gaza, the "eye of the storm," has also spread to neighboring regions, raising concerns that the Middle East is teetering on the brink of a wider regional war.

Israel's airstrike on the Iranian Embassy in Syria in April prompted Iran to retaliate with a large-scale drone and missile assault on Israel and triggered further tit-for-tats between the two sides. Israel then killed Hamas Politburo Chief Ismail Haniyeh in July and Hezbollah leader Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah in September. In the following month, Israeli tanks crossed the border and advanced onto Lebanese soil.

Despite a fragile ceasefire between Israel and Hezbollah, effective from Nov. 27 and aimed at ending a conflict that have reportedly claimed more than 4,000 lives in Lebanon, Israeli forces have continued their strikes, causing further casualties.

Following a 12-day military operation by Syrian militant groups that resulted in the fall of al-Assad's government on Dec. 8, Israel launched extensive airstrikes on Syria and moved its troops into a demilitarized zone near the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights. As the year comes to an end, Israel has vowed to "act with force" against the Houthis in Yemen amid heavier exchanges of fire between the two sides.

"Today, the Middle East serves as a battleground for Israel, which is engaged in multiple military confrontations," Washington-based think tank the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace said in mid-November, adding that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his allies "appear resolute in sustaining



Displaced Palestinian children play at a shelter in Gaza City on Dec. 9, 2024. Xinhua

these conflicts ... rejecting negotiations and political settlements." "If there ever was a time to use superlatives about Middle Eastern affairs, the year 2024 is it ... The region's reordering is accompanied by great violence and renewed competition," the Financial Times opined last Sunday.

## INVISIBLE HAND

While it is widely agreed that the chaos in the Middle East should be primarily understood from a historical viewpoint featuring unresolved problems among different ethnic groups in the region, many experts have agreed that external influences from the West, notably the United States, have also been a key factor in the region's ongoing war of attrition.

In mid-November, the Council on Foreign Relations, a U.S. think tank, revealed that "Israel has long been the leading recipient of U.S. foreign aid, including military assistance" and that "the United States has provisionally agreed via a memorandum of understanding to provide Israel with 3.8 billion U.S. dollars per year through 2028."

"U.S. military aid to Israel has soared to its highest in decades amid Israel's yearlong war with Hamas in the Gaza Strip," as it has enacted legislation providing at least 12.5 billion dollars in direct military aid to Israel, the think tank said.

Researchers at Brown University estimated in early October that U.S. President Joe Biden's administration provided an additional 17.9 billion dollars to Israel since the start of the Gaza war.

While the United States has dubbed itself a mediator in the Gaza ceasefire, it has repeatedly vetoed UN Security Council draft resolutions calling for an immediate and unconditional ceasefire in Gaza.

A Politico report in late September revealed that while Washington publicly urged Israel to curtail its strikes on Lebanon, senior White House figures privately backed Israel's military push against Hezbollah.

Earlier this month, U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken publicly admitted that his country's efforts spanning the last 20 years to seek regime change in Iran did not yield much success.

The Pentagon also recently confirmed the first official increase in U.S. troops in Syria from around 900 to 2,000, noting that the additional deployments were made before al-Assad's ouster in response to the evolving security situation in Syria and to safeguard critical U.S. interests in the region.

"The U.S. has a major role in these conflicts, as it is the one fueling these conflicts, standing behind them, planning them, and supporting them, although it always tries to deny its presence and direct intervention in these actions," Muthanna Mishaan al-Mazrouei, a professor of political geography at Iraq's Tikrit University, told Xinhua.

"It's frankly embarrassing ... to see just the way we

give in to the demands of the Israeli government and continue to support what the Israeli government is doing even though we know it's wrong," former U.S. State Department official Mike Casey told Al Jazeera on Dec. 21.

## UNATTAINABLE "LUXURIES"

Some 1.9 million people had been displaced in Gaza as of October out of a population of 2.2 million. A study of children living through the Gaza war published in December found that 96 percent of them feel their death is imminent and almost half want to die due to the trauma they have been through.

Nearly one million people, or one in five of Lebanon's population, have been displaced. In Syria, over 880,000 have fled their homes since Nov. 27, with around 6 percent living with disabilities. Cases of psychological trauma are surging across Syria, particularly among children.

In Yemen, 385,000 children face severe acute malnutrition, while a failing health system leaves 540,000 vulnerable to diseases like cholera. Over 9 million people in Libya, Palestine, and Sudan urgently need humanitarian aid.

The conflicts have taken a heavy economic toll on the region. The IMF projected in October that Middle Eastern economies may face prolonged recovery, with per capita gross domestic product (GDP) expected to drop by 10 percent even a decade after the Gaza conflict.

Given the recurring armed conflicts and the subsequent socioeconomic setbacks in the Middle East in 2024, the international community has voiced its call for regional stability for the new year.

"My hope is that Israel will change course and seek to advance a two-state solution with the Palestinians, paving the way for peacemaking and further normalization," Nimrod Goren, a senior fellow for Israeli Affairs at the Washington-based Middle East Institute, told Xinhua.

UN agencies and countries worldwide have repeatedly called for an end to Israel's "aggression" against Gaza and urged a long-overdue ceasefire, expressed hope for a lasting Israel-Hezbollah ceasefire, supported an "inclusive, credible, and peaceful" Syrian-led political transition, and pledged increased humanitarian aid to war-torn Middle Eastern countries.

Yet, for many experts, peace and development remain unattainable "luxuries" for the Middle East in the upcoming year.

"As long as entrenched political elites, external interventions, and sectarian divisions remain dominant, the Middle East is likely to remain a volatile and contested region, with peace a distant and uncertain prospect," Mohamed Elchime, professor of Political Science at Helwan University in Egypt, told Xinhua.

## US applies Ukrainian scenario to pressure China – Lavrov

MOSCOW

THE United States, in its efforts to pressure China over the Taiwan issue, employs methods very similar to those previously used to establish an anti-Russian foothold in Ukraine, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said in his year-end interview with TASS.

"We do not make assumptions about the plans of the future US administration; this is the work of political scientists. If we assess the overall situation in the region, it continues to deteriorate. The US and its satellites declare their commitment to the 'one China' principle but insist on maintaining the status quo, which implies preserving the current situation indefinitely," the minister said when asked about the Taiwan issue and the impact of the new Donald Trump administration on the processes in the region.

"Meanwhile, the Americans are taking provocative actions in the Taiwan Strait, supplying arms to Taipei, and developing a quasi-political dialogue with the authorities there. All of this together undoubtedly contributes to the growth of separatist sentiments. These methods are very similar to those that were once used by the Americans to establish an anti-Russian foothold in Ukraine," Lavrov added.

## Ukraine's non-aligned status remains special op goal to be achieved

Ensuring Ukraine's non-aligned status remains the goal of Russia's special military operation, which will be achieved, Lavrov said in his year-end interview with TASS.

"Since NATO's multi-year expansion was one of the main root causes of the Ukrainian crisis, securing Kiev's non-aligned status remains among the objectives of the special military operation that must be achieved," Lavrov stated.

## NATO involved in strikes with long-range missiles on Russia's territory

Lavrov suggested that NATO, which was involved in the invasion of the Kursk Region and strikes with long-range missiles on Russian territory, should "look at itself in the mirror" before accusing Moscow of escalation. The minister was asked whether the West accuses Russia of escalating the conflict due to the alleged involvement of the North Korean military in the hostilities. "We have already repeatedly commented on this issue, which is constantly fueled in the West. Recently, the false reports have become even more aggressive. We can respond to them briefly with the words of the well-known saying: 'If the shoe fits, wear it,'" Lavrov told TASS in his year-end interview.

"Those who accuse Russia of something need to look at themselves in the mirror," the minister continued. "NATO military personnel and mercenaries are blatantly involved in planning and conducting combat operations alongside the Ukrainian armed forces. NATO is involved in the invasion of the Kursk Region and strikes with long-range missiles on Russian territory. President Vladimir Putin has made this clear in his recent public speeches. What kind of escalation on our part can we even talk about?" Lavrov wondered.

## Russia to stay away from Kiev's 'peace summit'

Moscow will neither take part in the "peace summit" nor follow Vladimir Zelensky's statements, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said in his year-end interview with TASS.

"It is impossible to guess what Zelensky's public admission of his inability to regain lost territories by force means. Zelensky keeps making various statements all the time. We have stopped paying attention to them, frankly speaking," the foreign minister noted. "We do not believe statements, but rather facts, especially when it comes to the Kiev regime," he added. "I have repeatedly emphasized that we are not going to participate in the 'peace summit' even if we receive an invitation," Lavrov pointed out.

## Russia ready to restore relations with Georgia

Moscow is ready for the normalization of relations with Tbilisi to the extent that Georgia is prepared, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said in his year-end interview with TASS.

"We are determined to normalize Russian-Georgian relations precisely to the extent that Tbilisi is ready," he stated.

## Russia opposes Taiwan independence in any form

Moscow is against Taiwan's independence in any form, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said in his year-end interview with TASS.

"Our principled position on the Taiwan issue remains unchanged. It was outlined in a joint statement by the leaders of Russia and China following the May visit of Russian President Vladimir Putin to the country," the foreign minister said.

Agencies

# Ban Ki-moon: Xi has demonstrated proactive and crucial leadership

"I met with Chinese President Xi Jinping on many occasions. Our interactions and friendship are based on a common understanding that humanity shares the same planet and a common future," said Ban Ki-moon, former UN Secretary-General, in a recent interview with People's Daily.

Ban noted that consensus-building and win-win cooperation are crucial to effectively addressing global challenges and ushering in an even better future for humanity.

Ban still vividly remembers his first meeting with Xi. It was in July 2005 when Xi, then secretary of the Communist Party of China Zhejiang Provincial Committee, visited South Korea. Ban, who was his country's Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade at the time, hosted a welcome dinner at his residence. During their conversation, Ban deeply felt that Xi is a man of action who truly understands people's concerns.

During his tenure as UN Secretary-General from 2007 to 2016, Ban valued and actively supported China in playing a greater role on the international stage.

In September 2015, at Ban's invitation, Xi attended summits marking the 70th anniversary of the UN at the UN headquarters in New York. During the visit, he presented China's Zun of Peace as a gift to the UN on

September 27, and delivered an important speech at the general debate of the 70th session of the UN General Assembly on September 28, both of which left a lasting impression on Ban.

The gift Zun of Peace is modeled after Zun, which literally means reverence, and is a bronze ritual object used in ancient China. It represents China's high regard and support for the UN.

"This exquisite Zun of Peace, imbued with classical charm, now graces the UN headquarters in the Delegates Lounge," Ban told People's Daily.

He said that the gift embodies the aspiration of China and its people to promote peace, development and win-win cooperation, reflecting the shared values between China and the UN.

During the speech at the general debate of the 70th session of the UN General Assembly, Xi called for working together to forge a new partnership of win-win cooperation and creating a community of shared future for mankind.

"Xi provides the world with the crucial concept of building a community with a shared future for mankind, offering inspiration to UN member states," said Ban, who believes that in today's world, people in all countries



Photo shows Ban Ki-moon, former UN Secretary-General. (Photo by Chen Shangwen/People's Daily)

share the same future, and everyone should work together.

"Xi is a visionary leader of a major country with real wisdom," observed Ban. "He bears in mind the whole world, and shows genuine kindness and sincerity to his friends."

During the interview, Ban shared a heartwarming story with People's Daily.

Ban recalled that he had studied Chinese language and calligraphy when he was young, and continued to hone his skills in Chinese calligraphy after joining the UN.

"During my meeting with Xi, I nev-

er mentioned my love for Chinese calligraphy. After knowing my interest, he specially presented me with a set of writing materials - ink brush, ink, Chinese Xuan paper, and ink slabs," Ban recalled. "The gift was so precious that I couldn't bear to use it. I have been carefully preserving it."

"I very much admire the philosophical thoughts embedded in traditional Chinese culture, such as 'the greatest virtue is just like water,' and often share these words of wisdom with delegates from different countries," Ban said.

Ban believed that the notion that

"the greatest virtue is just like water, nurturing all things without competing with them" represents the ability to exert full effort when needed. "This is also what I have felt from Xi's leadership and Chinese people's character," he added.

With increased exchanges with Xi and deepening observations of China, Ban has gained a more comprehensive understanding of Chinese philosophies and solutions. "China is playing an increasingly important role on the world stage, and Xi has demonstrated proactive and crucial leadership."

Addressing climate change is crucial for global sustainable development. Ban noted that Xi has actively promoted global climate governance and played a significant and constructive role in response to climate change.

"Under Xi's leadership, China is committed to promoting low-carbon and sustainable development and vigorously developing renewable energy, demonstrating admirable determination and actions," Ban said.

Development is a common cause for the people of all countries. In Ban's view, China has been working with other countries to achieve shared development and prosperity.

He gives a range of examples: through the Belt and Road Initiative

(BRI), China actively supports developing countries in infrastructure development and green growth; under the framework of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC), China joins hands with African countries to advance modernization and improve people's livelihoods; and China has proposed the concept of a community with a shared future for mankind, the Global Development Initiative, Global Security Initiative, and Global Civilizations initiative, offering new solutions to addressing global challenges.

"These ideas and actions are inseparable from Xi's foresight. He always believes that China can only do well when the world is doing well, and when China does well, the world will get even better," said Ban.

"Under Xi's leadership, China has been continuously engaging in UN affairs and providing support to other developing countries, for which I am deeply grateful," he added.

In April 2018, Ban was elected chairman of the Boao Forum for Asia (BFA). He believes China's steadfast support has become a solid force for BFA's continuous development, significantly contributing to consensus-building and cooperation among all parties in Asia.

"We must unite and cooperate to continuously strive for shared peace and prosperity," Ban remarked.





## Join international federations, TOC urges national sports associations

By Correspondent Joseph Mchekadona

THE Tanzania Olympic Committee (TOC) has urged national sports associations in the country to register with their respective international federations (IF).

Speaking over the weekend in Dodoma at the TOC annual general meeting, Filbert Bayi, the secretary general of the committee, highlighted the numerous benefits of being members of international federations.

Bayi (pictured) explained that active membership in IFs enables national associations to compete in international tournaments and access funding opportunities.

He also emphasized that the TOC has been performing its duties in accordance with Olympic guidelines.

"Between January and December this year, the TOC has fulfilled its functions, including supporting athletes to secure scholarships from Olympic Solidarity, which help them qualify for the Paris Olympics," he said.

Bayi listed some of the athletes who

have benefited from Olympic Solidarity support: Alphonse Simbu, Gabriel Geay, Failuna, Antony Matanga, Andrew Thomas, Mlugu Hilal, and Hemed Hilal.

"Delegates to this meeting, our two female athletes - Magdalena Shauri and Jackiline Sakilu - were also given a seven-month sponsorship (January to July 2024) to prepare for the Paris Olympics," added Bayi.

He also addressed the banning of the National Boxing Federation (BFT) due to the misuse of funds provided by the TOC for sending boxers to the 2023 World Boxing Championship in Tashkent, Uzbekistan.

Despite this, the TOC sponsored boxer Yusufu Lucas Chagalawe to compete in Italy and Thailand, with both competitions serving as qualifiers for the Paris Olympics.

Additionally, the TOC facilitated judoka Andrew Mlugu and swimmers Collins Phillip Saliboko and Sophie Anisa Latiff in securing universality tickets to compete at the Paris Olympics.

## New Year Expectations



Serengeti Boys pictured recently during the U-17 AFCON CECAFA Qualifiers 2024 in Uganda. Photo: Courtesy of TFF

By Lloyd Elipokea

AS we approach the end of a non-stop, action-packed year of sensational sporting action, it is only natural for sports-obsessed fans to look ahead to the dawn of a new year with great expectations.

Here, in our neck of the woods, hordes of football fans will be fervently hoping that the Taifa Stars can put their best foot forward at the CHAN Finals, which will be co-hosted by Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda.

Indeed, it is hoped that our football administrators are now putting the finishing touches to their preparations for the football championship, which is exclusively reserved for home-based players on the continent.

Moreover, it is expected that the CHAN Finals next year will be a good litmus test of the mettle of our locally based players

at a competition whose standing continues to grow.

Here's hoping then that our locally based players will be eminently able to rise to the occasion once the competition gets underway.

Let us now consider our lengthy and embarrassing 40-year medals drought at the multi-sport, perpetually scintillating Olympic Games.

Despite heading into this year's Paris Olympic Games with high hopes, we eventually came back home with naught as our athletes' efforts to claim even a minuscule single medal were ultimately to no avail.

Once again, in the years ahead of the Paris 2024 Olympics, we shot ourselves in the foot as we dragged our feet instead of kick-starting our preparations right after the Tokyo 2020 Olympics had ended.

In light of that, I would like to issue a clarion call to our sports administrators to begin

our preparations for the Los Angeles 2028 Olympic Games forthwith.

Lest we forget, eleventh hour preparations are a sure-fire guarantee that we will end up with egg all over our faces at the next Olympic Games in Los Angeles.

Let us now return to the exciting realm of football where a lot of football players extraordinaire of African descent are continuing their steady ascent on the European football stage.

One such bright star is the Gallic football icon Kylian Mbappe whose father is from Cameroon and whose mother is an Algerian.

Now on the books of the ultra-successful La Liga giants, Real Madrid, Mbappe has endured a tough start to the present 2024-25 football season as he has struggled to find his best form.

However, in recent weeks, the extremely talented French

attacker has seemed to be in a rich vein of form as he has regained his deadly goal-scoring touch, which is ominous news for opposing defences.

While we continue to hope that Mbappe can successfully maintain his current top form in the New Year, all Arsenal FC fans on the continent have been plunged into misery following the news that their hugely influential forward Bukayo Saka will be on the injury sidelines for many weeks.

Saka, whose parents are Nigerians, has enjoyed a meteoric rise to the summit of international football where he is generally regarded as one of the leading right wingers in the world.

After suffering a hamstring injury recently, it is understandable that all Arsenal aficionados will be keeping their fingers crossed for Saka's swift return from injury.



Peter Kisenge, a cardiologist and executive director of the Jakaya Kikwete Cardiac Institute (JKCI), is pictured greeting musician Zuchu during her recent visit to the Institute. Zuchu was there to utilize the free cardiac test services introduced under the initiative of President Samia Suluhu Hassan. Photo Correspondent Joseph Mwendapole

## German chess player Rosenhan triumphs at Jordan Open 2024 in Morogoro

By Correspondent Joseph Mchekadona

JULIUS Rosenhan from Germany emerged as the winner of the fourth edition of the Jordan Open Chess Tournament, held at Jordan University College (JUCo) in Morogoro in the middle of this month.

His runner-up was Indian chess prodigy Arena FIDE Master Gokulraam Sankar, who previously won the second edition of the Jordan Open in 2022.

Both Rosenhan and Sankar scored the same number of points (5), but Rosenhan edged out in the

tie-breaks. Neither player lost a game. The two faced each other in the fourth round, resulting in a draw.

Sankar was named the Best Junior of the tournament, while Candidate Master Veer Gandhi, the winner of the third edition of the Jordan Open, secured third place with 4.5 points. Kenyan Edwin Kiplangat Bii was recognized as the best player in the ranking category of 1400-1800.

The tournament director, Dr. Konrad Czernichowski, mentioned that the winner of the first edition of the Jordan Open,

Cleophas Charles Mrope, did not compete in this tournament as he is currently studying at the University of Maria Curie-Skłodowska (UMCS) in Lublin, Poland.

Mrope received a scholarship due to his successes in the international chess arena.

Czernichowski noted that the only Tanzanian lady to perform well was Neema Adam Kisanga, who emerged as the top player in the ladies' category.

The Best JUCo student was Ugochukwu Celestin Wisdom Anyalebechi from Nigeria, currently pursuing a Bachelor's degree in

Philosophy.

"The event in Morogoro attracted 44 players from seven different countries, including Tanzania (33), Poland (4), India (3), Germany (1), Kenya (1), Mozambique (1), and Nigeria (1).

"Among them were members of the Tanzania national team: Albert Njau, the country's highest-rated player, Shedrack Lusako Mwakajilla, and Henry Marwa Michael.

"Four chess clubs participated: Don Bosco Chess Club from Dar es Salaam (whose members scored 29 points collectively), Jordan

Chess Club from Morogoro (19.5 points), Elimu Yetu Chess Club from Arusha (11 points), and Mgojole Chess Club from Morogoro (6.5 points, but in another tournament: Jordan Watoto 2024)," he said.

Although Tanzanian players did not perform well overall, Isaac Nicas Yabu gained recognition from the International Chess Federation (FIDE) for scoring two points against FIDE-rated players.

Czernichowski also highlighted that Jordan Watoto player Sandra John won a medal after winning all her games and drawing only

with the third-place player, Vincent Paulo.

Both tournaments were supervised by FIDE Arbiter Mustafa Ebrahim from Dar es Salaam.

The two-day tournament was officially opened by the college's Deputy Principal for Finance and Administration, Dr. John Boamo Tlegray.

Czernichowski expressed gratitude to the Chief Arbiter, the organizing committee's student members, and all participants for making the Jordan Open and Jordan Watoto tournaments a success.



## Guardiola relieved at much-needed win in 500th game

LEICESTER, England

MANCHESTER City celebrated Pep Guardiola's 500th game as boss with a 2-0 victory over lowly Leicester City, but the manager was more relieved than rapturous at what has of late become the rare taste of victory.

Guardiola's struggling team won for the first time in five league games to climb to a provisional fifth in the Premier League, but are still way off leaders Liverpool, who have 11 points and two games in hand over the reigning champions.

"Just relief, that is the word to express how all of us feel. We have done incredible things and now we struggle to win games so now it's just relief," Guardiola said.

"We needed it. All of us. It was not the ideal performance but hopefully the victories will give our mood a better position.

"For the result we have to do something. If you don't perform, the results won't come. Now, in the position we are in, the results are the most important thing, to get points and help our minds. We have another game at home next and many good things happened today."

Brazilian Savinho netted his first goal in a City shirt in the first half, and then City narrowly staved off several Leicester chances before Erling Haaland scored to give the visitors some breathing space.

### HAALAND BOOST

The goal was a confidence boost for Haaland as well, as he has found the back of the net just twice in his last eight league games in the roughest stretch of his Premier League career.

"Sometimes Erling has been judged badly but it's part of football," Guardiola said. "He's tired, he's played a lot of minutes. He's become a father for the first time in the last few days, a lot of emotions and an exciting few days for him."

Haaland pointed out that his team do not have a game now until Saturday when they host West Ham United, making for a rare few days off in what has been a gruelling stretch of games.

"It has been a difficult time. Things happen and we have to keep going, we have to stay positive and focus on the right things," Haaland said.

"Now it's New Year so don't think too much about football ... I think it's the longest time in a pretty long period and now we can rest a little bit and go again."

Meanwhile, Manchester United's transition from Erik ten Hag to Ruben Amorim is not going to be easy as their styles are completely different but the squad have full faith in the new manager, defender Harry Maguire said.

The 39-year-old former Sporting boss, who favours a back three, has won four, lost five and drawn one of his 10 games since taking over from Ten Hag in November.

United have struggled to get any momentum in the Premier League and sit 14th having lost four of their last five.

"The thing is with the managers and the styles, it is not like they have come in and they have similar styles," Maguire told Sky Sports in an interview published on Sunday.

"They are the total opposite in terms of what they want and what they demand.

"So the transition period is going to be tough. We all have great belief in the manager and all his coaching staff. I am sure things are going to turn around."

United, who lost 2-0 at Wolverhampton Wanderers on Thursday, host Newcastle United later on Monday before a trip to face leaders Liverpool on Sunday.

REUTERS

## Competitive Conte aims high with Napoli after bridging gap to top

NAPLES, Italy

ANTONIO Conte is not putting any limits on his ambitions for Napoli, after a 1-0 win over Venezia on Sunday pulled them level on points with Serie A leaders Atalanta, with substitute Giacomo Raspadori to thank for the victory.

At the start of the season, Conte had spoken of a rebuilding process after joining a club which had failed to defend their league title when finishing 10th last season.

Now the Scudetto is once again within their sights.

"Even when I play cards with my daughter, I want to win," Conte told broadcaster DAZN.

"I would never sign on for minimum goals. Personally, I always aim for the maximum, finding ourselves on 41 points was very difficult to predict, in my opinion.

"The squad is improving and works, game after game. We need to avoid injuries, the players and the fans are getting a lot of satisfaction."

Raspadori has found it difficult to break into Conte's side, with just two league starts this season, but his first goal of the campaign proved decisive and Conte has plans to get the forward more involved in the future.

"We are inventing Raspadori as a choice," Conte said.

"I'm working on turning him into an attacking midfielder, to add quality during games, which, like today, can certainly be a strategy that works."

REUTERS

# Liverpool's Dutch master Slot rounds off almost perfect year

By Martyn Herman

REPLACING Kop idol Jurgen Klopp at Anfield looked to many like mission impossible for Dutchman Arne Slot when he was named as the German's successor in May.

Now the appointment looks like a masterstroke halfway through his maiden Premier League campaign.

Liverpool's 5-0 thrashing of West Ham United on Sunday put Slot's side eight points clear of surprise second-placed side Nottingham Forest and 14 ahead of champions Manchester City.

They have lost only once in all competitions this season and Slot (pictured) can look back on an almost perfect 2024.

His Feyenoord side were unbeaten for the turn of the year to when he left as they finished runners-up to PSV Eindhoven.

The only side to get the better of Liverpool this season are Nottingham Forest and the way Slot's side have ended the year, a 20th title for the club now looks in their grasp.

"Compliments to Not-



tingham Forest. They were the one," Slot said after his side's rout of West Ham at the London Stadium.

While Slot inherited a high-quality squad and has not had to instigate a major rebuild, the tweaks he has made to Liverpool's style have put them in total control of the table.

They are a little more pragmatic than they were under Klopp's high-octane pressing game, but Slot has still retained Liverpool's attacking verve, evidenced by the fact they have scored 45 goals in 18 games including 14 in the last three.

### SALAH FACTOR

The 46-year-old has benefited hugely from

Mohamed Salah having what promises to be his best-ever season at Liverpool despite the ongoing saga of the Egyptian's contract talks.

Salah's goal on Sunday took his tally for the season to 20 and his two assists mean he has been involved in 30 goals in 18 Premier League games for Liverpool this season.

The 32-year-old Salah has been involved in 52 goals in all competitions in 2024 (29 goals, 23 assists), which is more than any other player in Europe's big five leagues.

"Mo and the word extraordinary is something I've heard a lot in the last six months," Slot told re-

porters.

"He truly deserves this and probably for the eight years, but I am involved in the last half-year. I don't think he keeps surprising us because we know what a player he is and we know he is able to do so. We can only hope he can keep bringing these performances in, but I would like to add that if he scores there's also a lead-up to him scoring.

"So there are also other players that bring him into these positions, but if you bring Mo in these positions, he is extraordinary. Definitely."

While Slot was delighted to see five different players on the

scoresheet on Sunday, a first clean sheet in five games was equally satisfying after his side conceded nine goals in their previous four.

"Clean sheets are one of the reasons why you win a lot. If every time you have to score two, three or four goals it is difficult," he said. "At the moment we do but it is not sustainable for a longer period of time.

"Sometimes you need a win by keeping a clean sheet and scoring one or two."

Meanwhile, Ludek Miklosko was given a rousing reception by West Ham United fans ahead of Sunday's Premier League clash against Liverpool after the club's former keeper announced he was no longer continuing with cancer treatment.

The 63-year-old Czech, who made almost 400 appearances for West Ham, said he has decided to stop chemotherapy in order to enjoy life. He was diagnosed with cancer three years ago after discovering a lump on his hip.

"I decided not to take the chemotherapy, because I want to live a normal life," Miklosko said in a statement be-

fore he walked on the pitch at the London Stadium before Sunday's game, waving as fans applauded and sang his name.

"I have very good people around me, and I have my work and my football, which is my life, all I have known. I want to keep doing that for as long as I can.

"When they told me about what the chemotherapy would mean, it was a case of not being able to work or be around my colleagues for around six months, not travel, have some sickness and everything else, and I said no - I do not want that."

Miklosko became a fan favourite at West Ham during eight years at the club from 1990 and his name is still sung.

He is currently Sporting Director at Banik Ostrava - his local club and where his career began.

"Lots of friends have said to me that, if they didn't know what I was going through, they would think that I was fine, which is nice for me to hear, because I want to feel like that for as long as possible," Miklosko said.

REUTERS

# Qatar savour continental success, Saudis named World Cup hosts in big year for Asian football

By Michael Church

QATAR were in full celebration mode to kick off 2024 with the successful defence of their Asian Cup title while Saudi Arabia ended the year on a high after being named hosts of the 2034 World Cup.

In between, Japan and Iran reasserted their status as regional heavyweights in 2026 World Cup qualifying but it has not been smooth sailing for some of the other top sides with South Korea and Australia failing to impress.

At the continental championships in Qatar, the hosts secured consecutive trophies with victory over surprise package Jordan in the final in Doha. Akram Afif's eight goals saw him end the tournament as top scorer and the captain would go on to be named Asian Player of the Year for a second time.

Qatar's success boosted belief they could make a second straight appearance at the World Cup having hosted the 2022 tournament but by November those hopes were hanging by a thread as defeats by the United Arab Emirates and Iran cost coach Marquez Lopez his job.

Japan were knocked out of the Asian Cup by Iran in the quarter-finals but they quickly shrugged off that disappointment to go nine points clear in their World Cup qualifying group while Australia and Saudi Arabia stumbled below them.

The Soccerroos and Green Falcons both made coaching changes



Fans are seen inside the stadium before the World Cup Asian Qualifiers Third Round Group C match involving Japan and Australia at Saitama Stadium 2002, in Saitama, Japan on October 15, 2024. REUTERS

after faltering starts to their 2026 campaigns but the race for Group C's second automatic qualifying spot remains tight with Bahrain, Indonesia and China also in contention.

Iran quickly took command of Group A but South Korea's struggles on and off the pitch continued.

With the controversy over Hong Myung-bo's appointment as manager dominating the headlines, South Korea opened their Group B campaign with a 0-0 draw with Palestine in Seoul, a result which sparked heavy criticism from fans and pundits.

Hong's side continued to blow hot and cold but they have held onto top spot in the group, with Iraq and Jordan breath-

ing down their neck.

### OLYMPIC WOES

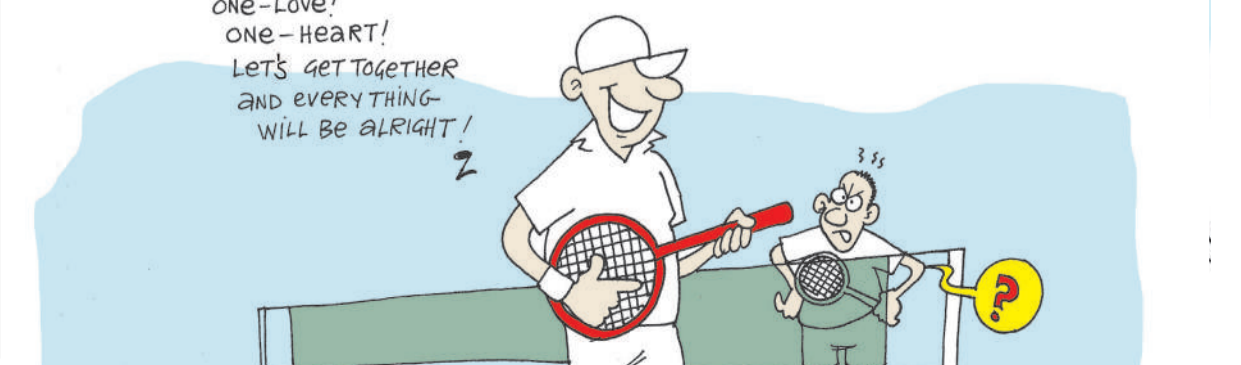
There was disappointment for South Korea when they failed to qualify for the Olympic Games for the first time since 1984, while Asia

under-23 champions Japan fell at the quarter-final stage in France.

The Japanese women's team, the Nadeshiko, were eliminated at the same stage by the United States.

## Gwiji by David Chikoko

♪  
ONE-LOVE!  
ONE-HEART!  
LET'S GET TOGETHER  
AND EVERY THING  
WILL BE ALRIGHT!



REUTERS



# SPORT

**Liverpool's Dutch master  
Slot rounds off almost  
perfect year**

PAGE 19

## Ramovic hails Yanga's grit after dominant 5-0 win over Fountain Gate

By Correspondent Seth Mapoli

YOUNG Africans head coach Sead Ramovic lauded his players and staff for their resilience and determination following a gruelling schedule that saw the team play four games in just ten days.

Young Africans capped this challenging run with an emphatic 5-0 victory over Fountain Gate, solidifying their second-place position in the Premier League.

"We have to know that we played four games in ten days," Ramovic said after the match at the KMC Complex. "Imagine playing four games in ten days with this kind of high intensity. What a team effort, what characters we have in our squad it's just unbelievable."

"I'm proud to be the head coach of this beautiful team and these players because they show real commitment to this club."

Ramovic emphasized the critical role of his players and staff in maintaining performance levels despite the intense schedule.

"The whole credit should go to the players and my staff," he said. "How we, as a staff, managed prioritization and recovery it's amazing. It's not easy to put this kind of intensity into a game and score five goals against a very good team."

The coach also credited Young Africans' passionate supporters for their unwavering encouragement, which he said had been instrumental in driving the team to success.

"These kinds of supporters, they pushed us," he remarked. "A big thank you from our side. And, of course, congratulations to the opponent for a fair, tough game."

"It's not just about the outcomes; it's about the intensity and getting the fitness levels I want," he added. "We want to play high-intensity, rock-and-roll football, never letting the opponent breathe. We are not there yet, but we are on the right track, alhamdulillah."

Young Africans' dominance was evident from the start. The defending champions opened the scoring in the 15th minute when Pacome Zouzou converted a cross from full-back Chadrack Boka.

Pacome doubled his tally just before halftime, netting his second in the 45th minute after an assist from Clement Mzize, who had earlier set up Young Africans' second goal for Mudathir Yahya in the 42nd minute.

Fountain Gate's defense struggled to contain Young Africans' relentless attacks, and an own goal by Jackson Shiga in the 54th minute further widened the gap. Substitute Duke Abuya then provided a long pass in the 86th minute, which Mzize expertly finished to seal the commanding 5-0 victory.

Despite the scoreline, Fountain Gate had fleeting moments of promise. Their best opportunity came in the 34th minute when Edgar William's close-range shot was blocked by Ibrahim Bacca.

The victory keeps Young Africans firmly in contention for the Premier League title. They are in second place with 39 points below league leaders Simba in first place with 40 points. Azam FC occupy third place with 36 points, while Singida Black Stars sit fourth with 33 points.

While Young Africans have been dominant domestically, their CAF Champions League campaign has been less impressive. The team has yet to register a win in the group stage, suffering defeats to Al Hilal (2-0) and MC Alger (2-0) while managing a 1-1 draw against TP Mazembe.

Ramovic acknowledged the challenges ahead, emphasizing the need to carry their domestic intensity onto the continental stage. "We are working hard to translate our form into the CAF Champions League. It's a learning curve, but we are determined to improve," he said.

## Simba now focus on CAF Confederation Cup after dominating Premier League first round



Simba midfielder Fabrice Ngoma pictured on Saturday with the Man of the Match award after their Premier League match against Singida Black Stars at Liti Stadium in Singida. Photo: Courtesy of SSC

By Correspondent Seth Mapoli

HAVING secured the top spot in the Premier League standings as the year 2024 comes to a close, Simba SC have now shifted their focus to the CAF Confederation Cup in pursuit of a quarterfinal berth.

Simba will face Tunisia's CS Sfaxien this Sunday, January 5, in a crucial away fixture. The team is scheduled to depart Tanzania tonight as preparations intensify for the high-stakes encounter.

The next three weeks will be decisive for Simba in the CAF Confederation Cup group stage, with the team needing at least four points from their re-

maining fixtures to secure a quarterfinal spot.

After the match in Tunisia, Simba will travel to Angola to face Bravos do Maquis on January 12. The group stage will conclude on January 19 with a home game against Algeria's CS Constantine.

Currently, Simba, CS Constantine, and Bravos each have six points, making the group tightly contested. It is evident that teams that secure away points and win their home games will have a strong chance of advancing.

Although nine points

may be sufficient to progress, this will also depend on the results of the other teams in the group.

Simba concluded the first round of the 2024/25 Premier League season with a hard-fought 1-0 away victory over Singida Black Stars. The lone goal, scored by midfielder Fabrice Ngoma, sealed Simba's dominant run in the league's first half.

This victory marked the completion of Simba's 15 matches against all the other teams in the league, achieving an impressive 87% win rate.

Despite a squad featur-

ing a significant number of foreign players, Simba have shown remarkable consistency, recording more wins than any other team in the league.

With 40 points from 15 matches, Simba have cemented their position at the top of the table, a tally that cannot be surpassed in the first round. Their record includes 13 wins, one draw, and just one loss. The team also leads in scoring, having netted 31 goals during the first round.

Midfielder Jean Charles Ahoua has been a stand-out performer for Simba, emerging as the team's top scorer with seven goals, trailing the league's leading scorer, Elvis Rupia, by just one goal. Additionally, Ahoua has provided five assists, underlining his value to the team.

Goalkeeper Moussa Camara has been a rock in Simba's defense, playing all 15 matches without being substituted. The Guinean shot-stopper has accumulated 1,350 minutes of play, conceding goals in only three matches and keeping 12 clean sheets.

Midfielder Ngoma has also proven his worth, scoring his third goal of the season in the vital win against Singida Black Stars. His

performances have earned him multiple Man-of-the-Match awards, and his recent resurgence has made him a regular starter under coach Fadlu Davids.

Ngoma's slow start to the season saw him struggle for game time, but he has since become indispensable. The club management has reportedly initiated contract renewal talks with the Congolese midfielder, whose current deal expires at the end of the season.

Simba are determined to reclaim all domestic and continental titles this season, and the performances of key players like Ngoma, Camara, and Ahoua will be instrumental in achieving these goals.

With their sights set on the CAF Confederation Cup quarterfinals, Simba are poised to build on their dominant domestic form and make a mark on the continental stage.

As they prepare for the critical matches ahead, Simba's players and management remain focused on ensuring the team's success across all competitions.

The coming weeks will be pivotal as Simba strive to maintain their momentum and secure their place among Africa's elite clubs.

## Senior national cricketers step up preps for ICC Men's CWC Challenge League B

By Correspondent Japheth Kazenga

THE senior national men's cricket squad has begun gunning up for a successful outing in the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup Challenge League B, to be played in Hong Kong in February 2025, by featuring in a series of trial games.

A Tanzania Cricket Association (TCA) official stated the trial games, termed TCA 50 Overs Trials Tournament, are played in Dar es Salaam bringing together selected competent junior cricketers and their senior counterparts.

The official said hosting the TCA 50 Overs Trials Tournament is an idea recommended by the senior national team's head coach, Pushpa Kumar, to ensure his players are in great shape ahead of the ICC tournament.

The players selected for the TCA 50 Overs Trials Tournament, the official said, are part of the national U-19 squad and several prospective senior cricketers.

The official added the showdown would hardly be an annual feature, saying it was designed by Kumar to give his players sufficient practice sessions.

Tanzania Blue, Tanzania Yellow, and Tanzania Green are the squads participating in the TCA 50 Overs Trials



Senior national men's cricket team. PHOTO: COURTESY OF TANZANIA CRICKET ASSOCIATION

Tournament.

He disclosed that there will further be a Super League held in a 50-over format, slated to take place in Dar es Salaam in January next year.

The showdown, according to the official, would equally serve as a chance for the prospective senior national cricketers to keep on shaping up for the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup Challenge League

B.

The ICC Men's Cricket World Cup Challenge League is a cricket competition contested in the List A format, and the bottom level of the three-league Cricket World Cup qualification system, which was introduced in 2019.

Twelve teams participate in two groups, with the top team of each group advanc-

ing to the World Cup Qualifier Play-off, which is a pathway to qualification for the next Cricket World Cup.

The Challenge League replaced Divisions Three, Four and Five from the World Cricket League in determining World Cup qualification. The first edition was in 2019-2022.

The 2024-2026 ICC Cricket World Cup Challenge League

is the second edition of the ICC Cricket World Cup Challenge League and a cricket tournament which forms part of the 2027 Cricket World Cup qualification process.

The league features 12 teams - those finishing second-fourth in their respective league in the 2019-2022 ICC Cricket World Cup Challenge League Play-off, and two teams from the 2023 Cricket World Cup Qualifier Play-off.

That tournament saw Canada, winner of League A in the previous Challenge League being promoted to League 2 status, while Papua New Guinea was relegated.

The other Challenge League winner, Jersey, was not successful in obtaining promotion.

The top two teams from both groups, A and B, will secure a spot at the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup Qualifier Playoff.

Each group in the ICC Cricket World Cup Challenge League is scheduled to play three times in a single round-robin tournament format, once each year from 2024 to 2026.

This amounts to 15 matches per team and a total of 90 matches.

## Flexibles by David Chikoko

